



Green River Regional
Educational Cooperative

Policy & Procedure Manual
Updated October, 2015



Green River Regional Educational Cooperative

Policy and Procedure Manual

I. GRREC - About

A. Authority and Name of Agency

The name of the agency shall be the Green River Regional Educational Cooperative (GRREC). The Board policies will comply with the Inter-local Cooperation Act (KRS 65.210 – 65.300).

B. Mission Statement

The mission of GRREC is to support leadership for high quality teaching and learning.

C. Vision Statement

The vision of GRREC is to become the region's most relevant resource in the design, implementation, and advancement of high quality teaching and leadership to foster student learning.

D. Belief Statements

GRREC believes in:

- A student centered learning environment;
- A world class curriculum design;
- Comprehensive assessment and intervention systems;
- Research-based instruction; and
- Professional learning communities.

E. Goals

The primary goal of the Cooperative is service to member districts. Service needs and desires of the local districts will determine the services provided by GRREC, as well as the Kentucky Department of Education's (KDE's) desire to make service available to schools via education service cooperatives.

GRREC will strive to provide:

- Requested services which individual schools have not or cannot provide;
- Requested services more economically and more efficiently than the services can be provided on an individual basis; and

- Services to all interested districts in an equitable manner.

F. Governance

1. Board of Directors

The governing body (hereinafter referred to as the Board of Directors or Board) shall consist of Superintendents of each member school district and the Dean of the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences at Western Kentucky University. Fifty percent of Board members present shall constitute a quorum. When a quorum is present, a majority vote is necessary to take any particular action, unless otherwise specified by statute. A Superintendent may designate someone from his/her district to vote in their absence.

The GRREC Board of Directors is the entity's overall governing authority. It is fundamentally a policy-making and oversight body. The Board defines policy and practice within the entity. Executing the Board's policies and plans is the function of staff, under the guidance and direction of the Executive Director.

2. Board Meetings

The Board of Directors will hold regular meetings on the first Wednesday of each month at 9:30 a.m. The location of the meeting will be set by the Executive Director and the Board Chairman. All dates, locations, and times are subject to change at the discretion of the Executive Committee. In the case of circumstances which dictate a change in the time, date, and/or place of the regular meeting, the Executive Committee shall reach a consensus on an alternate time, date, and/or location for the meeting. All members of the Board of Directors shall be notified in person, by email, or mail at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the meeting. All Board meetings with a quorum of members at which action is taken are to be open to the public.

The Board may, at any meeting, go into closed session to discuss matters which it may lawfully discuss in a closed meeting. The following requirements shall be met as a condition for conducting the closed session:

- a. Notice shall be given in regular, open meetings of the reason for the closed session.
- b. Closed sessions may be held only after a motion is made and carried by

a majority vote in open, public session.

c. No official action may be taken in a closed session.

d. No matters may be discussed at a closed session other than those publicly announced prior to convening the open session.

Lawful matters which may be discussed in a closed session (pursuant to KRS 61.810) include the following:

a. Deliberation on the future acquisition or sale of real property by the Board, but only when publicity would likely affect the value of a specific piece of property to be acquired for public use, or sold by the Board.

b. Discussions of proposed or pending litigation against or on behalf of the Board;

c. Discussion of hearings which might lead to the appointment, discipline, or dismissal of an individual employee, without restricting that employee's right to a public hearing if requested. (This exception shall not be interpreted as permitting discussion of general personnel matters in closed session.); and

d. Meetings which federal or state law specifically requires to be conducted in privacy.

3. Selection of Officers

The Vice-Chair of the Cooperative is also the Chair-Elect. The Board shall elect a Vice-Chair at its May or June meeting each year. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall serve one (1) year beginning July 1 of each year. Officers shall not succeed themselves.

Standing Committees shall include: Executive Committee, Finance Committee, Steering Committee, Legislative Committee, Bids Committee, Personnel Committee, and Leadership Committee. Other Committees may be established at the discretion of the Chairman of the Board. Executive Committee members shall consist of the current Chair, Vice-Chair, and immediate Past-Chair.

4. Duties of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall be responsible for the appointment and/or dismissal

of the Cooperative Director, and maintain general responsibility regarding policies and practices to ensure the integrity and trust of the public with regard to operation of the Co-op. Such responsibilities will include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Approval of a tentative budget;
- 2) Periodic review of receipts and disbursements;
- 3) Compliance with applicable laws and statutes;
- 4) Approval of personnel policies;
- 5) Monitoring of annual programs to ensure services and programs are consistent with district needs;
- 6) Carrying out other duties which may be required for efficient operation of the Cooperative.

a. **Duties & Responsibilities of Chair and Vice Chair**

The Chair of the Board shall preside at meetings of the Board of Directors, and of the Executive Committee. The Chair may appoint committees and assign the chair of each committee. S/he may call special meetings of the Board and of the Executive Committee. The Chair may vote on motions and sign official documents. The Chair shall serve as an ex-officio member of all standing committees, except the Executive Committee on which s/he is an official member. The Vice-Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair.

b. **Duties & Responsibilities of Committees**

The Executive Director or Chair may request that the Committee Chair call a meeting of a committee. Notice of committee meetings shall be given in a timely manner. The Executive Director or Chair shall provide direction for the scope of the committee's efforts. Committee members in attendance shall constitute a quorum. A report of the committee shall be made at a regular or specially called meeting of the Board of Directors.

5. **Board Policies**

Except when an emergency situation is declared by the Chair, the Board will not enact or revise a policy in the same meeting in which it is initially introduced. The Executive Director shall develop and implement a system whereby each

employee, and all member organizations directly affected by a specific policy, shall be apprised of the policy. All Board policies shall be reasonably accessible to all personnel and to the public. Copies of the official policy manual shall be housed in specified locations and kept current through a system developed and implemented by the Executive Director. All policies of the Board are binding on employees of the Cooperative and on the Board itself.

G. Executive Director

1. Qualifications

The Board holds the Executive Director responsible for the efficient management of the Cooperative. The Board expects the Director to carefully administer the organization and administration of both material and personnel resources in such a way as to achieve the Board's objectives for the best possible programs.

As the chief executive officer of the Board, the Director is the administrative head of all programs of the Cooperative. The Director may delegate duty and authority for the operation of the various programs, but retains responsibility to the Board for results produced.

It is the responsibility of the Board to attract and retain the services of a qualified and experienced educator to serve as Executive Director. The Director must have demonstrated competence and ability as an educational leader.

2. Duties

The Director will serve as the Executive Officer of the Cooperative and Treasurer of the Board; the Director will administer all Cooperative programs and provide supervision over Cooperative activities and operations. S/he will prepare, in conjunction with the Chair of the Board, the agenda for each Board meeting, and organize meetings of the Board. The Director will oversee the preparation of minutes and proceedings of the Board, develop surveys, summaries, and reports as authorized and/or requested by the Board, and maintain the Cooperative's records. S/he will review budgets prepared by finance for adoption by the Board, direct expenditures of Cooperative funds, and manage the affairs of the Cooperative.

The Director shall employ staff for positions authorized by the Board and

supervise day to day activities and the annual evaluations of staff. The Director will assist in planning and implementing professional development activities that meet identified needs of member districts and will assist in designing and implementing unified purchasing for member districts. S/he will provide oversight and administration for grants received for various Cooperative initiatives. S/he will serve as a liaison between Western Kentucky University's College of Education and Behavioral Sciences and member districts. The Director will plan and implement an annual Summer Conference for member district administrators, participate in the planning and facilitation of the annual Regional Title I Conference, participate in the planning and facilitation of the annual GRREC/WKU Law Conference, and serve as a member of the Kentucky Association of Educational Cooperatives. The Director will represent the Board and school districts through interagency collaboration and attendance at regional, state, and national conferences and meetings, and perform any additional duties as assigned and designated by the Board of Directors.

3. Delegation

The Executive Director may grant authority to an authorized representative(s) to act in full authority on the Executive Director's behalf for the good of the Cooperative.

H. GRREC Fee Structure

In February each year, the Finance Committee will make its recommendation to the Board of Directors for the fee structure for the following fiscal year. The Board will adopt either the recommendation of the Finance Committee or a different fee structure by the March Board meeting. In March, the Executive Director will send to each Board member the adopted fee structure for the following fiscal year, along with a Letter of Intent to Participate. This Letter of Intent will include notification that in order to withdraw from GRREC, or significantly change participation, notice must be provided to GRREC sixty days prior to the end of the fiscal year. Letters of Intent must be received by GRREC by May 31. In May an invoice for membership will be sent to each member district. Invoices will be payable by July 31 of each year. The membership fee will be

prorated for a district that joins GRREC after the fiscal year has begun. Fees for any existing menu items (a la carte services) may be pro-rated, if equitable for both parties.

I. District Expansion Procedure

Districts applying for membership to the Cooperative will be considered by the full Board; the decision to accept a new member shall be influenced by whether the addition will complement, benefit, and enhance the mission of the Cooperative, and whether the addition of the district will be administratively manageable. Approval for membership shall require a majority vote of the Board.

J. Grant Assurances

GRREC will comply with any and all state and federal statutes and guidelines as required by any awarded grant received, as well as with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations and its guidance on the allocation of federal monies.

K. Lobbying Certification

GRREC certifies that:

No federally appropriated funds will be paid by or on behalf of the Green River Regional Educational Cooperative to any person to influence, either directly or indirectly, the introduction or modification of any federal or state legislation, or the outcomes of any federal, state, or local election, referendum, or initiative. No federally appropriated funds will be paid by or on behalf of the Green River Regional Educational Cooperative to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or an employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any federal grant, the making of any federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, or the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any federal contract, grant, loan or cooperative agreement.

M. Open Records Request Policy

Pursuant to KRS 61.870 - 61.884, the public records of GRREC are open for inspection by any person upon written application to the Executive Director or Chief Financial Officer, the official custodians of the public records of the Green River Regional Educational Cooperative, Inc., whose address is 230 Technology Way, Bowling Green, Kentucky 42101, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday

each week, except holidays. Application forms for the inspection of public records of this Cooperative will be furnished upon request. Assistance in completing the application form may be provided by a GRREC employee upon request.

