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# AGENDA

## **GCTD Board of Directors Meeting**

**Meeting will be in-person and**

**Virtual Tuesday March 15, 2023,**

**2:00 p.m. Texas City**

**Administration Building**

**1415 33<sup>RD</sup> Street North**

**Texas City, TX 77590**

1. **Call to order**.....Chairman Holmes
2. **Citizens Comments (3 Minute Maximum Time)**..... Chairman Holmes
3. **Presentations**.....Scott Caput
  - a. Keep Truckin Mobile Camera Proposal
4. **Executive Director's Reports**.....Sean Middleton
  - a. Legislative update: Federal
  - b. Operations Report.....Ted Ross
  - c. Budget Finance Report.....Nathan Nevelow
5. **Consent Agenda**.....Chairman Holmes

Consideration and approval of recommendations and acceptance of consent for individual action items (Consent Agenda items may be pulled from form this consideration for individual action or presentation.)

  - a. Review and approval of February 15, 2022 Board Minutes.
  - b. Review and approval of February Check Register.

Topic: GCTD Board Meeting

Time: Mar 15, 2022 02:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83839574079?pwd=WktBZUN5QXZMWG5XUmRjRkpqeUJkUT09>

Meeting ID: 838 3957 4079

Passcode: 374311

One tap mobile

+13462487799,,83839574079#,,,,\*374311# US (Houston)

+12532158782,,83839574079#,,,,\*374311# US (Tacoma)

Dial by your location

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 408 638 0968 US (San Jose)

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 838 3957 4079

Passcode: 374311

# OPERATIONS REPORT

TED ROSS, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS  
March 21, 2023

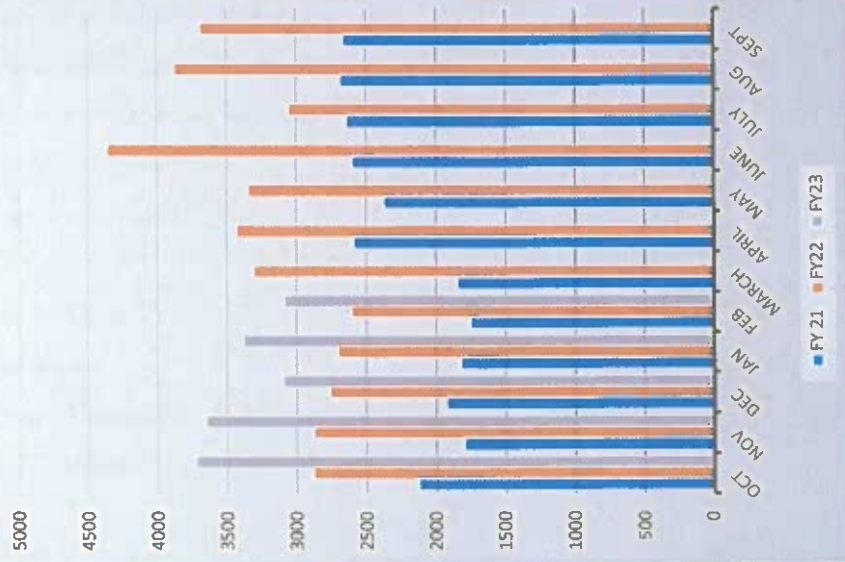
BRAZORIA AND GALVESTON COUNTY



PARA-TRANSIT  
FIXED ROUTE  
PARK AND RIDE

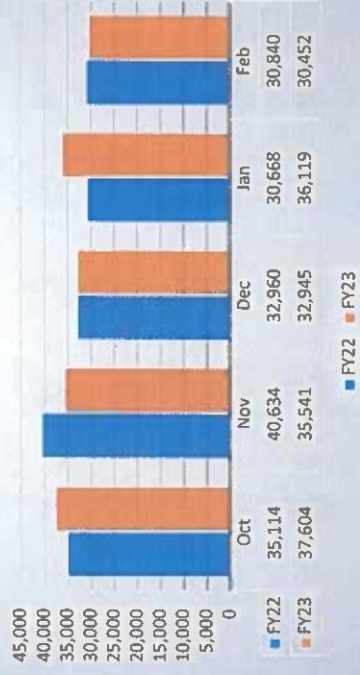


## Galveston County Para Transit



Para-Transit:				
	FY21	FY22	FY23	
Oct	2,124	2,882	3,722	
Nov	1,795	2,878	3,648	
Dec	1,918	2,758	3,094	
Jan	1,818	2,701	3,379	
Feb	1,750	2,603	3,084	
March	1,839	3,303		
April	2,587	3,427		
May	2,369	3,342		
June	2,594	4,357		
July	2,635	3,054		
Aug	2,683	3,873		
Sept	2,658	3,686		
Total	26,770	38,864	16,927	

