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INTRODUCTION

To All Employees:

Seattle Institute for Biomedical and Clinical Research (SIBCR) recognizes that information makes a very important contribution to both job satisfaction and job performance. The more an employee knows about the Institute and its employment policies and procedures, the more comfortable the employee will be in his or her job, and the more effective the employee will be in helping the Institute fulfill its mission.

The purpose of this Employee Handbook is to bring together in a convenient place a summary of some of the policies and procedures that affect employees. Employees should read this Handbook and become familiar with its content. Employees should be comfortable referring to the Handbook whenever a question regarding employment with SIBCR arises. If the Handbook does not answer the question, employees should contact their supervisor or Human Resources for assistance.

SIBCR has a positive, service-oriented view of our organization and its future. We hope that you will always share in our commitment to service and quality, and that this Handbook will make you more comfortable in your employment with us.

It is important to begin by describing what this Employee Handbook is, as well as what it is not. It...

- **IS a summary of our Institute's employment policies and procedures.** It revokes and supersedes any prior summaries or statements of employment policies and procedures and will control in case of any inconsistency with other written materials or unwritten practices. It is the primary document that describes SIBCR's policies.
- **IS an evolving document which we expect to revise and update.** We reserve the right to add, modify, or delete any or all policies, practices or procedures at our sole and absolute discretion, with or without notice.
- **IS NOT your only source of information on employment-related issues.** Although this handbook will usually be the best place to start in finding answers to questions, you may have questions that it does not answer. In such cases, you should talk with your supervisor, Human Resources or the Executive Director of SIBCR.
- **IS NOT a contract of employment.** We hope that our employment relationship with you will be ongoing and rewarding for you and us. However, your employment is "at will" and may be terminated at any time, with or without cause, by either you or us. In addition, employees may be demoted, their job duties may be changed, or their benefits altered at any time, with or without cause, and with or without notice. No one has the authority to enter into any agreement for employment for a specified period of time, or to make any other representations or agreement inconsistent with this policy, unless it is in writing and signed by the Executive Director.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Seattle Institute for Biomedical and Clinical Research is to facilitate the research and educational programs conducted at the VA Puget Sound Health Care System, Seattle and American Lake Divisions. SIBCR strives to provide outstanding support to VA staff in their research, education and training endeavors to foster progress in biomedical, clinical, rehabilitative and health care services programs that benefit the nation's veterans and the general public.

EMPLOYMENT BASICS

At Will Employment

Employment with SIBCR is “at will.” “At will” means that either SIBCR or the employee may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause, with or without notice. No one has the authority to enter into any agreement for employment for a specified period of time, or to make any other representations or agreement inconsistent with this policy, unless it is in writing and signed by the Executive Director.

Employee Requirements

A prerequisite for employment at SIBCR is a completed employment packet. This packet needs to be completed prior to or on the first day of employment. This will include, but is not limited to:

- ◆ Optional Application for Federal Employment – OF 612 (This is not optional for SIBCR employees.);
- ◆ SF-85 "Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions";
- ◆ IRS Form W-4, a copy of which will be sent to the State of Washington to comply with its new hire reporting requirements; and
- ◆ Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9. The Form I-9 is to be signed by the supervising SIBCR member or authorized SIBCR official after review of the employee's identification.

All SIBCR employees must secure status as a Without Compensation (WOC) appointee to work at the Veterans Affairs Puget Sound Health Care System (VAPSHCS). This requires specific paperwork, including the Optional Application for Employment – OF 612 and the SF-85 "Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions." As part of the WOC appointee requirements and as an employee at a federal facility, new hires will also be required to complete a background check and have their fingerprints taken.

WOC status awards the employees of SIBCR some of the benefits and responsibilities of employment at VAPSHCS. Please contact SIBCR if there is a question as to the applicability of any requirement or policy at VAPSHCS that is not covered in this handbook.

If the SIBCR employee is to engage in direct patient care activities, the securing of WOC status requires verification of professional credentials for nurses and the obtaining of clinical privileges from VAPSHCS for physicians, physician assistants and ARNPs. No patient contact is allowed until license verification is complete or clinical privileges are granted by VAPSHCS. Equivalent permission and/or clinical privileging must be obtained from other institutions if such work is to be performed at these sites (i.e., the University of Washington Medical Center, Harborview Medical Center, etc.).

All personnel at VAPSHCS who work with research patients or with patient-identifiable research data must complete training in Human Subjects and Good Clinical Practices, as well as other VA-mandated training. Personnel must also have a completed Scope of

Work form on file with the VAPSHCS Research and Development (R&D) office. The R&D office will also verify their credentials. All training, the Scope of Work form and verification of credentials must be completed before any work is conducted with patients or patient identifiable research data.

A new SIBCR employee should submit for Without Compensation (WOC) status with VAPSHCS by providing the necessary completed documents to the SIBCR office. The documents required can be obtained from the SIBCR office or at www.sibcr.org.

When SIBCR employees work at VAPSHCS and/or at other affiliated institutions, they are required to follow the host institution's policies relating to personal conduct, safety and the conduct of research activities.

Medical Examination/Information

Certain medical information and/or examinations are required by VAPSHCS for SIBCR employees working within VAPSHCS. A TB titer is required at the beginning of employment and annually thereafter; if an employee has a positive result, a chest x-ray may be required. A completed Immunization Worksheet for each employee is required to be submitted to Occupational Health at VAPSHCS.

Separate Employers

SIBCR employees are not University of Washington (UW) or Federal (VAPSHCS) employees, but often work side-by-side with employees of UW and VAPSHCS. Work policies of these employers differ slightly from SIBCR policies. All persons who are paid wages and salary directly from SIBCR are employees of SIBCR. If questions arise because of differences in treatment of employees, employees should refer their questions to SIBCR Human Resources. SIBCR employment policies will apply to SIBCR employees, not the policies of VAPSHCS or UW.

Classifications of Employees

SIBCR has several classifications for employees.

1. *Full-Time Employee*: An employee who is hired to work at least 30 hours per week and whose appointment is expected to exceed 1,000 hours per year. Full-time employees with an appointment expected to continue for a year are eligible for all SIBCR benefits.
2. *Part-Time Employee*: An employee who is hired to work less than 30 hours per week and whose appointment is expected to exceed 1,000 hours per year. Part-time employees are eligible for some SIBCR benefits (see Benefits section beginning on page 25).
3. *Casual Employee*: An employee who is hired to work on an intermittent or as-needed basis. These employees are not eligible for any SIBCR benefits.
4. *Temporary Employee*: An employee who is hired with the expectation that he or she will be needed for a specified period of time of less than 12 months and less than 1000 hours. Temporary employees are not eligible for most SIBCR benefits, but may be eligible for leave accrual (see Benefits section beginning on page 25).
5. *Exempt Employee*: An employee who is paid a fixed salary on a monthly basis and who otherwise meets the criteria for exclusion under the applicable federal and state wage and hour laws, including but not limited to, executive, administrative, or professional employees. An exempt employee is not eligible to receive overtime pay.
6. *Nonexempt Employee*: An hourly employee who is eligible for overtime pay for all hours actually worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek in accordance with applicable federal and state wage and hour laws.

Many SIBCR employees are nonexempt. Each employee's status under applicable federal and state wage and hour laws will be determined upon hiring. Employees should see SIBCR for any questions regarding their status.

Employment of Relatives (Nepotism)

Employment of relatives is permitted, except in circumstances where an appointment places related people in supervisory or subordinate roles, or in a situation where influence could be exerted, directly or indirectly, on future decisions concerning the status of the employee's employment, promotion, or compensation. For this policy, "Relative" is defined to include an employee's spouse, parents, children, aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, cousins, grandchildren, grandparents, and any person with whom the employee lives in a relationship substantially equivalent to marriage.