Applicants for the inspection of public records shall be advised of the availability of the records requested for inspection, and shall be notified in writing not later than three (3) working days after receipt of an application for inspection if for any reason the requested records are not available for public inspection.

Copies of written materials in public records of this Cooperative shall be furnished to any person requesting them upon payment of a fee of ten (10) cents per page; copies of non-written records (photographs, maps, materials stored in computer files or libraries, etc.) shall be furnished upon request and upon payment of a charge equal to the actual cost of producing copies of such records by the most economic process not likely to damage or alter the record.

N. Financial Standards and Procedures

1. Organization

GRREC receives membership dues from participating local school districts for the Cooperative's administration purposes and to provide programs and services in the local districts. GRREC is also the recipient of federal, state, local, and foundation grants. Accordingly, GRREC is subject to statutory and regulatory requirements applicable to these grants.

2. Financial Management System Standards

GRREC shall meet the following standards for all of its programs:

- a. Financial Reporting - Accurate, current, and complete disclosure of the financial results of each project or program shall be made in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the program.
- b. Accounting Records - Records which adequately identify the source and application of funds for all financial activities shall be consistently maintained and reported to the appropriate entities in a timely manner.
- c. Internal Controls - Effective controls and accountability shall be maintained for all Cooperative finances and property. A clear separation of duties and responsibilities between individuals will be maintained so that no one person

has access to all financial operations, procedures, and records.

- d. Budgetary Control - The actual and budgeted amounts for each program shall be compared. Budgetary controls are in place to assure that obligations incurred for a specific program are allocated to that program.
- e. Advance Payments - Cooperative procedures shall be established to minimize the time elapsing between the advance of Federal grant funds and their disbursement.
- f. Allowable Costs - OMB Circular A-87, "Cost Principals for State and Local Governments," shall be used for determining the reasonableness, allowability, and allocability of cost charged to federal grants until December 26, 2014.
- g. As of December 26, 2014, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Super Circular) (also known as A-122, 2 CFR, part 230) will be used.
- h. Source Documentation - Accounting records shall be supported by source documentation such as canceled checks, paid bills, payrolls, contracts etc.

3. Financial Reporting

- a. Internal Reporting - The Cooperative's accounting records are maintained on an automated computer system and fund accounting software. Financial reports are distributed to each project coordinator as a management aid in the administration of their programs and to assure that expenses are kept within budget. These reports show a comparison of budget with actual expenditures for the period-to-date and year-to-date total. A consolidated financial report is submitted to the Board of Directors at each meeting. This report shows the total month-to-date expenditures and revenues for each program.
- b. Reporting to Funding Sources - the Agency has a variety of funding sources, each unique and requiring a variety of reporting formats and reporting dates. To assure that all reports are submitted in a timely manner, the following procedures will be followed:
 - 1) The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for supervising the preparation of all financial reports required by funding sources. As

part of this responsibility, the Chief Financial Officer will maintain a file for each funding source, which contains copies of all reports by program year, blank reports, and reporting instructions.

- 2) The Executive Director will receive the original of each report for his/her approval and signature. The executive Director is the authorized Official to approve and sign financial reports.

4. Accounting Software and Data Management

GRREC's accounting software is maintained on a cloud-based solution using fund-accounting software. The Executive Director is responsible for overseeing the Cooperative's data processing activity related to the computer system and related accounting systems. The following procedures apply:

- a. The computer system and peripheral equipment used by the Chief Financial Officer will not be used by anyone without prior approval of the Executive Director. Only the Executive Director will be permitted to access the computer and input terminals when not in use.
- b. The Finance Department is the only personnel authorized to input, change, process, or merge data. Other personnel may be given select access with specific security options.
- c. The Executive Director is responsible for all application software with any subsequent modifications.

5. Budgets

A budget will be prepared for each program operated by GRREC at least annually. Development of the program budget will require the cooperation and active involvement of the Executive Director, the Chief Financial Officer, the Grant Writer(s), and the Project Coordinator. The following procedure will be followed:

a. Authorization

GRREC programs funded primarily by federal and state grants are awarded annually. Therefore, formal notification or permission to proceed with program implementation will be issued by the funding agency, together with a projected program funding level.

b. Budget Preparation

The Executive Director is responsible for the preparation of the agency's annual budget. Individual project coordinators are primarily responsible for the preparation of program budgets, working with the Chief Financial Officer. Program budgets will be prepared by individual cost elements (e.g. salaries, supplies, etc.). The Chief Financial Officer will keep current with applicable Board, state, and federal budget requirements.

c. Financial Review

All budgets will be submitted to the Chief Financial Officer for review prior to being submitted to any funding agency. The Chief Financial Officer will, at a minimum, do the following:

1. Check the budgets for mathematical accuracy;
2. Ascertain whether the budget is in compliance with financial guidelines;
3. Ascertain whether the budget complies with applicable laws and regulations;
4. Recommend possible changes or improvements to the project coordinator.

d. Administrative Review

All budgets must be submitted to the Executive Director for review and approval.

e. Amendments

All changes, or requested changes to budgets, must be submitted to the Chief Financial Officer. Requests for changes, which require prior grantor agency approval, will be submitted by the project coordinator to the appropriate federal grants officer, or other authorized official, prior to making such changes.

f. Record Keeping

The Chief Financial Officer will ensure that budgets, which have been properly approved by the funder, are on file for all grants and contracts.

g. Financial Reports

On or before the 15th day of each month a detailed financial report shall be given to project coordinators in charge of each grant project.

h. Check Endorsement

Any Associate Director and Chief Financial Officer may sign checks in the Executive Director's absence for anything not related to their own departments. The Chief Financial Officer can delegate his/her signing authority to the RTTD

Finance Director if necessary. The Executive Director will be notified of any check signed in his/her absence.

6. Cash Management

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for requesting funds for all federally sponsored programs. S/he will follow the applicable guidelines set forth by each funding agency.

7. Federal Audit

The agency shall have an annual audit for each fiscal year ending June 30. The selection of the auditing firm will be made in accordance to any applicable Board, state, and federal requirements. The below procedures will be followed by GRREC for annual audits:

- a. A contract between the organization and the auditor shall be prepared which contains an understanding of the work that needs to be performed to satisfy the Cooperative's requirements, including requirements for an A-133 audit. The contract shall provide an understanding of the terms, nature, and limitations of the engagements. The contract shall include the reporting, objectives and responsibilities assumed by the auditors. Agency responsibilities may also be included.
- b. The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for scheduling the audit fieldwork, providing records and financial information, coordination with project coordinators and any other appropriate staff.
- c. The project coordinators, with the Chief Financial Officer, are responsible for providing information and answering all questions in connection with the audit that are related to compliance with laws and regulations as it relates to his or her program.
- d. The Executive Director, in coordination with the project coordinators and Chief Financial Officer, is responsible for the resolution of any audit findings or questioned costs. These findings will be resolved within six (6) months after the receipt of the audit report.

8. Cash Depositories

The following sets forth the Cooperative's policy regarding the use of banks and

other institutions and depositories of funds:

- a. Depositories will be selected on a competitive basis and will be reviewed periodically as deemed necessary by the Executive Director.
- b. All funds of the Board will be deposited into local banks, which are accessible and capable of handling investment funds, and able to provide those services needed by the Board in the operation of the Cooperative.
- c. Depositories must have Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) insurance coverage and any balance exceeding the FDIC insurance must be collaterally secured.

9. Cash Receipts

The Cooperative has procedures in place to ensure that all cash receipts are deposited promptly and recorded accurately as to account, amount, and time period.

- a. Incoming Mail – mail is sorted and routed to the various programs and departments
 - 1) All cash, checks and other forms of legal tender are forwarded to the Office Manager, who is designated for receipt of monies.
 - 2) The following incoming mail will be forwarded to the Chief Financial Officer: payroll information, Worker’s Compensation and Unemployment information, vendor statements, utility bills, telephone bills, etc., personnel information, resumes, employment applications, changes of name/address, and employment verification.
 - 3) Bank statements are forwarded to the Executive Director who reviews and forwards to the Chief Financial Officer.
- b. Recording – the Office Manager will receive all cash, checks, and other forms of legal tender received by the Cooperative. The following procedures are to be followed:
 - 1) The Office Manager records all receipts into a numbered deposit log;
 - 2) All checks are stamped with a restricted endorsement as follows, “ For Deposit Only to the Account of Green River Regional Educational Cooperative;”
 - 3) Deposit log and checks are forwarded to the Chief Financial Officer;
 - 4) Chief Financial Officer completes a deposit slip and makes the deposit;
 - 5) Chief Financial Officer enters cash receipts into the computer system’s cash

receipts program as deposited;

- 6) Documentation for receipts is filed with the duplicate deposit slip and validated bank receipt.

O. Grants and Contracts

The Board of Directors shall authorize all grants and grant contracts. The Executive Director is the authorized official to sign contracts, grants, amendments, or other related documents, unless the Chairman of the Board is directly specified by the respective grantor/contractor. All grants, contracts, and amendments awarded to GRREC for the operation of programs will be processed in accordance with the following procedures:

1. All grants, contracts, and amendments will immediately, upon receipt, be forwarded to the Chief Financial Officer for review. The Chief Financial Officer will report any possible error or observations to the Executive Director and will do the following:
 - a. Maintain a file for each grant or contract which will contain all awards, amendments, budgets, and special conditions;
 - b. Record budget, or update budget in the accounting system;
 - c. Initiate a request for funds if appropriate, or if cost-reimbursed program arrange for an advance of funds from the unrestricted fund.

The Project Coordinator will take steps to implement the program in accordance with the terms of the grant or contract. The Project Coordinator will coordinate with the Chief Financial Officer concerning budgeting, reporting, and monitoring of the program.

P. Management of GRREC-Owned Property

For the purposes of GRREC's inventory control and record system, the following standards shall be employed:

1. Real Property - real estate including land, land improvements, structures (buildings), and appurtenances (attachments, built-in accessories, etc.) thereto, excluding movable equipment. Any real property shall be properly secured by deed and maintained on a current inventory of GRREC Real Property.
2. Personal Property - GRREC property of any kind except real property. It may be tangible (that is, having a physical existence like furniture or equipment), or it may be intangible (that is, without physical properties, including such things as copyrights,

trademarks, patents, inventions, or any other form of intellectual property created by staff or contractors while in the paid employment of GRREC.)