## Total Miles

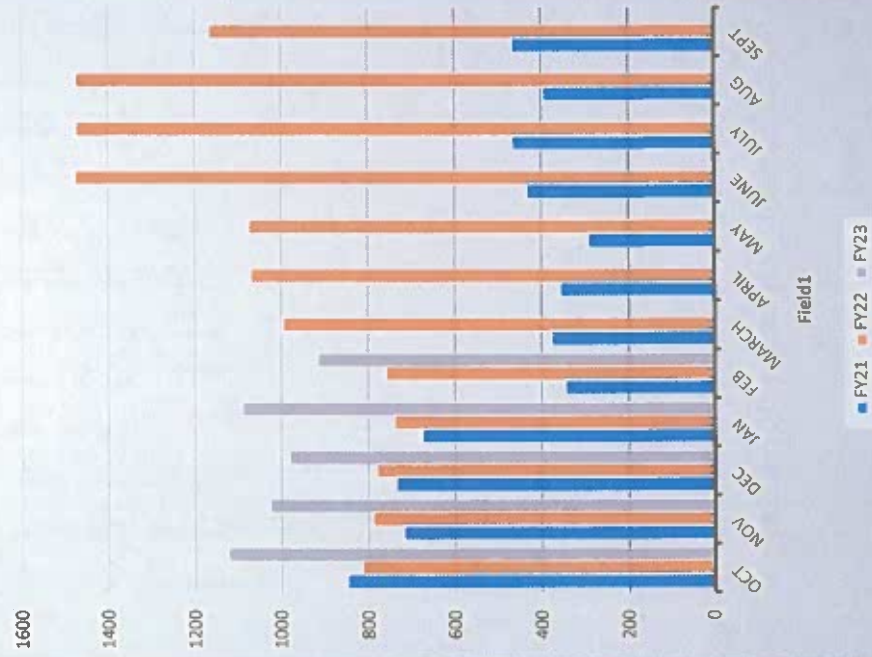


## ADA On Time Performance





## Brazoria County Para Transit



## Para-Transit:

	FY21	FY22	FY23
<b>Oct</b>	<b>848</b>	<b>814</b>	<b>1,123</b>
<b>Nov</b>	<b>717</b>	<b>789</b>	<b>1,025</b>
<b>Dec</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>979</b>
<b>Jan</b>	<b>674</b>	<b>739</b>	<b>1,088</b>
<b>Feb</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>760</b>	<b>914</b>
<b>March</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>995</b>	
<b>April</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>1,069</b>	
<b>May</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>1,074</b>	
<b>June</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>1,475</b>	
<b>July</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>1,168</b>	
<b>Aug</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>1,473</b>	
<b>Sept</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>1,165</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,952</b>	<b>12,301</b>	<b>5,129</b>

## Total Miles



## ADA On Time Performance





## Staffing Report

### • Brazoria County:

- 5 – CDL Positions Open -
- 2 – Non CDL Position Open -
- 1 – Part Time Position Open -
- 0 – Porter Position Open -
- 0 – Mechanic Position Open -

### • Galveston County:

- 4 – CDL Position Open -
- 1 – Park and Ride Position Open -
- 2 – Non CDL Position Open -
- 0 – Porter Position Open -
- 1 – Mechanic Position Open -
- 0 – Dispatcher Position Open -



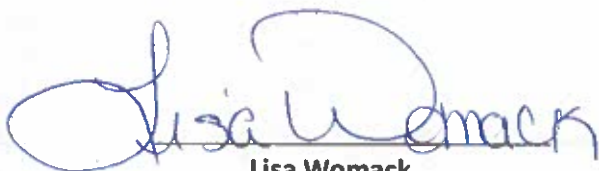
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**January 17, 2023**