If two employees become related or begin dating or become involved in an intimate relationship, and their continued employment might or does create a conflict of interest or the appearance of favoritism, one of the employees may be transferred to another open position. If such a position is not available, one of the two may be asked to resign or may be required to seek employment outside SIBCR.

WORKWEEK AND DAILY SCHEDULE

Workweek and Scheduling

For payroll and accounting purposes, the normal workweek begins at 12:01 a.m. Monday and ends at midnight the following Sunday. SIBCR may establish other workweeks for individual employees or certain positions.

Work schedules for each position are established by the supervisor and communicated in advance. Employees are expected to work all the hours and days assigned. Requests for scheduling changes or for particular days off must be made ahead of time and approved by the employee's supervisor.

Exempt employees are generally expected to be at work during their set work schedule. In addition, they may be expected to work additional hours in order to complete duties and assignments.

SIBCR reserves the right to change the regular workweek and the normal work schedule with prior notice to employees.

Rest and Meal Periods

All nonexempt employees receive a 10-minute paid break for each four hours of working time, unless the nature and circumstances of the nonexempt employee's work allow for the equivalent of a 10-minute break taken intermittently or prevent the establishment of regularly scheduled breaks. Ideally, a break will occur near the midpoint of each four-hour work period; however, scheduling will be approved by the supervisor. A nonexempt employee should not use break periods to extend a lunch period, to work overtime, or to leave work early.

Nonexempt employees working more than five hours in a day are required to take an unpaid meal break two to five hours into their shift. The normal meal break is a 30-minute unpaid period. Any nonexempt employee who works at least 10 hours in a day is required to take a second 30-minute unpaid meal period around the middle of the second five hour period.

Any nonexempt employee who is unable to take his or her break or meal period must notify his or her supervisor promptly so that the break/meal can be rescheduled. If the meal break cannot be rescheduled, the supervisor must ensure that the employee receives proper compensation. This meal break requirement can be waived if the employee and the supervisor agree to the waiver. A signed waiver form must be completed and on file in the employee's personnel file before the employee can work without taking a required meal break.

COMPENSATION

Employees of SIBCR are paid on a monthly basis. Each pay period is from the first day of the month to the last day of the month. Payday is the fifth day of each month for the prior month worked. If the fifth falls on a Saturday, payday will be the fourth day of the month and, if the fifth falls on a Sunday, payday will be the sixth day of the month. If a holiday falls within the first five days of the month the payday will be the sixth. Please see the schedule on the SIBCR website, www.sibcr.org.

If employees are hired in the last week of the month, they may be asked if SIBCR can pay them for that week in the following month's payroll. This allows Human Resources ample time to process the newly-hired employee's paperwork and enter the employee into the payroll program.

Paychecks will be issued by electronic transfer to the financial institution designated by the employee. The employee will be issued a paycheck directly from the SIBCR office pending initiation of the electronic transfer. Employees are required to provide necessary private bank account information to SIBCR administration within one week of employment in order to initiate actions in time for the second paycheck to be paid electronically.

Payroll Deductions: The law requires the following payroll deductions: FICA (Social Security and Medicare), Federal Income tax, and Industrial insurance (workers compensation).

Other deductions require the employee's authorization. Examples of such deductions include retirement plan contributions or deductions for a portion of any insurance premiums.

A leave and earnings statement for each pay period is mailed to the employee's home address along with any correspondence, and should be opened and reviewed upon receipt. It is the employee's responsibility to inform Human Resources if there are any errors in his or her (work or leave) hours or compensation.

Payroll Deductions for Exempt Employees

An Employee's exempt/nonexempt status will be determined upon employment. If an employee is unsure of his or her status, he or she should contact Human Resources. Exempt employees are paid a monthly salary. Being paid on a "salary basis" means an employee regularly receives a predetermined amount of compensation each pay period. The predetermined amount cannot be reduced because of variations in the quality or quantity of the employee's work. Subject to the exceptions listed below, an exempt employee must receive the full salary for any workweek in which the he or she works, regardless of the number of days or hours actually worked. Exempt employees do not need to be paid for any workweek in which they do not perform any 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.

Deductions from an exempt employee's pay are permissible 1) when an employee is absent from work for one or more full days for personal reasons, other than sickness or disability; 2) for absences of one or more full days due to sickness or disability or 3) for unpaid disciplinary suspensions for violation of safety rules of major significance. Also, the employer is not required to pay the full salary in 1) the initial or terminal week of employment, or 2) for weeks in which an exempt employee takes unpaid leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). In these circumstances, either partial day or full day deductions may be made.

It is SIBCR's policy to comply with the salary basis requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Therefore, SIBCR prohibits all managers from making any improper deductions from the salaries of exempt employees. Employees need to be aware of this policy and the fact the company does not allow deductions that violate the FLSA. If an employee believes that an improper deduction has been made to his or her salary, he or she should immediately report this information to the Executive Director or Human Resources. Reports of improper deductions will be promptly investigated. If it is determined that an improper deduction has occurred, the employee will be promptly reimbursed for any improper deduction(s) made.

Administrative Pay Corrections

In the event that there is an error in the amount of pay on an employee's paycheck, the employee should promptly bring the discrepancy to the attention of Human Resources. Errors will normally be corrected by the next paycheck based upon the situation. If an error has occurred and an overage has been applied to the employee's compensation, a repayment schedule will be arranged with the employee based upon the situation.

Overtime

Occasionally some overtime may be required. Working assigned overtime is an important part of each nonexempt employee's responsibilities.

Any overtime work must be authorized by the employee's supervisor in advance, unless in the case of emergency. The performance of unauthorized overtime may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

The overtime rate is one and one-half times the regular rate of pay for all hours actually worked over 40 hours in one workweek. Vacation and sick leave hours are not included as hours worked for the purpose of determining overtime.

All overtime must be calculated prior to supervisor's signing the time sheet and before turning the time sheet into SIBCR.

Exempt employees are expected to work whatever hours are necessary to complete their work. They do not receive overtime compensation.

Compensatory Time Off

As SIBCR is a private corporation, it is precluded by federal and state law from utilizing “comp” time in lieu of overtime payment for hours worked over 40 hours in a workweek. Nonexempt employees who wish to miss scheduled work as a result of personal obligations may request the opportunity to make up the amount of time missed by working on another day or days within the same workweek only. Such requests should be directed to the employee’s supervisor. In order to qualify, the make-up time must not cause the employee to exceed 40 hours in the workweek.

Time Reporting

The employee is responsible for maintaining accurate and complete records of all hours worked and all leave. Each nonexempt employee must fill out and sign a time sheet for the **actual** hours worked and leave taken, and submit it with a valid signature of the SIBCR member or supervisor. Falsification of timesheet(s) may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Off-the-clock work (work done with out reporting the time on your time sheet) is prohibited and can lead to disciplinary action. No manager may require a nonexempt employee to work outside his or her reported hours. Any violations must be reported immediately to Human Resources or the Executive Director.

Exempt employees are required to record absences due to illness, injury, vacation or holidays on the Exempt time sheet.

Time sheets are due on the last working day of each month. The timesheet due-date schedule and blank time sheets are available on the SIBCR website, www.sibcr.org.

EMPLOYEES ARE REQUIRED TO SUBMIT THEIR TIMESHEETS BY THE END OF EACH MONTH. IF A TIME SHEET IS SUBMITTED AFTER THE END OF THE MONTH SIBCR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO PAY THE EMPLOYEE WITH PAYROLL THE FOLLOWING MONTH.