3. Non-Expendable Personal Property - at a minimum, tangible personal (Cooperative) property having an acquisition cost of \$1,000 or more per unit and an expected useful life of one year.
4. Intellectual Property - not maintained on a formal inventory, but such property still belongs to the agency and may not be converted to personal use or ownership.
5. Employee personal items located in their offices or other cooperative premises are individual private property. These should be labeled by the respective owners so as to prevent later questions arising as to the true ownership of those items.
6. Property Disposal Procedure - the Executive Director will advise the Board when certain properties are no longer needed for Cooperative purposes. Upon receiving this report, the Board may, at such time as it deems proper, and after compliance with applicable state regulations, authorize the disposal of properties.

Individual GRREC programs may have more restrictive definitions than that above as may be required by their respective grantor contracting agencies. Individual Project Coordinators must advise the Chief Financial Officer when more restrictive than usual standards/definitions of property are required by their respective grantor or contracting agency.

All non-expendable personal property and all program grantor property that meets the above definitions must be maintained on the Agency Inventory of Property. No items on the Property Inventory may be moved from one location to another without first notifying the proper individual (Chief Financial Officer or Network Administrator) of its planned relocation. Appropriate paperwork must then be submitted to the Chief Financial Officer so the inventory can be updated.

Q. Cash Disbursements

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the preparation of checks for payment of all invoices and related payables for goods and services. The process of check preparation, which is primarily computer generated, involves the records of expenses to the various programs operated by the Cooperative.

1. The following procedures shall be followed:

- a. Vendor invoices, utility bills, telephone bills, contracts, leases, etc. along with completed purchases orders should be forwarded to the Chief Financial Officer who will prepare bills as follows:
 - 1) Vendor invoices, etc., non-employee travel, and standard invoices submitted to the Chief Financial Officer on or before the 22nd day of the month will be paid on the day of the monthly Board meeting (1st Wednesday of the month), generally within thirty (30) days.
 - 2) Leases, etc. which are paid monthly will be prepared for payment as provided by the lease terms.
 - b. The Chief Financial Officer will verify that all bills are properly supported by documentation, properly approved, and properly coded by the Project Coordinator, associate director, and the Executive Director. Bills not properly supported in accordance with the above will be sent back to the appropriate staff person. Bills properly supported will be entered into the computer for payment.
 - c. The Chief Financial Officer enters bills into the computer from appropriate documents.
2. Loans - Restricted funds such as federal and state grants, endowments, and donor restricted funds cannot be used for purposes other than that for which they were designated. Consequently, restricted funds cannot be loaned to other programs within the Cooperative. It is the combined responsibility of the Executive Director, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Associate Directors to monitor restricted funds to assure that violations do not occur.

R. Payroll

The Human Resource Specialist is responsible for conducting new employee orientation. As part of the orientation the HR Specialist obtains the following which are kept in an employee personnel file prepared by the HR Specialist: W-4, Employment Eligibility Verification (I-9), Elective Benefits form, Drug-Free form, Criminal Records Check release, Direct-Deposit Authorization form, Marketplace notice, Physical form, COBRA Rights, Worker's Compensation Information Sheet, Emergency Contact list, Acceptable Use policy, and the Office Policy manual.

The Chief Financial Officer will use information contained in the employee's personnel file to set-up employee information in the computer's payroll system. Cooperative employees will be paid on a bi-monthly basis; payroll is paid on the 15th and 30th of each month. If these dates fall on a weekend or holiday, payroll checks will be issued the day before. The following shall apply to the Cooperative's payroll procedures:

1. Time Sheets - time and attendance reports showing hours worked, signed by the employee's supervisor, and properly dated, are required from any employee deemed by the Executive Director to be a Time-Sheet Employee. The following procedures apply to time sheets:
 - a. The supervisor is responsible for the correctness of time sheets of his/her staff. Accordingly, time sheets are reviewed by the supervisor and each time sheet signed and dated indicating the review has been performed.
 - b. The Chief Financial Officer shall receive time sheets in accordance with the financial calendar created by the Chief Financial Officer.
 - c. Supervisors are responsible for assuring time sheets are submitted in a timely manner by their staff.
 - d. Time sheets will be reviewed by the Chief Financial Officer to determine if they are properly prepared, reviewed, and that hours appear reasonable.
 - e. The Chief Financial Officer will enter time sheet information into the computer.

S. Contributions and Donations

The Cooperative will accept all contributions or donations which can be used effectively in the operation of the Cooperative or its programs. These contributions or donations may be in cash or in-kind.

1. Cash Donations

The Executive Director is authorized to accept cash donations on behalf of the Cooperative or its programs. The following procedures shall be followed for all cash donations:

- a. Cash donations designated for a specific purpose or program will be recorded, clearly identifying its restriction and purpose.

- b. Cash donations, which are unrestricted, will be deposited into the Cooperative's unrestricted fund.
- c. All cash donations will be forwarded to the Chief Financial Officer for deposit and recording in accordance with the Cooperative's cash receipts procedures.

2. In-Kind Donations

In-kind contributions usually fall into the following categories: donated services or time, supplies, loaned equipment or space, or donated equipment, buildings, or land. The following procedures shall be followed for all in-kind donations:

- a. Project coordinators are responsible for collecting, recording, and summarizing in-kind contributions for their respective programs.
- b. The Executive Director will be responsible for the development of an in-kind contribution voucher. The voucher will be signed by the donor and also signed by the Executive Director.
- c. Valuations of in-kind donations will be as follows:
 - 1) Volunteer services will be based on rates consistent with that paid for similar work, plus a reasonable amount for fringe benefits;
 - 2) Supplies and materials will be valued based on market value at the date of the donation taking into account condition, age, etc., as applicable.

T. Taxes

1. GRREC Exemptions

GRREC is exempt from income taxes under Section 115 of the IRS code of 1986. However, the Cooperative may be subject to income tax if it has income from the operation of a business enterprise not related to the purpose for which it received its exemption.

GRREC is exempt from KY Sales and Use Tax on property used for its exempt purpose, and from tangible and intangible property taxes on property used for its exempt purpose in the State of Kentucky.

2. Tax Responsibility

GRREC is responsible for the following Federal and State taxes:

GRREC will withhold federal income taxes from employees' wages based on Form W-4 and applicable withholding tables. Taxes withheld will be deposited in an authorized institution or Federal Reserve Bank within three (3) days after they are withheld.

Social Security and Medicare Taxes - GRREC will withhold Social Security and Medicare taxes from employee wages based on applicable rates prescribed by the IRS. Social Security and Medicare taxes withheld will be matched by GRREC and deposited in an authorized institution or Federal Reserve Bank within three (3) days after they are withheld.

State Income Taxes - GRREC will withhold state income taxes from employees' wages based on withholding allowance certificates and applicable withholding tables. Taxes withheld will be remitted to the state(s) based on their requirements.

State Unemployment Taxes - GRREC is responsible for unemployment taxes, which are based on employee earnings, multiplied by an assigned rate. Unemployment taxes will be paid quarterly to the appropriate state unemployment commission.

The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for preparing all payroll tax reports for the Cooperative. The Chief Financial Officer is also responsible for preparing all checks for payment of payroll taxes. The Chief Financial Officer will review all payroll tax reports. In addition, the Chief Financial Officer is authorized to approve and sign payroll reports.

U. Retention and Access Requirements for Records

All financial and programmatic records, supporting documents, statistical records and other records will be maintained in accordance with the following: as required by the terms of a grant or contract; as required by the Internal Revenue Code or other Federal regulations, and/or required by the Commonwealth of Kentucky Statutes or other Kentucky Regulations.

V. Non-Discrimination

The Green River Regional Educational Cooperative shall not discriminate in employment, service delivery, or program participation on the basis of race, color, age,

religion, sex, national origin, disability or marital status in accordance with Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; Executive Order No. 11246 of September 24, 1965, as amended; and all other applicable laws which prohibit discrimination, and regulations, guidelines, and standards lawfully adopted and promulgated under those laws.

Inquiries and/or complaints concerning discrimination in employment or services may be addressed to: George Wilson, 230 Technology Way, Bowling Green, KY 42101, (270) 563-2113.

W. Subsequent Approval of Reoccurring Bills

It is sometimes necessary to pay bills in between board meetings before official board approval is granted. The Executive Director shall have the authority to pay districts, reoccurring operation related bills, urgent bills, or reimburse employees for travel/supplies as s/he deems necessary. The board will be given subsequent notification at the next board meeting of any bills the Executive Director deemed necessary to pay.

II. PROCUREMENT POLICY

A. Procurement Standards

The Green River Regional Educational Cooperative (GRREC) Board of Directors adopts the Kentucky Model Procurement Code as prescribed in Chapter 45A of the Kentucky Revised Statutes and adopts the following standards for procurement consistent with KRS 45A.300 to 45A.460. All ordinances and regulations pertaining to procurement, whether promulgated under KRS 45A.300 to 45A.460 or otherwise, shall be maintained in the GRREC central office and shall be available to the public upon request at a cost not to exceed the cost of reproduction.

B. Responsibility and Delegation of Authority

The Executive Director is hereby designated as the Chief Purchasing Officer for GRREC and is responsible for administration of the procurement function. The Executive Director will also establish procedures in keeping with State regulations, GRREC policies (as approved by the Board of Directors), and accepted business principals to control the

purchase of items by employees. The Board of Directors must approve all expenditures over \$20,000, and will be notified at each Board meeting of all procurements made. A certified audit report shall be provided to the Board of Directors annually detailing all financial transactions conducted by GRREC.

Any delegation of purchasing authority shall be made by the Executive Director. S/he may delegate procurement responsibilities to the Chief Financial Officer, Bids Coordinator, or other staff as may be appropriate and/or necessary for the proper performance of the procurement functions.

The Executive Director or Chief Financial Officer may make expenditures in cases of emergency in accordance with approved procedures; these purchases will also subsequently be approved by the Board of Directors. Employee procurements of less than \$20,000 shall be authorized according to written financial procedures and shall have the appropriate financial documentation.