**Board Meeting Minutes**

1. **Call to order:** Quorum was established at 2:00 pm Chairman Holmes opened the meeting. The following Board Members were present: Dude Payne, Chris Whittaker, Neal Bess Jr, Chairman Holmes, David Jordan, Amy Skicki, Rick Elizondo, Modesto Mundo, Tim Kelty, Gerald Roznovsky  
Joined Zoom Paula Alexander
2. **Citizens Comments:** none
- ❖ **Operations Report:** Ted spoke about the increase in ridership in Paratransit. In both Brazoria and Galveston County, Ted showed the new Operations report he has created there was a slight increase in fixed routes, and an increase in Paratransit.  
Brazoria has 4 part time positions open Galveston County has no vacant positions open with one open position in Park and Ride.
- ❖ **Budget and Finance Report:** Worth spoke to the FY 2023 Budget
4. **Discussion items:**
  - Board Member nominations for upcoming March meeting
  - Holiday Calendar for FY 23-24
  - Maintenance facility lease options
  - Print service procurement
  - Omnia Cooperative Agreement
  - Organizational Structure update
  - ADP Services for HR and Payroll to replace Datis
5. **Consent Agenda:**
  - a. Review and approval of November ,2022 Board minutes on motion by David Jordan, seconded by Rick Elizondo, the board voted to approve November Board minutes the motion carried with all members voting in favor approved
  - b. Review and approval of November and December check register: on motion by David Jordan, seconded by Rick Elizondo, the board voted to approve the November and December check register the motion carried with all members voting in favor.
6. **Action Items:**
  - a. Consider approval of the updated Holiday Calendar on motion by Dude Payne, seconded by Amy Skicki, the board voted to approve the updated Holiday the motion carried with all members voting in favor.

- b. Consider approval to allow the Executive Director to enter into a lease for and off-site maintenance facility NTE 8K Monthly on motion by Chris Whittaker seconded by Amy Skicki, the board voted to approval to allow Executive Director to enter into a lease for an off-site maintenance facility NTE 8K monthly the motion carried with all member voting in favor
  - c. Consider approval to authorize the allow Executive Director to enter into a print service agreement with TNT Printing for print services on motion by David Jordan, seconded by Neal Bess Jr the board voted to approve to authorize the Executive Director to enter into a print service agreement with TNT Printing for print services motion carried with all members voting in favor.
  - d. Consider approval to allow Executive Director to enter into a contract with Omnia Cooperative on motion by Neal Bess JR, seconded by Amy Skicki the board voted to approval to allow the Executive Director to enter into a contract with Omnia Cooperative the motion carried with all member voting in favor.
  - e. Consider approval to allow the Executive Director to enter into a contract with ADP for Human Resources and Payroll System Services on motion by Amy Skicki seconded by David Jordan the board voted approval to allow the Executive Director to enter into a contract with ADP for Human Resources and Payroll System Services the motion carried with all members voting in favor the board asked that a report be given to them in months on how the system is working out.
  - f. Consider approval of the Updated Organizational structure on motion by Neal Bess JR, seconded by Amy Skicki the board voted on approval of the Updated Organizational Structure motion carried with all members voting in favor
7. Next Board of Directors meeting will be in-person March 21,2023 2:00 PM at Texas City Building
8. **Adjournment:** There being no further business to bring before the Board of Directors the meeting was adjourned at 2:29 pm.



**Lisa Womack**  
Secretary to the Board of Directors

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**Stephen Holmes**  
Chairman to the board of directors





## **Gulf Coast Transit District Employee Policy & Procedure Handbook**

Approved by the GCTD Board of Directors and GCTD Executive Director Sean Middleton on 4/20/21

REVISED AND APPROVED 8/16/2022

- 4.9 Cell Phone Use Policy
- 4.10 Employee Backgrounds
- 4.11 Employee Performance Appraisal Feedback
- 4.12 Orientation and Onboarding

- 4.13 Learning & Development
- 4.14 Conflict Resolution
- 4.15 Conducting Investigations

## Section 5 Employee Benefits & Services

Pg. 93

- 5.1 General
- 5.2 Health Insurance: Medical, Dental, Vision
- 5.3 Life Insurance
- 5.4 Retirement Accounts
- 5.5 Flexible Spending Account (FSA)

- 5.6 COBRA
- 5.7 Critical Illness
- 5.8 Social Security Benefits (FICA)
- 5.9 Unemployment Insurance
- 5.10 Employee Wellness

## Section 6 Leaves of Absence & Time Off

Pg. 97

- 6.1 Time Off Requests, Earned Accrued Leave, Flex Time
- 6.2 Holidays
- 6.3 Maternity Leave
- 6.4 Family Medical Leave (FMLA)
- 6.5 Workers Compensation Leave
- 6.6 Emergency Natural Disaster & Bereavement Leave