Performance and Compensation Reviews

SIBCR sends notices to supervisors near the anniversary date of each employee who has not received a raise in the proceeding 12 months, and encourages compensation reviews at that time. All performance reviews are based on merit, achievement and job description fulfillment.

Bonus Pay

Supervisors may on occasion request that a bonus be paid to an employee who has exceeded expectations, persevered through difficult times, or is otherwise deserving of an excellence award. Bonus pay is an exceptional occurrence at SIBCR and should not be expected by the employee nor promised by a supervisor.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

Equal Employment Opportunity

SIBCR is an equal opportunity employer. Every employee has the right to work in surroundings that are free from all forms of unlawful discrimination. SIBCR will not engage in nor tolerate unlawful discrimination on any basis prohibited by local, state or federal law. Specifically, SIBCR does not discriminate against any person in any matter of employment on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, physical or mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation, military or veteran status or status as a disabled veteran or a veteran of the Vietnam era.

This policy applies to staff of all levels within the organization and includes (but is not limited to) the following: (1) recruiting and soliciting for employment; (2) hiring, placement, promotion, transfer, and demotion; (3) employment training or selection for training; (4) pay rates, compensation, and benefits; and (5) termination. All selection methods and criteria shall be based on job-related criteria and individual merit.

SIBCR encourages men and women of minority status to apply for positions at all scientific and administrative levels.

Employees should speak to either the Executive Director or Human Resources if he or she has any related questions, complaints or comments on this policy.

SIBCR recognizes that employees with physical or mental conditions which significantly limit their major life activities may need reasonable accommodations to enable them to perform their essential job functions. Any employee who believes he or she needs reasonable accommodation should notify Human Resources. Although the need for accommodations is determined on a case-by-case basis, generally SIBCR and the employee engage in an interactive process with the employee's healthcare provider(s). The employee has an obligation to cooperate with SIBCR in this process, which may include authorizing SIBCR to communicate with the employee's healthcare providers concerning the employee's condition, its limitations, and possible reasonable accommodations.

Domestic Partner Statement and Policy

SIBCR seeks to promote acceptance of diversity in all its dimensions. In light of this goal, the benefits provided to domestic partners, as much as possible, are the same benefits as provided to spouses of legally married employees.

Registration of a domestic partnership is not required in order for the employee to be able to take advantage of this policy's provisions, with the exception of insurance benefits, including medical, dental and vision.

Domestic partners are persons who:

- Are at least 18 years of age.
- Are competent to contract at the time the domestic partnership statement is completed.
- Are not legally married to or legally separated from any person.
- Are not related in any way that would prohibit marriage in Washington State.
- Have been each other's sole domestic partner for the past six months and intend to remain so indefinitely.
- Are engaged in a committed relationship of mutual caring and support and are jointly responsible for their common welfare and living expenses.
- Share permanent residence.

Completion of an Affidavit of Domestic Partnership (ADP) will be required for coverage under the group medical, dental, and vision insurance benefits. Please see Human Resources for information and the ADP form.

Upon receipt of a properly completed ADP form, SIBCR will consider the partnership registered as of the date on the signature on the form. Children of domestic partners are eligible for benefits under the same conditions as are the children of employees' legal spouses.

Enrollment of domestic partners and eligible dependent children is subject to the same rules as enrollment of other dependents.

Under the current medical, dental, and vision plans, domestic partners and their enrolled dependents receive the same or equivalent benefits as spouses and their enrolled dependents receive for group continuation health coverage through the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) and/or individual conversion.

An employee may terminate a domestic partnership by notifying Human Resources in writing of the termination of the domestic partnership within 30 days of its termination. (The same guideline exists for married couples that divorce.) The employee must then wait six months from the date of the notice before registering another domestic partnership, except in either of the following cases:

- The employee is registering the same domestic partnership within 30 days of notification of the termination of that domestic partnership, or
- The employee's former domestic partnership was dissolved through the death of the employee's domestic partner.

The tax consequences of a domestic partnership are the responsibility of the employee, not the company. Under the Internal Revenue Code (IRC), an employee is not taxed on the value of benefits provided by an employer to an employee's spouse or dependent. However, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has ruled that a domestic partner does not qualify as a spouse. The value of benefits provided to an employee's domestic partner (and the domestic partner's eligible children, if any) is therefore considered part of the employee's taxable income, unless the employee's domestic partner qualifies as a dependent under Section 152 of the IRC.

SIBCR will treat the value of the benefits provided to the employee's domestic partner (and the domestic partner's eligible children, if any) as part of the employee's income and will withhold the taxes on the value of those benefits from the employee's paychecks. If the employee's domestic partner qualifies as a dependent under Section 125 of the IRC, the employee may file the proper documentation with the IRS and seek a refund for taxes withheld.

Some courts have recognized non-marriage relationships as the equivalent of marriage for the purpose of establishing and dividing community property. A declaration of common welfare, such as the registration of a domestic partnership, may therefore have legal implications.

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to Human Resources.

Sexual and Other Harassment

SIBCR expects all employees to accomplish their work in a professional and businesslike manner. Harassment of employees by fellow employees, supervisors or non-employees in the workplace is a form of unlawful discriminatory behavior and is not permitted regardless of working relationship. Specifically forbidden is harassment based on gender, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or engagement in protected activities, i.e., opposition to prohibited discrimination.

Harassment includes unsolicited remarks, gestures, or physical contact; display or circulation of written materials, e-mail or pictures derogatory to either gender or to racial, ethnic, or religious groups; or basing personnel decisions on an employee's response to sexually-oriented requests.

Sexual harassment is generally defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other visual, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct affects employment opportunities, term or conditions; or
- The conduct interferes with an employee's work or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment includes harassment based on another person's gender or harassment based upon pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. It also includes harassment of another employee of the same gender as the harasser.

Engaging in any act that discriminates against another employee because of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, creed, marital or veteran's status, age, the presence of a disability or any other basis prohibited by local, state, or federal laws will not be tolerated. Harassment and all other forms of discrimination are improper and illegal and are grounds for disciplinary action up to and including immediate dismissal.

Every employee is responsible for supporting and adhering to this policy. Employees should never tolerate inappropriate behavior, toward themselves or others. Reports of offending behavior must be made to one's supervisor, manager or to Human Resources. Employees are not to wait for the harassment to become severe or pervasive before making a report.

All employees' concerns will be investigated promptly and employees will not suffer retaliation for reporting them. SIBCR will protect the confidentiality of any complainant to the extent possible. It is important to SIBCR that all claims of discrimination or harassment be thoroughly reviewed and investigated so appropriate steps are taken. If an SIBCR employee is found to have committed harassment, discipline, up to and including termination, may be imposed. The severity of the punishment will depend on the nature of the situation and the number of occurrences.

No action will be taken against any employee who in good faith files a complaint of harassment or assists in the investigation of such complaint. Employees who believe they have been retaliated against for having reported incidents of harassment or for having participated in an investigation must promptly notify any manager, Human Resources or the Executive Director so their concerns can be investigated. Appropriate corrective measures will be taken if allegations of retaliation are substantiated.

An SIBCR employee working as a WOC (Without Compensation) at VAPSHCS will receive Equal Opportunity Employer (EEO) and Prevention of Sexual Harassment training during VAPSHCS new employee orientation and every year after in the required MARS training.

Whistleblowers Policy & Guidelines for Reporting Improper Activity

SIBCR does not condone any activity that is illegal or improper, whether by a Board Member, the Executive Director, any SIBCR member or employee. SIBCR encourages its employees to report any suspected or actual illegal or improper activity.