The Bids Coordinator shall maintain sufficient and required records for the Board of Directors to verify all purchasing agreements and the purchases made through such agreements. No contract shall be awarded for an amount which exceeds the sum budgeted and appropriated for the procurement by GRREC.

C. State Bid Purchasing

The Chief Financial Officer may approve the purchase of supplies and equipment from the State bid contracts. The Bids Coordinator shall include the State bid price contract number on all purchase orders or invoices used to purchase from the State price contract.

D. Cooperative Purchasing

The Board of Directors may authorize the Executive Director to enter into an agreement, subject to Board ratification, for cooperative purchasing with another public agency. When GRREC contracts with another agency for supplies, services, or construction pursuant to State law all other parties to the agreement shall be deemed to have complied with the promises of these laws.

E. Small Purchase Procedures

Small purchases are hereby authorized to procure necessary supplies, services, or construction, the cost and quality of which are such that any possible savings of public funds realized would not justify the administrative time and expense necessary for the

conduct of competitive sealed bidding.

Required purchases shall not be fragmented or artificially divided to avoid use of other source selection methods. Categories of supplies, services, or construction reasonably anticipated to be required during a fiscal year shall be considered one procurement for the purpose of the small purchase procedures. The contracted pricing may be for a stipulated period of time which will provide the most beneficial market pricing to GRREC, provided the time period does not avoid the requirements of competitive sealed bidding procedures. In determining whether supplies, services, or construction are normally supplied as a unit, the test is not that such supplies, services, or construction are furnished by a particular vendor, but rather whether supplies, services, or construction are closely related in their function and use.

Small purchases of \$500 or less (or construction services costing \$1,500 or less) may be made from any available source of supply without obtaining quotes. Small purchases in excess of \$500, but less than \$20,000 may be made only after obtaining three or more price quotes from responsible sources. Each determination shall be based on written findings that support the determination, and shall be signed by the employee making the determination.

F. Competitive Sealed Bid Procedures

GRREC's Bids Coordinator shall develop evaluative bid procedures which permit the Board of Directors to select the bid which is in the best interest of the Cooperative. GRREC shall advertise and bid items or services which involve an expenditure of more than \$20,000, such other amounts as may be prescribed by statute or regulation during the fiscal year, or items of lesser amounts where items are categorical and a savings can be realized. If durability of the product, the quality of service, or other factors is to be considered in bid selection, such factors shall be stated in the bid documents.

The bid notice shall state the time and place for receiving and opening bids, and the time and place where bid specifications may be obtained. All bids are to be submitted in writing, typewritten or in ink, and sealed. Bids will be opened and read publicly by the Bids Coordinator at the designated date/time. No bids may be altered after they are submitted. This in no way prevents the acceptance or rejection of alternates, which are specified as a part of the regular bid forms and specifications.

A successful bidder shall be deemed as having been awarded a bid when the Board of Directors has taken such action at a regular or special meeting. The awarded vendor shall receive formal notice of the awarding from the Bid Coordinator. In the event the lowest dollar value bid is not accepted, the Bids Committee shall identify and record the reason for the rejection. All bids shall be held by the Bids Coordinator for at least ninety (90) days after bid award. Written notification of the awarding of the contract shall be given to all bidders. The notice shall include a list of all bidders together with their bid totals.

The Board of Directors or their designee may elect to pre-qualify bidders/suppliers based on experience with the product/service, proven ability to perform or supply availability to service and/or repair, evaluation and/or testing of the product, and/or other qualifications appropriate to ensure quality performance of supplies/equipment.

The Board of Directors may elect to suspend or debar a bidder/supplier from providing services if it finds that a contract agreement has been violated and/or inferior service, supplies, and/or equipment has been provided as part of the contract. The Board may elect to reinstate bidder/supplies after certain conditions have been met as outlined/determined by the Board of Directors.

Any bid which is accepted in non-compliance with any of the above items shall be considered null and void.

G. Non-Competitive Negotiated Purchases

The non-competitive negotiated process may be used instead of advertising for bids when a written determination is made by the Executive Director showing competition is not feasible under conditions allowed and acceptable under adopted policies, including the following conditions:

1. When an emergency exists which will cause public harm as a result of the delay of competitive procedures;
2. When there is a single-source of the product or service to be procured;
3. When the contract is for the services of a licensed professional (a professional service is one performed by a licensed professional and an activity for which a license is required);
4. When the contract is for the purchase of perishable items purchased on a weekly or more frequent basis, such as fresh fruit, vegetables, or fish; or

5. Where grant language specifies the vendor and amount.

The Board of Directors, upon the Executive Director's recommendation, shall approve all non-competitive purchases exceeding \$20,000, except in the case where the Executive Director declares an emergency in which a delay in making the non-competitive purchase will result in danger to health, safety, or property, and submits such determination to the Board of Directors for its approval at the next regular meeting.

Items for resale are authorized to be purchased by non-competitive negotiation.

H. Competitive Negotiated Purchases

Competitive negotiated purchasing is authorized for the procurement of necessary supplies and services under the following conditions:

1. Bids must have been received and opened;
2. There are not sufficient budgeted funds to award the contract; and
3. When the best interest of the Cooperative will not permit the delay caused by re-solicitation under revised specifications and quantities.

Procedures for competitive negotiated purchases shall be established by the Executive Director and approved by the Board of Directors, and shall be in compliance with State statutes and regulations governing purchasing procedures by public agencies.

I. Maximum Free and Open Competition

It is the clear intention of the Green River Regional Educational Cooperative to foster all procurement transactions in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practicable, open and free competition. GRREC shall make positive efforts toward procuring and utilizing small business and minority-owned business sources of supplies and services. All such efforts shall be made to allow these sources the maximum feasible opportunity to compete for contracts with GRREC. All procurement procedures developed and implemented by GRREC shall assure that unnecessary or duplicative items are not purchased. Where appropriate, considerations of lease and purchase alternatives will be made to determine which would be the most economical and practical procurement.

All GRREC bids and solicitations for goods and services shall be based upon a clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product or service to be procured. Such description shall not, in competitive procurements, contain features that unduly restrict competition. Brand name, or equal clause, may be used as a means to

define the performance of other salient requirements of procurement, and when so used the specific features of the named brand that must be met by bidders/offers are clearly specified. GRREC shall use procuring instruments such as fixed price contracts, cost reimbursable contracts, and purchase orders where appropriate and or required by state law and which promotes the best interest of GRREC and its programs and services. Contracts will only be entered into by GRREC with responsible contractors who possess the potential ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of a proposed procurement. Consideration shall be made by GRREC for such matters as a contractor's integrity, record of past performance, financial and technical resources, or accessibility to other necessary resources. GRREC may be required by federal grants to seek prior approval by the granting agency for purchases of an aggregate amount of \$5,000 or more in the event of receiving only one bid or proposal.

GRREC shall follow the principles of cost analysis in the review and evaluation of proposals or bids to determine if the offer meets the requirements of reasonableness, allocability, and allowability. GRREC shall, for all purchases which exceed \$20,000, maintain procurement files that include the basis for contractor selection, justification for lack of competition when competitive bids or offers were not obtained, the basis for award cost or price, and a system for contract administration so as to ensure contractor conformance with the terms, conditions, and specifications of the contract, and to ensure adequate and timely follow-up of all purchases.

GRREC shall follow all laws of the State of Kentucky requiring bidding of goods or services in excess of \$20,000.

J. Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibility Matters

GRREC certifies that The Green River Regional Educational Cooperative, its principals and/or subcontractors, are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in transactions by any Federal department or agency.

The Board of Directors may elect to suspend or debar a bidder/supplier from providing services if it finds that a contract agreement has been violated and/or inferior service, supplies, and/or equipment has been provided as part of the contract. The Board of Directors may elect to reinstate bidder/supplies after certain conditions have been met

as outlined by the Board of Directors.

K. Consultant and Contracted Services

GRREC shall use formal contracts for all projects involving professional or technical services. The Executive Director must approve all such services.

III. PERSONNEL POLICIES

A. Hiring

All appointments, promotions, and transfers of personnel for positions authorized by the Board shall be made by the Executive Director who, at the first meeting following the actions, shall notify the Board of the same. Such notification shall be recorded in the Board minutes. The Executive Director shall employ only individuals who possess qualifications established by law, regulation, and/or Board policy, except in the case where no individual applies who is properly certified and/or who meets established qualifications set by Board policy.

Upon hire, all new employees shall receive a copy of their job description and responsibilities. Personnel shall be employed annually upon the recommendation of the Director. All employee contracts will be based on a fiscal year calendar (July 1 – June 30) and renewed at the Director’s discretion each year. Each employee should provide all proper documentation for his/her personnel file prior to receiving his/her first paycheck. A complete list of all documentation required for personnel files may be requested through the HR Specialist.

1. **Employment Applications**

GRREC relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process. Any misrepresentation, falsification, 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, immediate suspension from work. The Executive Director may then move to terminate the employee.

2. **Reference Checks**

To ensure that individuals who join GRREC are well qualified and have strong

potential to be productive and successful, it is the policy of GRREC to check the employment references of applicants at the discretion of the Executive Director and the Human Resources Specialist. Any cost related to background checks or testing required by applicable statutes and regulations shall be borne by the employee. If the employee is rehired for a second year at GRREC, the costs of any pre-employment test borne by the employee will be reimbursed.

3. Criminal Records/Background Check

GRREC shall require all new employees to submit to a fingerprint police record check as part of the initial employment process. Upon review of the background check, employment can be terminated at the discretion of the Executive Director. Reasons for terminating the employee on the basis of the background check include, but are not limited to, past or present criminal behavior threatening to the welfare of children, other employees, school district employees, or the community. The Executive Director may also terminate the employee if the results of the background check indicate behavior, or a pattern of behavior, inappropriate for an individual responsible for the welfare of children. In addition, termination may take place if the background check indicates criminal activity including, but not limited to, fraud, embezzlement, or other misbehavior involving the handling of funds.

At the beginning of each fiscal year, every finance employee will be subject to two background checks. One will be performed by the Kentucky State Police, and the other performed by the Administration Office of the Courts. The purpose of these annual background checks will be to ensure that GRREC's finance staff possesses the utmost integrity. The Executive Director will review each background check, and address any convictions. The cost of these background checks will be incurred by GRREC.