- 6.7 Jury Duty
- 6.8 Voting Time & Rights
- 6.9 Military Leave
- 6.10 Family Military Leave
- 6.11 Short- & Long-Term Disability
- 6.12 Unpaid Leaves of Absence
- 6.13 Administrative Leave
- 6.14 Leave Provisions

## Section 7 Revenue Vehicle Operation and Vehicle Guidance

Pg. 110

- 7.1 Types of Revenue Vehicles
- 7.2 Vehicle Operations & Safety
- 7.3 Traffic Signals & Stop Signs
- 7.4 Road Users
- 7.5 Disabled Vehicles
- 7.6 Emergency Transferring of Passengers
- 7.7 Pedestrian Right-Of-Way
- 7.8 Emergency Triangle Use
- 7.9 Starting Engines & Idling
- 7.10 Air Pressure (Park & Ride)
- 7.11 Gauges
- 7.12 Emergency Buzzer & Warning Lights & Hazard Flashers
- 7.13 Heating, Ventilation, & Air Conditioning
- 7.14 Break Application
- 7.15 Door Operation
- 7.16 Tires & Rims
- 7.17 Kneel Lift, Ramp Systems (Park & Ride)
- 7.18 Bicycle Racks
- 7.19 Automatic Voice Annunciator

- 7.20 Mirror Adjustment
- 7.21 Destination Signs
- 7.22 Use of Lights & Testing
- 7.23 Operating in Yard
- 7.24 Backing the Bus
- 7.25 Pull-out and Pull-ins; Off route trips
- 7.26 Supervision of Operator While on Duty
- 7.27 End of The Line Inspection
- 7.28 Relieving Bus Procedures
- 7.29 Bell or Chime
- 7.30 Directional Signals
- 7.31 Passenger Stop Procedure
- 7.32 Stops Between Marked Bus Stops & Courtesy Stops
- 7.33 Transfer Connection
- 7.34 Comfort Stations
- 7.35 Railroad Crossing
- 7.36 Following Distance & Operating Speed
- 7.37 Dips, Speed Humps & Speed Bumps

# Section 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Welcome To GCTD

Welcome,

We hope that your employment with Gulf Coast Transit District will be rewarding and challenging. Gulf Coast Transit District takes pride in our employees, customers, community, community members, the public at large, and the products and services we provide. As one of the region's premier public transit providers, Gulf Coast Transit District is proud to embrace a culture of safety and customer service. Throughout this manual Gulf Coast Transit District will be abbreviated GCTD. The safety and well-being of our customers, employees, vendors, the community, and the property of GCTD are vital. The policies and procedures manual sets forth the rules and procedures all GCTD employees must operate. The operating rules and procedures apply to all employees regardless of specific job duties. All employees are responsible for adhering to these rules and procedures. GCTD complies with all cities, county, state, and federal laws. We achieve success through a coordinated team approach to safety and ethics.

GCTD is committed to providing an environment of mutual respect where equal employment opportunities are available to all applicants and teammates without regard to race, color, religion, sex, pregnancy (including childbirth, lactation, and related medical conditions), national origin, age, physical and mental disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information (including characteristics and testing), military and veteran status, and any other characteristic protected by applicable law. GCTD believes that diversity and inclusion are critical to our success.

GCTD strives to provide a comfortable, ethical, legal, professional, and productive work environment for everyone. Employees may bring any questions, comments, concerns, or grievances to a manager, director, and or Human Resources at any time. It is the policy of GCTD that all employees adhere to their established chain of command by trying to resolve concerns with their Manager, Director, Human Resources, and Executive Director. GCTD understands that an employee's direct manager may not always be available. GCTD has an open-door policy that encourages employees to talk with anyone in management or Human Resources at any time. GCTD welcomes all employee feedback. Employees who have already brought a concern to their manager and do not believe they have received a sufficient response should consult with their director or human resources. When a manager or director is the source of the employees' concerns, employees should consult with Human Resources. If the employee's concern is with Human Resources, the employee should consult with the Executive Director.

We are excited to have you join the team and help promote our values and mission.

### **GCTD Mission Statement**

Gulf Coast Transit District connects people through safe, accessible, and reliable public transit and mobility services for all residents of the area.

### **GCTD Value Statement**

Connecting the region with transit.