Behavior that falls into the category of illegal or improper conduct includes: fraud, theft, safety violations, improper use of authority, gross waste of funds, harassment, or retaliation. If an employee in good faith believes that an improper or illegal action or event has occurred, he or she should report the incident to Human Resources. If Human Resources is involved, the employee should report the incident to the Executive Director or President of the Board of Directors. If an employee is unsure who the current President is he or she may refer to www.sibcr.org.

SIBCR will strive to keep a whistleblower's identity confidential, but this cannot be guaranteed. An employee may be called as a witness in any criminal investigation. SIBCR will seek to protect the employee from any retaliation. Any employee who feels that adverse action has been taken toward him or her due to a report of improper activity should report it as soon as possible in writing to the Executive Director or the President of the Board.

SIBCR supports the conscientious reporting of improper activity. If it is determined that a report was made maliciously or for personal gain, the offending employee may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination from employment.

Personnel Records

Personnel records, including medical information about an employee, are confidential. Access will be limited only to those who have a justified need to access the information. Although SIBCR will maintain personnel records as confidential, employees may discuss their wages, benefits, or other terms and conditions of employment with other employees or third parties at their choosing. Under some circumstances, SIBCR may be required to provide personnel records under federal or state law, or in response to a court order.

Employees may review their personnel records at a mutually convenient time during business hours and may add additional items to the file. Any concerns regarding the completeness or accuracy of the information contained in an employee's personnel file should be discussed with his or her supervisor or Human Resources.

When a current employee needs SIBCR to verify employment (such as for a loan approval), the employee should advise Human Resources of the need at the earliest opportunity so that Human Resources can verify the authorization to release employment information.

SIBCR also reserves the right to provide references regarding former employees.

Personal Information

Employees are responsible to notify Human Resources of any personal changes, including but not limited to addresses, telephone numbers, number of dependents, change in marital status or other personal information so that SIBCR may keep personnel records accurate and up-to-date and so that we can communicate with employees as needed.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Standards of Conduct and Discipline

SIBCR expects each employee to demonstrate integrity and to contribute to the quality and reliability of the Institute within the scope of his or her job responsibilities. SIBCR also expects each employee to comply with the guidelines as set forth in this Handbook as well as any other policies or procedures communicated to the employee, including those of VAPSHCS that apply to WOCs. Failure to meet these standards of performance may be the basis for negative or delayed adjustment in compensation and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment with SIBCR.

SIBCR will take action appropriate to the seriousness of the situation and the circumstances. Disciplinary measures less than termination may take the form of an oral warning, a written warning, probation, or suspension. Which of these options is chosen, or whether any of them is used prior to termination, will depend on the situation. The evaluation of the facts will be made by supervisors in consultation with the Executive Director where appropriate. Nothing in this policy alters the employee's at-will employment relationship with SIBCR or changes the fundamental right of either SIBCR or the employee to terminate employment at any time, with or without cause, with or without notice.

Standards of Ethical Conduct and Conflict of Interest

Per Title 38, U.S.C. §7366(c), employees of VA nonprofit corporations are subject to federal laws and regulations applicable to federal employees with respect to conflicts of interest in the performance of official functions. They are also required to certify awareness of these laws and regulations. Copies of the conflict of interest statute [18 U.S.C. §208] and regulations [5 C.F.R. 2635 Subpart D] are given to you at the time of your hire. If you need another copy please contact Human Resources.

We expect employees to avoid situations that might cause their personal interests to conflict with the interests of SIBCR or to compromise its reputation or integrity. A conflict of interest, or the appearance of one, occurs when an employee or a member of his or her immediate family uses the employee's position with SIBCR for personal benefit through an investment, association, or business relationship that interferes with the employee's ability to exercise independent judgment on SIBCR's behalf.

Employees are discouraged from accepting meals or other gifts of more than a nominal value from salespeople, vendors, suppliers, or any other solicitors.

Attendance and Tardiness

Regular attendance is essential to job performance. If an employee is unable to report to work or will be late, he or she must let his or her supervisor know as soon as possible, and always before his or her scheduled starting time. If the supervisor is unavailable, the employee should leave a message on voice mail, stating the reason for being late or absent and a telephone number where he or she may be reached.

If the employee's absence or tardiness is due to an emergency, he or she is to call in as soon as possible, or have someone call in for him or her.

If an employee fails to report to work for three consecutive days without notification to his or her supervisor, he or she will be deemed to have voluntarily resigned his or her position.

Attendance or tardiness problems, including failure to call in, may result in discipline up to and including termination.

Confidential Information

SIBCR employees will at some time or another come to possess or have access to confidential, sensitive, or protected information. This may include research data, patient identifiers, research results, access to VA computer records or databases or third party's proprietary information, such as research protocols. It is the employee's responsibility to keep this information confidential even if he or she is no longer employed at SIBCR.

Employees are to remember to keep all confidential information secure; this includes locking computers before leaving the workstation, properly disposing all unneeded documents that contain confidential information, and keeping file cabinets locked.

An employee who improperly discloses confidential information will be disciplined up to and including termination and may expose himself or herself to legal action. If inquiries are made from outside SIBCR/VAPSHCS, employees should direct all questions to the VAPSHCS Public Relations Officer.

Smoking

Smoking by employees is permitted only during break or meal periods and only in outdoor areas designated by VAPSHCS.

Inventions

All SIBCR employees as WOC appointees of VAPSHCS are required to sign the VAPSHCS Intellectual Property agreement and abide by the requirement stated therein. If an employee discloses to VAPSHCS a possible invention, they must also disclose that possible invention to the Executive Director of SIBCR. For any questions on this policy please talk to the Executive Director of SIBCR or the R&D Administrative Officer.

External Communications

Employees occasionally may be contacted by outside third parties, including the media and attorneys, with requests for information about SIBCR or VAPSHCS. Employees contacted by an outside third party should immediately refer the outside third party to the Executive Director or the VAPSHCS Public Relations Officer. Employees should not provide any information concerning SIBCR or the projects supported by SIBCR unless authorized to do so by the Executive Director. This does not preclude an employee from discussing his or her personal employment terms and conditions with outside third parties if the employee so chooses.

Electronic Communications

The following are some general principles to be applied to the use of all electronic media and services used in the course of employment with SIBCR, regardless of the owner of the electronic equipment used.

Employees may not use electronic media in any way that may be seen as insulting, harassing or offensive by other persons. Employees should not use email for gossip, including personal information, for forwarding messages under circumstances likely to embarrass the sender or for emotional responses to business correspondence or work situations. Using electronic systems for any purpose which is illegal, against company policy or contrary to SIBCR's interest may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employees must follow the policies of the institution which owns and supports the electronic services they use.

Although each employee has an individual password to access these electronic systems, the employee does not own any of the email or information stored on these systems. The electronic systems may be owned completely or in part by SIBCR, UW or VAPSHCS. SIBCR reserves the right, in its discretion and without permission, to review any electronic files, email messages and internet usage to the extent necessary to ensure that electronic systems are being used in compliance with the law and with policies. SIBCR respects the individual privacy of its employees. However, employee privacy does not extend to the employee's work-related conduct or to the use of equipment provided in the course of his or her SIBCR employment.

Alcohol and Drug Abuse

Abuse of alcohol or any other drug is a serious threat to both personal health and job performance. Employees are strictly prohibited from manufacturing, possessing, selling, consuming or being under any influence of alcohol and illegal drugs (and legal drugs that are not used in a manner consistent with accepted frequency or dosage requirements) while on the job. Violators are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Employees should determine with their physician or pharmacist whether any prescription

drugs prescribed might impair their ability to perform their jobs safely and effectively. If your performance might be so impaired, you should not report to work. You should discuss the issue with your supervisor to determine whether some accommodation may allow you to perform the essential functions of the position safely and effectively.