4. Medical Examination

GRREC requires new employees to submit to a physical examination, including a TB test, the cost of which shall be incurred by the employee.

5. Experience

Past work experience will be considered if prior job responsibilities closely match

those contained in the GRREC job description. Information received will be reviewed by the Executive Director for similarity of duties. Experience will be counted in increments of years, not half years. New hires will have their compensation calculated on zero (0) years' experience until verification(s) of experience has been reviewed by the HR Specialist. Any compensation increase will be retroactive to the employee's start date.

6. Equal Employment Opportunity

No person in GRREC shall, on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, sex, age, handicap, national origin or similar personal distinction, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in regard to employment, retention, promotion, transfer or dismissal in any position, educational program, or activity which is under the jurisdiction of the Board. No qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of the disability, be subject to discrimination in employment. (KRS 161.164; 29 U.S.C.A 794; 34 C.F.R. 104.3-104.14; Section 504 of the Rehab Act of 1973.) Employees who have a temporary or permanent disability may request the Executive Director provide reasonable accommodations necessary for them to perform the essential duties of the position. If assistive technology is deemed necessary for an employee, every effort will be made to obtain that technology in a timely fashion.

7. Employment Status

At the time of employment, personnel status shall be based on the following designations (for accounting purposes, the certified/classified statuses will be determined by Kentucky LEA standards):

- a. GRREC Certified – An employee holding a position which requires a four year degree and who is considered “exempt” under Wage and Hour standards;
- b. GRREC Classified – An employee holding a position that does not require a four-year degree, and who, depending on the position, may be considered either “exempt” or “non-exempt” under Wage and Hour standards;
- c. Full-time – Any employee contracted for 185 days or more;

d. Part-time – Any employee contracted for less than 185 days.

- 1) Any part-time employee who averages over 30 hours a week for one calendar year would be eligible for full benefits the following year.

*Note - In cases where Federal, State or Local entities would classify an employee differently than the standards set by Board policy, GRREC will defer to the standards of those entities.

e. Salary Employee – Salary employee’s method of compensation is determined by taking their total yearly compensation, which is based upon their daily rate and number of contract days, and divide it equally between 24 payrolls occurring throughout the fiscal year. Although the employee does not need to track their hours for compensation purposes, the employee is still expected to work a minimum of eight hours each contract day, with one hour included for lunch.

f. Time-Sheet Employee - A Time-Sheet employee is compensated on the days actually worked throughout the fiscal year up to their agreed upon maximum allowable compensated days in their contract. The Executive Director has the authority to authorize additional days over the maximum amount set forth in the contract if s/he deems necessary. If additional days are added a contract modification will be added to the employee’s personnel file signifying that addition of days. It is the employee’s responsibility to notify the Executive Director when they reach their maximum allowable days, so s/he can make a determination if additional days are needed.

- 1) Time-Sheet employee’s compensation is paid semi-monthly based on a Time-Sheet which is approved by their supervisor, and then submitted to finance. If the employee is paid by the day, it is expected that the employee work a minimum of an eight hour day, with one hour included for lunch, to receive compensation for a whole work day.

- 2) Timesheets for the purposes of compensation may not be sufficient for grant based time & effort requirements. It is the employee’s responsibility to ensure compliance with time & effort if applicable. If the employee is unsure, the best practice is to consult the guidance of their immediate supervisor.

*Note - The Executive Director upon hire will make the determination if an employee will be considered a Salary or Time Sheet employee. The Executive Director retains the right to change that status at any time. If the status of the employee’s compensation is changed the employee will be notified in advance.

*Note - Both Salary and Time-Sheet employees will have their compensation direct deposited into an account of their choosing. Only in exceptional circumstances will an employee be given a paper check.

B. Work Day

Employees of GRREC are expected to be on time to work every day. An employee's direct supervisor will determine the best start time for that employee. The three start times are: 7:00 a.m., 7:30 a.m., and 8:00 a.m. Department heads are responsible for making sure Associate Directors have a copy of each employee's start time. The Associate Directors will then give that information to the Human Resources Specialist, who will ensure that both the Executive Director, Chief Financial Officer, or the appropriate Associate Director have a copy. This information should be given to the Human Resources Specialist no later than August 1st of every fiscal year.

The Executive Director has the authority to make the final determination of an employee's start time, and can deviate from the three listed if a different time is determined to be more beneficial to the interest of the Cooperative.

Full time employees are to work a minimum of eight hour days, one hour of which is set aside for lunch. Any deviation from a regular working day needs to be approved by an employee's direct supervisor. GRREC strongly recommends employees take time away from their desks to enjoy a healthy lunch and give themselves time to reflect on their work.

Occasionally employees may be asked by the Chief Financial Officer, an Associate Director, or the Executive Director to work beyond the normal eight hour work day in order to get necessary work accomplished. It is the understanding of GRREC employees that working an eight hour day might not always be plausible. Employees should feel free to take extended lunches, leave early, or arrive late occasionally when personal obligations arise, but the employee should also understand if they are needed to stay late, arrive early, or shorten their lunch sometimes when asked by a supervisor, that those obligations are just as important.

C. Dress Code

It is the responsibility of all employees of GRREC to dress professionally every day. GRREC is a place of professional business, and, as an employee of GRREC, employees are expected to represent that professionalism. No employee will be allowed to dress down unless a Dress Down Day is declared by either the Executive Director or the Associate Director of Operations. Dress Down Days will be declared in advance. Common practice will be to dress professionally every day. Any violation of the dress code will be addressed by either the Executive Director or the Associate Director of Operations.

D. Vacancies and Compensation Guides

The Board of Directors, through the Executive Director, shall enter into contracts of employment with GRREC personnel. The salary of personnel shall be in accordance with the Board's salary schedule as determined by certification, experience, and/or any other criteria approved by the Board in keeping with the laws of the state. The Executive Director shall, by July 1 of each year, notify all personnel of the best estimate of their salary for the upcoming year (KRS 161.760; KRS 157.390; KRS 160.290; KRS 160.291; 702KAR 3:060; 702 KAR 3:070). The Executive Director's salary may be established in exception to the above referenced schedule. The Board may also establish separate salary schedules for certified GRREC personnel who work less than a half-day and for other part-time certified employees.

No optional payroll deduction, authorized by the Board, shall be deducted from an individual employee's salary without a signed request from the employee requesting the optional deduction.

At the time of initial employment, an employee shall be given the first COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act) notification which informs the employee that he/she may continue some insurance benefits after employment termination with GRREC. The second notification and continuation of benefits shall be contingent upon the employee's notifying GRREC of a qualifying event.

A listing of any job openings at GRREC will be posted on the GRREC website for a minimum of fourteen (14) days. Job openings may be provided to the offices of all board members on a timely basis. Postings of vacancies may be made with other agencies

and/or otherwise advertised as appropriate. All job vacancies should flow through the HR Specialist. It is the responsibility of Directors to ensure the HR Specialist is aware of any job vacancies and proper hiring procedures are being followed.

E. Evaluations

Each employee will be evaluated based upon a procedure developed by the Executive Director. The purpose of the evaluation shall be to improve job performance, provide a measure of performance accountability to the Board and member school districts, foster professional growth, and support individual personnel decisions. All written evaluations shall be discussed with the employee, and he/she shall have the opportunity to attach a written statement to the evaluation instrument. Both the evaluator and the employee shall sign and date the evaluation instrument. All evaluations shall be maintained in the employee's personnel file.

F. Salary Increase Procedure

Prior to the development of GRREC's budget, districts and other Kentucky cooperatives will be polled to determine anticipated salary increases (cost of living allowance) for certified and classified personnel. Information gathered shall guide the Executive Director in determining appropriate salary increases to recommend for GRREC personnel.

G. Conflicts of Interest

1. Employment Conflicts of Interest

The Board of GRREC prohibits employees from engaging in additional employment, or in any other personal pursuits which would:

- a) affect their efficiency or usefulness as employees in the organization;
- b) make time and/or energy demands upon such individuals which could interfere with their effectiveness in performing their contractual obligations to the organization;
- c) compromise or embarrass the organization;
- d) adversely affect the organization's status or professional standing; or
- e) conflict with, or violate professional ethics.

Employees shall not engage in any other employment or in any private business during the hours required to fulfill GRREC assigned duties. The Director may

require from any full-time employee a written description of other employment, hours, and number of days involved. Any employee of GRREC who engages in activities for pay, with the Director's approval, during regular working hours must choose one of these three options: use a day of personal time for the business day; pay GRREC any stipend received less expenses; or use an out of calendar day.

Employees shall not profit monetarily through use of confidential information gained in the course of, or by reason of, their position of employment with GRREC. Unless prior arrangements are made with the Board, any device, publication, or any other item to be copyrighted, and which was developed during the employee's paid time shall be the property of GRREC.

2. Benefits

Employees cannot receive benefits in the form of currency, credit card points, mileage points, or any benefit determined by the Executive Director as being above their agreed upon compensation for anything GRREC is paying for. GRREC employees should be aware that contract prices are for GRREC purchases only. There shall be no personal purchases from GRREC contracts. Additionally, any specials/giveaways offered by approved GRREC contracts are to become the property of GRREC.

GRREC abides by State and Local Tax-Exempt laws for procuring goods and services. Any good or service being procured should be a bona-fide GRREC transaction. A misrepresentation to vendors could result in the loss of GRREC's tax exempt status.

If anything is purchased using GRREC's contract pricing, or any extra benefits are distributed to employees, the employees need to notify their supervisor and the Executive Director as soon as possible. Any extra benefit must be returned or given over to GRREC and the misrepresentation straightened out. Failure to report these events can result in suspension or termination as determined by the Executive Director.

H. Retirement

Employees retiring should give the Executive Director their notice as far in advance as possible, but not less than two (2) weeks prior to retirement. Retirement benefits shall be

solely a matter of contract between the employee and his/her retirement system and shall not be the responsibility of the board, except that the Board shall deduct and send to the appropriate retirement system, in the manner prescribed, those amounts required under law.

For employees employed by GRREC for at least five years at the time of their retirement, the Board shall compensate them for each unused sick day at the rate of 30% of the employee's daily salary rate. This calculation shall be based upon the employee's last annual salary. The Board may create an escrow account to maintain the funds necessary to reimburse employees who qualify to be compensated for unused sick leave as described above. (29 U.S.C.631; KRS 161.155(8), OAG 83-191, OAG 94-39,OAG 97-28; KRS161.220; KRS161.540; KRS 161.545; KRS 161.555; OAG 81-1; KRS 161.560; KRS 161.600; KRS 157.420)

I. Drug and Tobacco Use Policy

1. Drug Policy

GRREC is committed to providing a high quality work environment for its employees. An important aspect of a quality workplace is that it be drug-free; therefore, the Board is committed to full compliance with federal regulations regarding the maintenance of a Drug-Free Workplace. The illegal manufacture, distribution, dispensation, or use of narcotics, drugs, alcohol, or controlled substances during workplace hours constitutes conduct unbecoming an employee and is prohibited. An employee shall not report to work, or work after having used any prohibited drug and/or alcohol. Compliance with this regulation is a condition of employment and any employee in violation is subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Compliance with the standards of conduct stated in this policy is mandatory of all employees. Violations of any part of the policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension and termination. If the situation warrants, the Director shall communicate all available information promptly to the proper law enforcement agency and offer the full cooperation of GRREC in any investigation.

If an employee is suspected of being intoxicated or inebriated on any substance while at work, the Executive Director has the authority to have the employee

submit to a drug screening and/or a breath alcohol test at the employee's expense. If the employee refuses to comply with a voluntary drug test, the Executive Director has the authority to suspend and/or terminate that employee. Tests will be conducted at a health care provider chosen by GRREC, and the employee will be accompanied by the HR Specialist to the provider. Employees working or traveling for GRREC are expected to be in full control of themselves at all times.

Employees are encouraged to seek treatment and/or counseling for drug problems. GRREC will not assume any expenses incurred in counseling or attendance in a drug/alcohol program. A request for assistance by an employee after violating this regulation will not affect the imposition of disciplinary action.

Employees shall notify the Executive Director in writing of any criminal drug statute violation incurred by them within five (5) calendar days of the violation (including arrest and/or conviction). Within ten (10) calendar days after receiving an employee's notification of violation, the Executive Director shall inform the relevant agency(s). A copy of this report shall be simultaneously provided to the members of the Board.

All employees shall be required to confirm in writing their knowledge of the Board's Drug-Free Workplace policy and their agreement to abide by this policy as a condition of employment. (KRS 160-209; KRS 161.790; 34 CFR Part 85; PL 101-226; 20 U.S.C.A. Section 3171)

2. Tobacco Policy

GRREC adheres to the statewide no smoking policy mandated as of May 15, 1993 for all public buildings. Smoking, the use of tobacco, or products containing tobacco in any form is prohibited in any GRREC facility (including any offices, stairwells, elevators, hallways, classrooms, restrooms, reception areas, conference rooms, and break rooms).

J. Leave Benefits

1. Reporting Absences/Leave

Employees taking sick, personal, or out of calendar days are responsible for ensuring their days are properly reported and entered in the electronic accrual recording software. The steps in the absence reporting process are as follows:

- a. An employee needing to use a sick day must login to the accrual recording software and input their absence. If the employee is unable to put the absence in, their supervisor must be notified of their absence as soon as possible. The supervisor can then enter the absence in the software themselves, or notify the HR Specialist or Office Manager.
- b. If an employee is taking an out of calendar day or personal day, prior approval is required. Entering the absence in the accrual recording software will begin the approval process. Once the absence has been approved, the employee will receive a confirmation email.
- c. There may be situations where prior approval is not possible (i.e., snow days, personal emergencies, etc.). In such cases the employee should use their best judgment about whether to come to work. If this situation occurs, the employee should immediately notify their supervisor and the GRREC main office about the absence. If possible, they should also attempt to enter the absence in the accrual recording software and inform their supervisor or the HR Specialist to input their absence.

2. Sick Leave

Full-time employees shall be entitled to ten (10) sick leave days with pay each year. Persons employed for less than a full year contract shall receive a pro-rated part of the authorized sick leave days calculated to the nearest ½ day. Persons employed on a full-year contract but scheduled for less than a full work day shall receive authorized sick leave equivalent to their normal working day. Sick leave days not taken during the year in which they were granted shall accumulate without limitation to the credit of the employee to whom they were granted.

Sickness shall mean personal illness, including illness or temporary disabilities arising from pregnancy. An employee may use their sick days following the birth or adoption of a child or children. Sick leave can also be taken for illness in the immediate family or for the purpose of mourning a member of the employee's immediate family. Immediate family shall mean the employee's spouse, children (including stepchildren), parents, spouse's parents, grandparents, spouse's grandparents without reference to the location or residence of said relative and

any other blood relative who resides in the employee's home.

Employees taking more than five (5) sick days consecutively must have prior approval from the Executive Director. Upon return to work they must file a personal affidavit or a certificate of a physician stating that the employee was ill or that the employee was absent for the purpose of attending to a member of the immediate family who was ill.

Employees coming to GRREC from a Kentucky school district, Kentucky Public College or University, or from the Kentucky Department of Education may transfer accumulated sick leave to the Cooperative. Upon leaving GRREC, an employee may obtain a statement from the Executive Director verifying his/her accumulated sick leave at that point for the consideration of the agency or organization to which the employee may accept new employment.

Upon retirement, the Board shall compensate each GRREC employee employed for a period of at least five years for their unused sick leave. The rate shall be 30% of the daily salary for each unused sick day. This calculation shall be based upon the employee's last annual salary. In addition, GRREC will honor experience worked at any other cooperative that is absorbed by GRREC.

3. Personal Leave

Full time employees shall be entitled to three (3) days of personal leave with pay each year. Persons employed for less than a full year shall receive a pro-rated amount of the authorized personal leave days calculated to the nearest ½ day. Persons employed on a full-year contract but scheduled for less than a full work day shall receive authorized personal leave equivalent to their normal working day. The Executive Director, Chief Financial Officer, or the appropriate Associate Director must approve the leave date but no reason shall be required for the leave. The request shall be submitted to the Executive Director prior to the date for which leave is requested. Employees taking personal leave must file a personal affidavit on their return to work stating that the leave was personal in nature.

On June 30, personal leave days not taken during the current year shall be transferred and credited to the employee's accumulated sick leave account. Employees, upon leaving GRREC, shall not be compensated for any unused

personal leave accrued that year.

4. Non-Contracted Days/Out of Calendar Days

Employees shall work the days specified in their contracts. Use of non-contracted days for GRREC work must be approved in advance by the Executive Director, Chief Financial Officer, or the appropriate Associate Director. Non-contracted days not taken during the fiscal year in which they were available may not accumulate. Any days remaining as of June 30th must be used no later than August 31st of the same calendar year. A waiver of this policy to allow the employee to carry forward non-work days for longer than the end of the current calendar year may be granted at the discretion of the Executive Director.

a. Contract Substitution Day

Employees can count up to six days of work done on a pre-approved basis by the Executive Director, Chief Financial Officer, or the appropriate Associate Director as part of their contract days. The guidelines for substitution days are:

- 1) 240+ day contract – Up to 6 days
- 2) 220-239 day contract – Up to 5 days
- 3) 185-219 day contract – Up to 4 days
- 4) Up to 184 day contract – Up to 3 days

These days are for attendance at, travel to, facilitation of, or preparation for an approved conference, workshop, or completion of a grant. There must be a documented exceptional need. This leave requires prior approval of both the employee's supervisor and the Executive Director.

5. Holiday Leave

GRREC employees who work the number of days specified below shall be paid for the corresponding number of holidays:

Days Employed	# of Paid Holidays	Paid Holidays
184	4	New Year's Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day
185-219	6	New Year's Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, Memorial Day, 4 th of July
220-239	7	New Year's Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Martin Luther King Day
240+	8	New Year's Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Martin Luther King Day, President's Day

6. Childcare Leave

Childbirth and recovery therefrom, which prevents the employee from performing assigned duties, shall entitle the employee to sick leave benefits as stated in Board policy. An illness of the newborn shall entitle the employee to sick leave benefits as provided in the Board policy.

a. Unpaid Childcare Leave

Upon written request, the parent of a newborn or the employee who adopts a child or children shall be granted unpaid leave of absence not to exceed the remainder of the contract year. Thereafter, the leave may be extended for one (1) year. Employees on childcare leave shall notify the Executive Director in writing of their intent to return to the workplace on or before March 15. Employees who fail to notify the Executive Director of their return by the date prescribed shall not be guaranteed employment for the following fiscal year. Employees taking childcare leave will be entitled,

upon return, to a comparable position for which they are qualified.

Placement in the same position cannot be guaranteed.

7. Family and Medical Leave (FMLA – Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993)

In compliance with FMLA of 1993, GRREC will grant unpaid leave up to a maximum of twelve weeks during any one-year period to an eligible employee for one or more of the following reasons: for the care of the employee's child (birth, adoption, foster); for the care of the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition; or for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform his/her job. In order to qualify for FMLA, an employee must have been employed by GRREC for at least one year, and must have worked 1,250 hours over the previous twelve months.

- a. Applying for FMLA - The request for family/medical leave must be made in writing to the Executive Director thirty days prior to the beginning of the leave. Advance notice is not required in cases of medical emergency or other unforeseeable events. Medical certification from a licensed, practicing health-care provider must be provided with application for FMLA. The certification must verify the need for the leave and the estimated length of the leave. The medical certification must be provided at the time the request for FMLA is presented to the Executive Director. If an employee fails to provide timely medical certification, the leave may be denied until medical certification is provided. The medical certification must include a statement from a licensed practicing health-care provider that the employee is unable to perform the required functions of his or her position.

An employee who wishes to request unpaid FMLA must provide thirty days advance notice to the Executive Director in writing if the need for the leave is "foreseeable." The written request must state the declared reason for the leave and the length of time requested. Medical certification from a licensed practicing health-care provider must also be provided. GRREC may require a second medical opinion and periodic recertification at its own expense. If the first and second medical opinions differ, GRREC, at

its own expense, may require the binding opinion of a third licensed, practicing health-care provider approved jointly by the employee and the Cooperative.