Any employee convicted of a violation of a criminal drug statute which occurred in the workplace must notify his or her supervisor and the Executive Director of SIBCR in writing within five days of the conviction. SIBCR is then required by law to notify all federal agencies providing funds to SIBCR of the infraction within 10 days after receiving notice from an employee.

In support of this policy, information is available in the SIBCR office regarding the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace and information about recognizing and obtaining treatment for chemical dependency problems.

EMPLOYEE SEPARATION

Termination

In order to maintain the staffing flexibility that is essential to the successful management of SIBCR, as well as to protect the options of each employee, it is understood that the employment relationship with us is "at will." It can be terminated, with or without cause, at any time by either employer or employee. The provision of benefits does not constitute a promise that employment will last one year or longer. No agreement inconsistent with this policy is valid, unless it is in writing and signed by the Executive Director. The Employment Request form does not constitute an exception to the at-will policy.

An employee who is leaving will be informed of any rights to continued benefits coverage, and will receive the pertinent information by mail. The employee's final paycheck will be distributed on the next scheduled SIBCR payday. The employee must turn in all keys, swipe cards, badge, FlexPass, lab coats and laundry card and other property of SIBCR or VAPSHCS prior to their departure. Please see SIBCR for the Termination Checklist.

Voluntary Resignation: If an employee voluntarily terminates his or her employment, as a courtesy he or she is asked to give at least two weeks notice to his or her supervisor and Human Resources stating the reason for the resignation.

Final Pay upon Termination

The employee's final paycheck will be issued at the next regularly scheduled SIBCR pay date. Accrued annual leave will be paid out at this time. The employee should note on his or her timesheet that he or she is terminating employment with SIBCR.

Exit Interviews

If an employee separates from SIBCR employment, his or her supervisor and/or SIBCR may choose to conduct an exit interview. The topics of an exit interview may include:

- reviewing the reasons for the termination, layoff, or resignation; and
- reviewing financial arrangements, including the amount of the employee's final paycheck, accrued vacation, and similar items.

References

Human Resources will confirm dates of employment, positions held, and final rate of pay. Additional information may be shared with prospective employers on a case-by-case basis. Former employees can facilitate the sharing of additional information by signing authorizations to release information to their prospective employers. SIBCR reserves the right to share information concerning former employees whenever it determines the requester has a legitimate need to know information about a former employee.

EMPLOYEE SERVICES

Communications

As an employer, SIBCR strives to keep its employees well informed. This can be accomplished when the employee keeps SIBCR up-to-date on his or her address, preferred email address and telephone number. It is important that the employee read all memos and announcements from SIBCR to stay informed.

Email is often used for rapid dissemination of information. Some notices of personnel and other issues are mailed with the Leave and Earnings Statements to the employee's home address each pay period. Bulletin boards are located in the SIBCR office to keep employees informed of various items of interest; they are used to communicate announcements and information required by law and other official postings.

Facilities

Employee Parking: VAPSHCS assigns all employees who drive to work a parking decal, which must be displayed on their vehicles while they are parked on VA property. Employee parking spaces are provided in the parking lot. Parking for employees in these parking spaces is on a first-come, first-served basis. Spaces reserved for patients, carpools, disabled employees and visitors are to be honored. Employees are urged to lock their cars while parked. SIBCR does not assume responsibility for vehicles or their contents in these parking areas.

Personal Mail: Employees may not use SIBCR's name, address, envelopes, or letterhead for personal correspondence; this includes correspondence of a political nature.

Personal Possessions: SIBCR does not assume responsibility for any theft of or damage to the personal belongings of employees. Office doors should be locked when a room is unoccupied. SIBCR reserves the right to search an employee's desk, locker, work space or personal belongings brought onto VAPSHCS at any time

Long Distance Phone Calls: To place work-related long distance phone calls employees must obtain a PIN from the VAPSHCS R&D Administrative Office.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

Safety

SIBCR operates within the VAPSHCS facilities. VAPSHCS provides a clean, healthy, safe environment in which to work in accordance with the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970. Employee safety depends on the safety consciousness of everyone. As SIBCR employees and VAPSHCS WOC appointees, employees are expected to take an active part in maintaining this environment. Always observe the special safety rules applicable in your work area, adhere to all safety instructions provided by your supervisor and use safety equipment where required. Each employee working in a laboratory will have available the R&D Laboratory Safety Manual and Radiation Safety Plan. Each employee should be aware of and have read the plan. All SIBCR employees are required to attend the annual safety meeting and other mandatory trainings.

Your work place should be kept neat, clean and orderly. It is your responsibility to learn the location of all safety and emergency equipment, as well as the appropriate safety contact phone numbers.

All safety equipment will be provided by SIBCR or VAPSHCS, and employees will be responsible for the reasonable upkeep of this equipment. Any problems or defects in equipment should be reported immediately to the R&D Safety Officer.

For further safety procedures and requirements, please refer to the R&D Lab Safety Manual Copies are available in each laboratory and from R&D Administration.

No minors (under 18) are allowed in the laboratories of VAPSHCS. This includes: the 6th and 7th floors of Building 1, Buildings 8, 11, 13, 23, and 34 at the Seattle Division and Buildings 18N, 18S, 72 at the American Lake Division, and any other space that is designated a laboratory.

SIBCR employees have a duty to comply with the safety rules of VAPSHCS as follows:

- assist in maintaining the hazard-free environment,
- report any accidents or injuries - including any breaches of safety,
- and report any unsafe equipment, working condition, process or procedure, at once to their supervisors.

Employees may report safety violations or injuries anonymously to the R&D Safety Officer, if they are not the injured or violating party. **NO EMPLOYEE WILL BE PUNISHED OR REPRIMANDED FOR REPORTING SAFETY VIOLATIONS OR HAZARDS.** Any deliberate or ongoing safety violation, or creation of hazard, by an employee will be dealt with through disciplinary action by SIBCR, up to and including termination.

Accidents and Accident Reports

An employee must notify his or her supervisor immediately if he or she is injured on the job. It is the supervisor's responsibility to help evaluate the situation and assist in obtaining appropriate medical assistance, should that be necessary.

Employees of SIBCR are insured under SIBCR's Washington State Industrial Insurance (L&I). This insurance covers medical expenses and lost pay in cases of accidental injury or occupational illness on the job. In order to file for benefits employees must complete the appropriate L&I claim forms. These forms can be obtained from the employee's health care provider, who will initiate the claims process upon request. Employees must bring the completed forms back to the SIBCR Human Resources Manager for approval. The Washington State Labor and Industries claims manager can be contacted with any questions regarding claims.

As soon as practical, but in no case later than 24 hours following an injury or suspected injury, an employee must also complete a VAPSHCS accident report (available in paper format in the SIBCR office), describing the circumstances surrounding the incident. Failure to report the accident to SIBCR may result in a claim denial. Reporting an injury to SIBCR will permit better assistance with obtaining insurance benefits for the employee if he or she qualifies for them. The accident report form is an internal requirement of working at a VAPSHCS facility, and does not register a claim for L&I compensation.

Snow / Inclement Weather

In the case of snow or other inclement weather SIBCR will follow the closure decisions of VAPSHCS. Employees should monitor radio and/or television broadcasts to find out if VAPSHCS will be closed for all but essential personnel and should use their best judgment in deciding whether to come to work or not; employees are urged not to put themselves at risk. Employees are to call their supervisor or the SIBCR office to confirm or leave a message regarding their absence. Absence due to weather may be paid or unpaid, depending on the circumstances. SIBCR will send out an email regarding any authorized absences. Any questions on reporting weather-related absences on timesheets should be directed to Human Resources.

BENEFITS

Group Health Plans

Medical, dental and vision insurance are available through SIBCR's group benefit plans. Beginning the first day of the month following hire date, eligible employees can elect to participate in the Institute's medical, dental and vision insurance program. Eligibility for participation in SIBCR's group benefit plans is based on a normal schedule of 20 hours or more per week, expected to continue for one year or more. There will be a designated deduction for health insurance as the employee contribution. Human Resources may be contacted for more information. Coverage for dependents will be paid 75% by SIBCR and 25% by the covered employee. The employee's signature on the enrollment forms constitutes authorization for any payroll deduction. Cost breakdowns for insurance premiums are available from the SIBCR office.

SIBCR intends to continue its group benefit plans indefinitely, but reserves the right to amend or even discontinue all or some of them at any time, subject to applicable laws and regulations. If a plan is terminated and not replaced with comparable benefits, participants will be notified. Please remember that actual benefits provided, as well as eligibility requirements, are determined by the plan documents. For information on these, consult the applicable benefits booklet or contact Human Resources.

Section 125 Plan

SIBCR has a Premium Only Plan, which allows its employees to pay for portions of the Group Insurance Premiums with pre-tax dollars.

If an employee enrolls dependents, his or her portion of the Group Insurance Premiums will be deducted through Payroll. SIBCR will automatically code the deduction to take advantage of the Premium Only Plan, and the deduction will be reflected in the employee's first paycheck. If an employee does not wish to take advantage of this plan he or she will have until the end of his or her first month of employment to submit a waiver form to SIBCR.

Flexible Spending Accounts for Dependent Care and Medical Expenses

SIBCR offers Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs) which give employees significant tax advantages in that they can pay for medical, dental, vision, and child care expenses on a pretax basis. These accounts save employees money on Federal Income taxes and Social Security taxes.

FSA programs allow employees to set aside a certain amount of pre-tax dollars through payroll deductions. The deducted funds go into a health-care spending account and/or a dependent-care account, allowing employees to pay for child care expenses for children under the age of 13. Daycare for disabled adults can also be covered under the dependent care program.

The maximum annual amount of deduction for the Health FSA is \$3,000 and the maximum for the Daycare FSA is \$5,000. An employee can contribute anything from \$120 per year (\$10/month) up to the maximum. These programs start every year on October 1 or six months after employment for new hires.

Once enrolled in the FSA, an employee is not allowed (by the IRS) to make corrections to the contributions agreed upon for payroll deductions unless there is a change in status for the current year. Employees should be conservative in estimating expenses. Any money not used within the year will not be returned to the employee. Employees should contact Human Resources if they would like to know if circumstances qualify as a change in status.

Insurance Coverage after Termination

Under the COBRA regulations, upon termination from SIBCR for any reason other than gross misconduct, an employee may elect to continue group medical, dental and vision coverage at group rates as long as the employee pays the required monthly premium. It is also possible to convert other group plans to individual plans. More detailed information is provided in the COBRA Information Memo given to employees with the benefit plans information packet at the beginning of benefit eligibility. Details on the conversion of any benefits will be sent to each employee by mail at the time of his or her separation. The employee may, of course, request information on this subject at any time prior to actual termination.

Retirement Plan

Eligibility requirements for participation in the Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association, College Retirement Equities Fund (TIAA-CREF) Group Retirement Annuity (GRA) plan are discussed in the Summary Plan Description, which is available on the SIBCR website (www.sibcr.org) or in the SIBCR office. Generally, eligibility is based on a regular full- or part-time appointment expected to exceed 1,000 hours per year. The employee may participate in the retirement plan at the beginning of the seventh month of employment, at which time he or she will automatically be enrolled in the GRA plan. The employee will be enrolled in the plan the first pay period following the completion of his or her six-month waiting period. Employees transferring to SIBCR from the University of Washington, VA Puget Sound Health Care System or 501(c)(3) institutions can satisfy the waiting period with service at the prior institution.

When an eligible employee is enrolled in the retirement plan, an amount equal to 5% of his or her gross monthly wages or salary will be paid by SIBCR into the plan each month. The employee can choose to contribute up to 2.5% of his or her gross pay to the plan and that amount will be matched by SIBCR. The maximum combined amount contributed by the employer and employee to the retirement plan is therefore equal to 10% of the gross monthly pay (2.5% employee pay reduction plus 7.5% SIBCR contribution and match). A signed wage and salary reduction plan is required for employee contributions and the SIBCR match. This reduction plan must be submitted to SIBCR in the month prior to the effective date of the requested change.

Because TIAA-CREF is the administrator of the GRA plan, it is funded through the TIAA-

CREF money market account. An employee may choose among other investment options with TIAA-CREF, and SIBCR recommends diversification of funds. The employee will receive an introduction letter with more detailed information from TIAA-CREF once a contribution has been made to the plan. He or she will also receive an Enrollment/Designation of Beneficiary form at this time. In the event that he or she does not select a beneficiary, his or her beneficiary will default to his or her estate.

Any employee may participate in a tax-deferred annuity plan: the TIAA-CREF Supplemental Retirement Annuity (SRA) plan. The SRA plan is strictly an employee contribution, and no employer contribution is made. The SRA plan does not have a waiting period.

Disability Insurance

Short- and long-term disability policies are provided to employees working at least 30 hours per week on an appointment expected to last one year or longer. Disability insurance premiums are paid by SIBCR.

Life Insurance

Each employee working at least 30 hours per week is insured for \$50,000 worth of group term life and accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D) insurance. Premiums for this insurance are paid by SIBCR.

In addition, SIBCR offers voluntary life insurance benefits for employees who work 20 hours a week or more. For this insurance, the premium will be paid by the employee who may purchase from \$20,000 to \$300,000 of life insurance for self coverage, not to exceed five times the annual salary. Coverage may also be purchased for a spouse and children. Full details are available from Human Resources.

Unemployment and Workers' Compensation Insurance

SIBCR pays a tax based on employee wages to Washington State's Workers Compensation and Unemployment Compensation Systems (WCUCS). Eligibility for such benefits is determined by the State or, in some cases, by designated administrators applying applicable law.

It is the employee's right and responsibility to file a claim for a determination under the WCUCS. SIBCR will not retaliate against any employee for filing a workers' compensation claim (regardless of whether the claim is granted) or for participating in a workers' compensation proceeding.

Metro Transit Flex Pass

SIBCR offers the Seattle Metro FlexPass program to eligible employees. This benefit program provides unlimited, free-of-charge use of Metro and Sound Transit buses or trains, and subsidizes vanpool and vanship costs. SIBCR employees on VAPSHCS

Seattle campus with an appointment that is expected to last six months or more are eligible for this benefit.

FlexPass provides users an unlimited number of rides, at any time, in all zones. This applies only to regularly scheduled services and routes.

FlexPass contributes \$65/month toward the cost of a Metro Transit vanpool fare (including gas, insurance, and maintenance fees). Alternately, a vanshare can help you get between your home and a station, terminal, or park-and-ride lot. FlexPass covers the monthly vanshare fee, while riders share gas costs. Three people are needed to begin a vanshare.

For eligible employees who commute by FlexPass and miss their ride home (e.g., having to work late unexpectedly, an emergency requiring them to leave early), FlexPass covers up to 8 taxi trips yearly (excluding tips, maximum 60 miles one-way). **Home Free rides must be pre-approved by the SIBCR office.**

TIME OFF

Holidays

SIBCR observes the following paid holidays. Part-time employees receive pay only for those holidays falling on work days in their scheduled tour of duty, and only for the number of hours which they would have been scheduled to work had the holiday not fallen on that date. Intermittent employees and those who work an unscheduled number of hours per week or month do not receive holiday pay.