- b. Length of Leave - An eligible employee of GRREC is entitled to a total of twelve (12) work weeks of leave during a “rolling” twelve month period measured backward from the date the employee first uses any FMLA leave. However, the employee must first utilize earned and/or accrued sick leave and unused personal days to substitute for all or part of any unpaid FMLA leave. FMLA leave because of the birth or adoption of a child expires at the end of the twelve-month period beginning on the date of the birth of the child or placement of the child. Any leave must be concluded within this one-year period. Spouses employed by GRREC are limited to a total of twelve (12) weeks combined leave for the birth or adoption of a child, or for the care of a sick relative.
- c. FMLA Health Insurance during Leave: For the duration of the FMLA leave, the employee’s group health insurance will be continued under the same conditions as if the employee had continued working. Since the employee will be on unpaid leave, the employee will be responsible for bringing to the Finance office each month the employee-paid portion of the health insurance premium. State matching insurance will continue during the period of the leave. Even though the employee is on unpaid FMLA leave, he or she must continue to make his or her contribution to the insurance premium. Payment of the employee-paid portion of the health insurance premium will be due in the Chief Financial Officer’s office at the same time as if it were on a regular payroll deduction. If the employee on FMLA leave has received state matching contribution for health insurance and does not return to work, the amount of the insurance matched provided by the state will be recovered from the employee.
- d. Reporting Requirement during Leave: Employees on FMLA leave shall communicate with GRREC every two weeks during the leave period to report on the employee’s leave status and intention to return to work, as

well as the expected date of return.

- e. **Returning from Leave:** As a condition of restoration from FMLA leave, the employee will provide medical certification from a licensed, practicing health-care provider that the employee is able to resume work. If an employee is permanently unable to return from leave, medical certification from a licensed, practicing health-care provider must be provided to verify the inability of the employee to return to work. An employee taking FMLA leave is entitled to be returned to his or her previous position or to a comparable position for which they are qualified. In the event that an employee is unable to return to work, the Executive Director will make a determination at that time as to the documented need for a severance of the employee's contract due to an inability of the employee to fulfill the responsibilities and requirements of the contract.

8. Maternity Leave

Staff members may use accumulated sick leave, out-of-calendar leave, and/or personal leave for maternity/adoption leave, with pay. Any unpaid maternity/adoption leave will be counted toward the twelve weeks leave available under the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993.

9. Disability Leave

a. Extended Disability Leave

Unpaid disability shall be granted by the Board, upon written request, for the remainder of the contract year. Thereafter, leave may be extended in increments of no more than one (1) year. In compliance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 medical leave shall be granted in accordance with Board policy. Employees on extended disability leave shall notify the Executive Director in writing of their intent to return to GRREC on or before March 15 of the year the leave terminates.

Employees who fail to notify the Executive Director of their return by this date shall not be guaranteed employment for the following year. The Executive Director may require the employee to secure a licensed physician's verification of disability. Employees taking disability leave

will be entitled to return to a comparable position for which they are qualified. Placement in the same position shall not be guaranteed.

b. Involuntary Disability Leave

When, in the opinion of the Executive Director, there is evidence that an employee is no longer able to perform satisfactorily the assigned duties, the Executive Director may require the employee to submit to a physical examination with a licensed physician. The Board shall bear the cost of this examination only if the physician is chosen by the Executive Director.

10. Court/Jury Duty Leave

Any employee who serves on a jury in a duly constituted local, state, or federal court shall be granted leave with full compensation for the period of the actual jury service. The employee shall reimburse GRREC for the amount of any compensation received as jury pay with the exception of travel expenses. Persons who will be absent from work to serve on a jury must give advance notice to their immediate supervisor. Employees should return to their work station in the event the jury duty ends and they can be back to work with at least two hours left to work.

11. Military Leave

Military leave will be granted in compliance with P.L. 93-508 (December 1974) as amended by P.L. 94-286 (May 1976), as amended by P.L. 103-503 (October 1994). The employee must attach a copy of his/her military orders to each request.

12. Educational Leave

Upon written request and recommendation of the Executive Director, the Board may grant certified personnel a leave (without pay) not to exceed two (2) consecutive years for the purpose of obtaining additional training to enhance professional skills. Leave may be granted for full-time attendance at universities or other training activities approved by the Executive Director when those activities are related to the employee's job or to other jobs an employee might hold in the Cooperative. Leave shall not be granted for part-time educational activities. Written application for educational leave must be made at least sixty

(60) days before the beginning of the educational year. Employees on educational leave shall notify the Executive Director in writing of their intent to return to GRREC. Employees who fail to notify the Executive Director of their return shall not be guaranteed employment for the following year. Employees taking an educational leave will be entitled on return to a comparable position for which they are qualified. Placement in the same position cannot be guaranteed.

K. Working from Home

No employee of GRREC shall be allowed to work from home without prior written approval of the Executive Director. Exceptions may only be considered by the Executive Director.

L. Employee Benefits

1. Insurance

The Board shall provide unemployment insurance, Workers' Compensation, and liability insurance for all personnel. In addition, the State provides full-time employees with term life insurance and single coverage hospitalization insurance.

2. Workers Compensation Coverage

It is the intent of GRREC to provide a safe and accident free workplace.

Employees are encouraged to practice safe work habits and to always use good judgment related to all work tasks. Additionally, employees are encouraged to report any workplace problem(s) that might result in an employee injury or sickness. Should an employee be injured while at work, or involved in a work-related accident, the employee must immediately (or as soon as is possible) report the incident to his/her immediate supervisor, and report the claim to the Chief Financial Officer. At the time the claim is reported to the Chief Financial Officer, the employee will be given a basic fact sheet that covers frequently asked questions regarding this coverage. The employee will be given the name of GRREC's Workers' Compensation approved doctor. The personnel of GRREC do not participate in eligibility determination. All claims will be reviewed by an independent claims agency, and approved by Workers' Compensation to determine eligibility. The employee is responsible for all expenses incurred if the claim is denied. Simply reporting the claim does not guarantee an eligible claim.

There is an appeal process for claims that are denied. In case of a denial, a denial notification will be sent to the employee, and the appeal process will be outlined on this notification.

Employees qualifying for Workers' Compensation indemnity payments may choose to take sick leave pay during part or all of the period they are unable to work. However, the amount paid to these employees while on sick leave shall be deducted from their Workers' Compensation indemnity payments. (Employees shall be responsible for determining any personal tax consequences resulting from their choice to use sick leave pay.)

M. Employee Reimbursements

1. Travel Expenses

The Board shall reimburse GRREC personnel for job related travel when such travel is a required part of the duties of the employee, or for job related activities that have been approved. Approval for an overnight stay must be approved in advance by the Chief Financial Officer/Associate Directors, or in some cases the Executive Director. GRREC will be responsible only for allowable expenses. Allowable expenses are as follows:

- a. Mileage - Actual mileage between your official work station or home (whichever is the lesser amount) to locations within GRREC's districts and outside the districts, which have been approved by the Chief Financial Officer, or the appropriate Associate Director, shall be reimbursed when the employee uses his/her personal vehicle for official GRREC duties. The reimbursed rate will be equal to the current state allowed mileage rate.
- b. Parking - All tolls and parking fees incurred in job-related travel, when supported by a receipt will be reimbursed.
- c. Car Rental - Car rental charges, when approved in advance by the Chief Financial Officer, or the appropriate Associate Director, will be reimbursed when substantiated by a receipt.
- d. Carriers - All charges for fares for necessary travel on common carriers (plane, train, bus, subway, taxi, ferry, etc.) will be reimbursed provided appropriate travel approvals are in place. Sightseeing and pleasure tours

are not reimbursable.

- e. Food - Actual money spent on meals while on approved overnight travel may be reimbursed up to \$35 per day. A receipt is required for any reimbursement on meals. Any meal over \$3.00 must be substantiated by an itemized receipt. The Executive Director in the discharge of his duties may exceed this amount. No alcoholic beverages are reimbursable.
- f. Lodging: Hotel charges (not including food or other charges) incurred in job-related travel must be approved and substantiated by a purchase order prior to traveling.

NO requests for travel reimbursement will be considered without prior approval by the Executive Director, Chief Financial Officer, or the appropriate Associate Director. The proper travel authorization form and all proper receipts must accompany the reimbursement form.

N. Travel Authorization

For travel outside of regular daily duties the following documents and procedures will be followed:

Any travel which requires an overnight stay, or travel during normal business hours which falls outside an employee's regular daily duties, must have a completed and approved travel authorization form filled out prior to any travel occurring. The employee is responsible for ensuring a travel authorization form has been completed and approved before s/he travels. The employee fills out the form, submits it to his/her department head, who in turn submits it to the Chief Financial Officer, or the appropriate Associate Director.

Prior to working in any new district added to GRREC after July 1, 2013, each GRREC employee is required to submit a travel authorization form. Regardless of whether the trip requires an overnight stay or occurs during regular business hours, an approved travel authorization is required for these districts.

1. Travel Purchase Orders: Travel related purchase orders must be completed for the following: registration, transportation, lodging, meals, parking, etc. Travel related purchase order requests will only be approved if an approved travel authorization

form accompanies the request. The purchase order and the travel authorization will be approved at the same time.

O. Purchasing Procedures

1. Purchase Order Signing Approval

The total cost amount of the purchase order determines who needs to sign the Purchase Order. The procedures are as follows:

- a. Purchase Orders less than \$5,000 require three signatures as designated by the Executive Director: the CFO, Associate Director, and the requesting employee.
- b. Purchase Orders greater than \$5,000 require four signatures as designated by the Executive Director: the CFO, Associate Director, Executive Director, and the requesting employee.

2. Non-Travel Related Purchase Orders

Purchase Orders or standard invoices for goods and services must be completed prior to any purchase. For a required/necessary purchase an employee must complete a Purchase Order form in full. The Purchase Order is then submitted to their supervisor for review. Once the department head approves the purchase and signs off, the department head will submit the Purchase Order to the Chief Financial Officer. The Chief Financial Officer will review the Purchase Order and sign off if he/she determines the purchase is necessary.