New Year's Day	Labor Day
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	Columbus Day
Presidents' Day	Veterans Day
Memorial Day	Thanksgiving Day
Independence Day	Christmas Day

If a holiday falls on a Saturday, the preceding Friday will be recognized as the holiday. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday will be recognized as the holiday. The SIBCR-observed holidays are consistent with the VAPSHCS holiday calendar.

In order to receive holiday pay, employees must:

1. Have worked the last scheduled workday before and the first scheduled workday after the holiday, unless on approved absence (which includes annual and sick leave); and
2. Normally be scheduled to work on the day in question if it were not a holiday.

If a holiday falls during an employees chosen vacation time, the holiday will not be considered a day of his or her paid annual leave. Only the non-holiday period will be charged to annual leave. A nonexempt employee who works on a holiday is paid for the hours worked as well as for the holiday.

Annual Leave (Vacation)

An employee is eligible for annual and sick leave if his or her regular appointment is more than 15 hours per week and is expected to continue for 12 months. Intermittent employees are not eligible for this benefit.

Annual leave accrual is as follows:

• 1 - 3 years	1 hour for every 20 worked =	13 days/year @FT
• >3 - 11 years	1 hour for every 13 worked =	20 days/year @FT
• >11 - 15 years	1 hour for every 11.25 worked =	23 days/year @FT
• >15 years	1 hour per every 10 worked =	26 days/year @FT

Employees who transfer from University of Washington (UW) or VAPSHCS to SIBCR will have their service time credited toward SIBCR annual leave accruals. For example: an employee with five years of service at UW will start accruing annual leave at the rate of

one hour for every 13 hours worked at the start of employment with SIBCR (the > 3-11-year rate.) This employee would move to the > 15-year rate after 10 years of service with SIBCR.

The employee should get supervisor approval one week prior to the beginning of proposed annual leave. However, supervisors may grant leave with shorter notice in some circumstances. Supervisors may consider workplace coverage in approving leave.

An employee may use accrued but unused annual leave to care for his/her spouse, child, parent, parent-in-law or grandparent with a serious health condition or emergency condition, consistent with the Washington Family Care Act.

The maximum annual leave carry-over at December 31st of each year is 160 hours. An employee may, before the end of the year, submit a written request approved by his or her supervisor explaining the need to carry over and a plan to use the leave in excess of 160 hours. Employees who terminate after at least six (6) months of employment are paid up to 160 hours of unused accrued annual leave upon termination.

Although employees begin accruing annual leave from their first work day, annual leave may not be used during the first 30 days of employment and unused annual leave will not be paid to employees terminating after less than six months of employment.

Exempt employees use annual leave in whole or half day increments. Nonexempt employees use annual leave in quarter-hour increments.

Sick Leave

Eligible (those whose regular appointment is more than 15 hours per week and is expected to continue for 12 months) employees will earn 1 hour paid sick leave for every 20 regular, holiday, sick or annual leave hours paid. Sick leave does not accrue on overtime or any period of unpaid time off.

A maximum of 240 hours sick leave may be accrued. If an employee who is at the maximum accrual of sick leave uses some of this leave, accrual will restart until the 240 hour cap is reached again. Unused sick leave benefits are not paid upon termination of employment.

Sick leave may be used for:

- Personal illness or injury
- Illness or injury of a family member
- Temporary medical disability (e.g., pregnancy or childbirth)
- Doctor and dentist appointments
- Any leave covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) as required by applicable state law

Sick leave use will normally be authorized by the supervisor for periods up to three days without the necessity of a note from a medical provider. For an absence of more than three days due to illness, the employee may be asked to confirm the illness with a supporting statement from a medical caregiver.

Generally, exempt employees use sick leave in full or half day increments. (FMLA allows for smaller increments for exempt employees.) Nonexempt employees use such leave in quarter-hour increments.

Bereavement Leave

An employee is permitted to use a reasonable amount of accrued sick or annual leave when an employee is absent due to the death a family member.

Domestic Violence Leave

Employees who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking (or their family members) may take reasonable or intermittent leave from work to take care of legal or law enforcement needs or obtain medical treatment, mental health counseling or social services assistance. Employees taking this leave may use any available paid time off (sick leave, annual leave, etc.) while on this leave. On request, the employee may be required to provide verification of the need for the leave. For the purposes of this policy, “family member” includes child, spouse, domestic partner, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, or person who the employee is dating.

Military Leave

Employees who are required to attend annual military reserve training or other active military duty are granted leave with regular pay for up to 15 working days per year. Leave for additional military service may be taken as regular vacation or as unpaid leave. Employees who take military leave are entitled to return to their jobs as provided under federal and state laws. Employees should bring the orders to the attention of their supervisor on the first working day after receiving the notice. A copy of the orders must be supplied to Human Resources.

As the laws regarding military leave depend on the length of the leave, please contact Human Resources for information on benefits available during and after military leave.

Leave for Spouses of Persons in Military Conflict

Any employee who works more than 20 hours per week and whose spouse is deployed or about to be deployed or is on leave from deployment in a military conflict declared by Congress or the President is entitled to up to fifteen (15) days of leave of absence per deployment. The leave is unpaid except that the employee can use his/her annual leave or sick leave at the same time. An employee wishing to take this leave must notify his/her supervisor within five business days of receiving official notice that the spouse is being deployed or will be on leave from deployment. Upon conclusion of the leave, the employee will return to his/her position unless the position was eliminated or the employee would otherwise have been terminated during the leave.

Jury Duty

Performance of jury duty is part of a person's responsibilities as a citizen. Unless job responsibilities require it, SIBCR will not ask or encourage an employee to request to be excused from or to ask for postponement of a call to jury duty. If a regular full- or part-time employee is required to perform jury duty, he or she will receive regular pay up to a maximum of 10 days. Exempt employees will continue to receive their regular salary for any time spent on a jury for the initial 10 days and any week in which they work for any amount of time. The employee will be expected to work his or her regular schedule on any day he or she is not required to be present in court.

In order to receive regular pay during jury duty, the employee must provide SIBCR with a letter or other confirmation from the court clerk indicating the time served.

Court Appearances

An employee may take annual leave to appear in court as a witness. He or she is responsible for notifying his or her supervisor immediately after receiving a summons to appear for a court appearance during scheduled work hours. A copy of this notice should be given to Human Resources with the timesheet for that month.

Voting

SIBCR encourages each employee to exercise the right to vote. In most situations, a person should be able to vote before or after work or by absentee ballot. If unable to vote during these times due to his or her work schedule, an employee may take up to two hours off work with pay to vote. He or she must request this time off in advance from his or her supervisor, and must have a valid reason why he or she cannot vote by absentee ballot or during non-working hours. The employee will be expected to take the time off at a time of the day that will require the least amount of time missed from work, usually at the beginning or end of the workday.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

An employee, who has worked for SIBCR at least 12 months, including at least 1,250 hours in the last twelve months, is entitled to 12 workweeks of unpaid leave in any 12-month period:

- to care for a newborn, a newly-adopted child or a newly-placed foster child,
- to care for a child, parent or spouse who has a serious health condition, or
- because of the employee's own serious health condition.

A "serious health condition" is an illness, impairment or condition that involves:

- inpatient care in a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility or continuing treatment by a health care provider,
- any period of incapacity of three or more consecutive days and continuing care by a medical provider, or
- any period of incapacity due to pregnancy, including prenatal care.

In addition to the leave described above, the employee may also be entitled to leave for the actual period of disability associated with pregnancy and childbirth.

Leave to care for a newborn, newly adopted child or newly placed foster child must be taken within 12 months of the birth, adoption or placement. If SIBCR employs both parents, they are together entitled to a total of 12 workweeks of unpaid leave between the two parents (not 12 weeks each).

If the need for the leave is foreseeable, employees must give written notice at least 30 days in advance of the anticipated date the leave is to begin, stating the reason for the leave and the dates during which the leave is to be taken. If the need for the leave is not foreseeable, the employee must give notice as soon as possible after the need for the leave is known. Health care provider certifications/recertifications, as well as second/third opinions and fitness for duty reports/releases may be required in accordance with the FMLA regulations.

Upon returning from the leave, an employee is entitled to return to the same position held when the leave began or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits and pay, unless the position would have been eliminated had the employee not been on leave. Additionally, an employee on leave is not immune from discipline, up to and including termination, if information is uncovered during the leave which would have normally resulted in discipline had the employee been actively working.

The employee must use any other accumulated leave, paid or unpaid, to which he or she is otherwise entitled while on this leave. (For maternity disability leave, employees are only required to use sick leave.) After the paid annual and sick leave is used the rest of the leave taken under FMLA is unpaid. If leave pursuant to this policy would also qualify as leave under any other benefit or policy, the period of the leave will apply toward the entitlement for each type of leave that may apply.

By taking the leave, the employee will not lose any benefits that accrued before the start of the leave. The employee will not be entitled to accrue further benefits during periods of unpaid leave. SIBCR will maintain its contributions to the employee's health insurance premiums during the leave, whether it is paid or unpaid. The employee will be required to continue paying his or her share of the premiums for the employee and his or her dependents, if applicable. The employee will also be required to arrange in advance self-payment of other group insurance benefits, if applicable. If the employee does not return at the end of the leave, the employee may be required to repay the SIBCR for the health insurance premiums paid by the institution during the leave.

This policy will be administered according to the Family and Medical Leave Act and the regulations interpreting it and any applicable state law.

Employees should contact Human Resources with questions about eligibility for leave or other leave benefits that may be available.

Servicemember Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) now entitles employees to take leave for a covered family member's service in the Armed Forces ("Servicemember FMLA"). This policy supplements our FMLA policy and provides general notice of employee rights to such leave. Except as mentioned below, an employee's rights and obligations to Servicemember FMLA Leave are governed by our existing FMLA policy.

Leave entitlement

Servicemember FMLA provides eligible employees unpaid leave for any one, or for a combination, of the following reasons:

- A "qualifying exigency" arising out of a spouse, son, daughter or parent's active duty or call to active duty in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency operation; and/or
- To care for a spouse, child, parent or other relative for whom the employee is the next of kin who is a member of the Armed Forces, including the National Guard or Reserves, who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability list for a serious injury or illness.

Duration of Servicemember FLMA

- When leave is due to a "qualifying exigency": An eligible employee may take up to 12 workweeks of leave during any 12-month period.
- When leave is to care for an injured or ill servicemember: An eligible employee may take up to 26 workweeks of leave during a single 12-month period to care for the servicemember. Leave to care for an injured or ill servicemember, when combined with other FLMA-qualifying leave, may not exceed 26 weeks in a single 12-month period.
- Servicemember FLMA runs concurrent with other leave entitlements provided under federal, state and local law.

Any questions regarding Servicemember FMLA leave should be directed to Human Resources.

Requesting Family and/or Medical Leave

- Request must be in writing 30 days before the leave is to begin; if such notice is not feasible, then as soon as possible. The dates of leave must be included in the notice.
- If the employee makes contributions to the group benefit plan, arrangements to continue making contributions must be made before the leave begins.
- FMLA and paid leave run concurrently, not in addition to one another (i.e., taking vacation and sick leave at the beginning of FMLA leave does not extend the 12 weeks of FMLA leave by the length of the vacation/sick leave).

- Employees are required to take all accrued sick leave and all accrued annual leave (except in the case of pregnancy) during FMLA leave.
- During leave for the birth or placement for foster care of a child, the employee must notify SIBCR if he or she intends to take additional leave allowed under Washington State law.
- FMLA leave may be taken intermittently under some circumstances. This will be determined on a case-by-case basis, relative to the employee's normal workweek. This must be arranged with the administrative staff at SIBCR.

SIBCR will not retaliate against any employee for requesting Family Medical Leave regardless of whether or not the leave is granted.

Maternity/Parental Leave

Employees are entitled to leave for the actual period of disability associated with pregnancy and childbirth. If the employee is eligible for family leave under the FMLA, described above, FMLA leave will run concurrent with the period of maternity disability. Once the maternity disability period has concluded, an eligible employee may take up to twelve weeks of unpaid leave under the Washington Parental Leave law. The leave is unpaid unless the employee has available sick and/or annual leave. Sick leave must be used during this leave. This policy will be administered according to the federal FMLA and the regulations interpreting it and any applicable state law. Employees should contact Human Resources with questions about these benefits.

Other Unpaid Leaves of Absence:

SIBCR, in its sole discretion, may grant unpaid leaves of absence to an employee based on staffing needs, the employee's work record and the reason for the requested leave. In general, all annual and sick leave must be used before unpaid leave will be authorized. Unpaid leave of absence for reasons other than those covered under FMLA may be granted under certain conditions, for a specified period of time.

A personal leave of absence must be requested in writing and submitted to the employee's supervisor and Human Resources as soon as the need for such leave is known. Requests for personal leave will be evaluated based on the employee's work record, his or her department's staffing needs, and the reason for the request. Circumstances will determine the length of leave granted.

No benefits, such as annual or sick leave are earned while the employee is on unpaid leave. During an unpaid leave of absence, the employee may be required to pay his or

her full group health premiums.

Employees returning from a personal leave are *not guaranteed* a return to their former job. Where possible, the employee will return to his or her prior job or a similar position. If a position is available for which he or she is qualified, he or she may be considered for that opening. An employee will be terminated if the employee does not return from the authorized unpaid leave of absence at the agreed time, if there is no opening for which the employee is qualified, or if the employee is not selected for any open position.

This policy does not apply to unpaid leave taken under either the federal or state FMLA or maternity/parental leave laws.

All unpaid leaves of absence must be approved by the employee's supervisor. Leave taken without supervisor approval may be considered abandonment and resignation of the employee's position.

EMPLOYEE'S STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

I, _____, acknowledge that I have received, read, and understand the SIBCR Employee Handbook dated May 2008.

I also acknowledge that its purpose and content have been explained to me and I have been offered an opportunity to ask questions regarding it. I understand the Employee Handbook summarizes various employment policies and procedures applicable to my employment with SIBCR.

I further understand that the Employee Handbook is not an employment agreement or contract for employment. I have been told and I understand that my employment with SIBCR is "at will" which means it may be terminated at any time, with or without cause, with or without notice, by either me or SIBCR. I also understand that I may be demoted, my job responsibilities may change, or my benefits altered after I accept employment with SIBCR with or without cause and with or without notice.

I understand that this Handbook supersedes any prior handbooks or policy manuals regarding employment with SIBCR issued by SIBCR.

I understand that SIBCR may add to, modify, or delete any of the policies and procedures contained in the Employee Handbook from time to time.

I agree to perform my job and otherwise act in a manner consistent with the Employee Handbook and any subsequent addition(s), modification(s), or deletion(s), which may be implemented by SIBCR during my employment.

(Signature)

(Print Name)

Date of Signature: _____

Employee Handbook of
Seattle Institute for Biomedical and Clinical Research (SIBCR)

Revised: May 2008