Any Purchase Order over \$20,000 must have the bid section of the form filled out (refer to the bids section of this document for information on the bid process). The approved Purchase Order is then submitted to the Finance Department for proper processing. The Finance Department will make a pink copy of the approved Purchase Order, which will be returned to the employee requesting the good or service. The white copy of the Purchase Order will be retained by the Finance Department.

The pink purchase order form is returned to the employee who will await delivery of the good or service. Once the good or service has been received, the employee signs the Purchase Order to show it has been received. The employee then resubmits the pink Purchase Order form to the Chief Financial Officer to process for payment.

P. Workstation

1. A permanent workstation is defined as the employee's main place of business as assigned by the Chief Financial Officer, the appropriate Associate Director or the Executive Director.
2. A temporary workstation is defined as the employee's temporary place of business as assigned by the Chief Financial Officer, the appropriate Associate Director, or the Executive Director to fulfill necessary work-related responsibilities.
3. From home to permanent workstation is considered a commuting expense and is non-reimbursable.

Q. Travel Route

Employees shall travel by the shortest reasonable route to any destination, and the mode of transportation shall be the most economical within reason.

R. Compensation

All financial compensation, including grant related and approved tuition reimbursement, requires a written request for pre-approval to the Executive Director.

S. Usage of GRREC Equipment

1. Technology Usage

GRREC has personal computers which are used for specific purposes within programs or departments. The following procedures apply to all computers and computer systems within the Cooperative. The Executive Director and Network Administrator must approve all purchases of computers and software. This procedure is to be followed to prevent duplication, and to assure that all computer equipment and software are compatible with the Cooperative's goal of a total integrated system.

GRREC employees should back up their computer's operating system, application software, and data files weekly. Any question on backing up your files should be clarified with the Network Administrator.

Assistant Directors are responsible for overseeing the personal computers within their respective program areas. At a minimum, the following procedures should be followed: individuals authorized to use the computer must be identified, and any unauthorized use must be reported to the Network Administrator; and technology

equipment may not be transferred to another employee without notifying the Network Administrator.

a. Acceptable Use

This policy is based on the assumption that the majority of GRREC's employees want to use information technology appropriately but may be unaware of the laws, regulations, and GRREC's expectations guiding use. Some will, however, intentionally disregard these guidelines. The adoption of an acceptable use policy involves educating all employees and providing legal and disciplinary boundaries for those who may contemplate misuse. GRREC has adopted an Acceptable Use Policy to guide access to information in electronic media, information technology, and networks. The purposes of this policy are to: educate; provide protection against violations of privacy, misuse of State resources, and inappropriate or destructive behaviors which occur as a result of employee access to electronic information resources; and ensure the technology resources of GRREC are dedicated to improving service and raising productivity.

Users must respect the privacy of others; for example, users shall not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to others, or represent themselves as another user unless explicitly authorized to do so by that user. Users must respect the legal protection provided by copyright and license to programs and data. Users must respect the integrity of computing and network systems; for example, users shall not intentionally develop or use programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer, computing system or network. Users should be consistent with guiding ethical statements and accepted Cooperative standards. Malicious use is not acceptable. GRREC email may not be used in ways that violate applicable laws or regulations. Use of GRREC email in a manner that precludes or significantly hampers its use

by others is not allowed. Repeated, unsolicited and unwanted communication of an intrusive nature is not acceptable. For example, continuing to send e-mail messages to an individual after being asked to stop is not acceptable. Connections which create routing patterns that are inconsistent with the effective and shared usage of the network may not be established.

This policy applies to all employees of GRREC including all personnel serving under contract or memorandum of agreement. Each individual is responsible for his/her own actions and the actions of those he/she knowingly permits to use assigned resources and passwords.

If technical assistance is needed, an online work order must be completed. That order will then be submitted to the Network Administrator.

b. Email

GRREC may provide you with access to an e-mail system. All e-mail messages are company records. These systems may be subject to periodic unannounced inspections and should be treated like other shared filing systems. The contents of e-mail may be disclosed within the company without your permission. Therefore, you should not assume that messages are confidential. Backup copies of e-mail may be maintained and referenced for business and legal reasons. The GRREC e-mail system is to be used for business purposes only.

c. Internet

GRREC respects the privacy of its employees. However, employee privacy does not extend to an employee's work-related conduct or to the use of company provided equipment or supplies. As a condition of providing Internet access to its employees, GRREC places certain restrictions on workplace use of the Internet. The Internet may be used to acquire information related to the performance of regularly assigned duties or to facilitate performance of any task or project in a manner approved by

an employee's supervisor. You are expressly prohibited from using the Internet for the following:

- 1) Any illegal or unlawful purpose such as: copyright infringement, obscenity, libel, slander, fraud, defamation, plagiarism, harassment, intimidation, forgery, impersonation, illegal gambling, soliciting for illegal pyramid schemes, and deliberate computer tampering (e.g. spreading computer viruses or worms).
- 2) Unreasonable or extensive personal use or use which does not fulfill, or conflicts with, the individual's role within GRREC.
- 3) Inappropriately viewing, copying, altering, or destroying data, software, documentation, or data communications belonging to GRREC or another individual without authorized permission.
- 4) Violation of the policies, rules, regulations, or codes of conduct, or using in any manner not consistent with the professional status of the GRREC misrepresents the Cooperative, or brings the Cooperative into disrepute. This would include: game playing, shopping, solicitation, any non-work related streaming audio (radio) or video, any unauthorized /unapproved software, and non-work related or non-educational chat rooms.

T. Employee Grievance/Disciplinary Procedure

An employee shall be entitled to and shall be offered the opportunity to have a witness or representative of the employee's choice present during any disciplinary or grievance matter with any administrator. The purpose of this procedure is to secure, at the lowest possible level, equitable solutions to problems which may, from time to time, affect employees. The employee shall have the right to present grievances and, in so doing, shall be assured freedom from restraint, interference, discrimination, and reprisal. At any point in the procedure, the complainant has the right to counsel. The following steps will be used in any complaint or grievance:

1. Within ten days (two working weeks) of the incident, the complainant must present the complaint in written form to their immediate supervisor.
2. Upon receipt of the complaint, the supervisor has one working week (five days) in

which to investigate and respond in writing to the complainant.

3. If the complainant desires to further pursue the grievance, the grievance must be presented to the Chief Financial Officer, or the appropriate Associate Director within ten days (two working weeks) of receiving the supervisor's written response.
4. A written response by the Chief Financial Officer, or the appropriate Associate Director must be received by the complainant within five days (one working week) after receipt of the written complaint.
5. If the complainant is not satisfied at this level, an appeal may be made within ten days (two working weeks) to the Board of Directors which will consider the complaint at the next regular board meeting. Board meeting hearings will be conducted so as to accord due process to all parties involved in the complaint, such as written notice of hearings, dates of specific charges, right to counsel, and right to present written statements. The decision of the Board of Directors will be by a majority of the members at a public meeting.
6. The Board of Directors will respond to the complainant in writing within thirty (30) calendar days. The Board's decision/determination will be final.

U. Workplace Harassment/Discrimination

GRREC employees come into contact with not only other GRREC employees, but also school district employees whom GRREC serves. On the rarest of occasions, GRREC employees may also come into contact with school district students.

Harassment/Discrimination of employees is unlawful behavior based on race, color, national or ethnic origin, sex, genetic information, religion, political affiliation, age, or disability of an employee which involves intimidation through threats of, or actual physical violence; the creation by whatever means, of a climate of hostility or intimidation, or the use of language, conduct, or symbols in such a manner as to be commonly understood to convey hatred or prejudice.

Sexual harassment of an employee or school district employee/student is defined as any unwanted, personally offensive sexual attention, requests for sexual favors, or other illegal conduct of a sexual nature when: submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic

status; submission to, or rejection of, such conduct is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting that individual; or such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, educational experience, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment.

Harassment/Discrimination is prohibited at all times on GRREC's grounds and off GRREC's grounds during GRREC-sponsored activities. This prohibition also applies to visitors to GRREC who may come into contact with GRREC employees, school district employees/students. GRREC Staff shall provide for a prompt and equitable resolution of complaints concerning harassment/discrimination. Employees who engage in sexual harassment/discrimination of another employee or school district employee/student shall be subject to disciplinary action including but not limited to termination of employment.

The Executive Director shall provide procedures encompassing the following: investigation of allegations of harassment/discrimination, to include a submission of a written report of all findings of an investigation to the complainant and the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors to be completed within thirty (30) working days of receipt of the original written complaint; measures to provide confidentiality in the complaint process; and a process to identify and employ, within thirty (30) working days of the submission of the written investigative report, methods to correct and prevent reoccurrence of the harassment/discrimination. The Executive Director shall also provide a process where the provisions of this policy are disseminated in writing annually to all staff and provide an annual explanation of prohibited behaviors.

Depending on the circumstances and facts of the situation, and within the definition of harassment/discrimination contained in this policy, examples of conduct and/or actions that could be considered a violation of this policy include but are not limited to:

1. Name calling, stories, jokes, pictures, or objects that are offensive to one's gender, race, color, national origin, age, marital status, religion, or disability;
2. Unwanted touching, sexual name calling, sexual jokes and spreading sexual rumors;
3. Employees being subjected to sexual remarks by another employee in the context of the workplace, regardless of gender;
4. Impeding the work and/or limiting the opportunities of an employee by

questioning his/her ability to do the required or anticipated work based on the gender of the employee; and/or

5. Limiting access to tools and/or equipment based on the employee's gender.

Upon the completion of the investigation and correction of the conditions leading to the harassment/discrimination, any party may appeal any part of the findings and corrective actions to the Executive Director (42 USC 2000e).

V. Personnel Information Changes

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify GRREC of any changes in personnel data. Personal mailing addresses, name changes, telephone numbers, number and names of dependents, individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency, educational accomplishment, certification changes, and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times. If any personnel data has changed, notify the HR Specialist. Failure to report personnel data changes may adversely impact the employee's pay or benefit programs.

W. Exit Checklist

Any employee leaving GRREC, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, must meet with the HR Specialist and complete the checklist of exiting activities. This checklist will ensure that both GRREC and the employee have met all of their obligations in transitioning the employee to a post-employment status.