### **Ongoing Training**

Employees will be issued a policy and procedure handbook in their welcome email and receive training during onboarding. Employees are required to review the handbook every six months at a minimum. Suggestions designed to improve, clarify, or enhance the policies and procedures are always encouraged. GCTD employees are required to always comply with applicable policies and procedures in this handbook. Ignorance of the rules or procedures does not excuse non-compliance to perform all required duties safely and properly. Failure to comply with GCTD policies and procedures contained in this handbook or any violation of the policies or procedures shall be considered enough cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination. Safety and the code of ethics shall always be the first consideration in all decision-making processes. The result of unsafe practices can be severe; therefore, GCTD employees must exercise care and follow safety guidelines to prevent injury to persons or damage to property.

### **1.4 Employment-At-Will**

Employment with GCTD is on an at-will basis unless otherwise specified in a written employment agreement. Employees are free to resign at any time, for any reason, with or without notice at any time. Similarly, GCTD is free to conclude the employment relationship for any lawful reason, with or without cause and with or without notice. Any violation of a city, county, state, federal law, or GCTD policy & procedure violation may result in immediate termination of employment.

Nothing in this handbook will limit the right of either party to terminate at-will employment. Nothing in this handbook is meant to establish anything other than an employment-at-will relationship. This handbook does not limit management's discretion to make personnel decisions such as reassignment, wages, benefits, demotions, or adjusting job descriptions. In collaboration with legal counsel, no person other than the executive director has the authority to enter into an agreement for employment for any specified period or make any agreement for employment other than at-will terms. Such an agreement is only binding if it is made in writing, signed by the executive director, and approved by legal counsel. If a written contract between an employee and GCTD is inconsistent with the policies and procedures, the written contract is controlling.

## **Section 2 Employment Policies**

### **2.1 Employee Payroll Classifications**

#### **Exempt Employees**

Employees whose positions meet specific tests established by the Federal Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and Texas state law. Job titles do not determine exempt status. To meet an exemption status, an employee's specific job duties and salary must meet all the requirements of the DOL's regulations. Exemption categories may include executive, administrative, professional, computer employee, or outside sales. Exempt employees are not subject to the minimum wage and overtime laws.

#### **Nonexempt Employees**

Employees whose positions do not meet specific tests established by the FLSA and Texas State law. All non-exempt employees are covered by federal or state minimum wage and overtime laws. Employees working in nonexempt jobs are entitled to be paid at least the minimum wage per hour and a premium for overtime for any hours worked over 40 hours in a workweek.

#### **Full-Time Employees**

orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, or any other status protected under federal, state, or local law.

This policy applies to all aspects of employment, including the decision to hire, promote, discipline, or discharge. All employment factors are based on merit, competence, performance, qualifications, and business needs. GCTD ensures hiring persons whose qualifications meet or exceed those required in the position description and is committed to hiring the most qualified applicant based on job qualifications, work history, work experience, and or education.

GCTD will continually assess the balance of its workforce. GCTD values a workforce that reflects the communities in which it operates. The Human Resource department emphasizes equal employment opportunities.

Anyone feeling discriminated against should report this to the Human Resource department within five working days. Upon conclusion of the investigation, a written report will be forwarded that outlines the assessment of the allegations and any internal recommendations. Any recommendations that result in adverse personnel actions against staff are open to the internal grievance procedures for conflict resolution. It is the policy that all employees are treated fairly. When internal methods for resolving EEO conflicts are exhausted, employees should be directed to the Texas Commission for Human Rights or the local Office of Equal Employment Opportunity for further review and resolution. It is a GCTD policy to take affirmative action as called for by applicable laws and executive orders to:

- Provide equal employment opportunities to all
- Administer personnel actions in employment practices and social and recreational programs to ensure that employees are not discriminated against
- Ensure employment decisions are made in furtherance of the objective of equal employment, including, but not limited to:
  - Layoffs
  - Promotion
  - Recruitment & selection
  - Terminations
  - Transfers

Applicants and employees will not be subjected to harassment, intimidation, or any retaliation because they have:

- Filed a complaint
- Assisted or participated in an investigation, compliance review, or any other activity related to the administration of any federal, state, or local law requiring equal employment opportunity
- Opposed any act or practice made unlawful by any federal, state, or local law requiring equal opportunity
- Exercised any other legal right protected by federal, state, or local law requiring equal opportunity

GCTD expects all employees to support our equal employment opportunity policy, take all steps necessary to maintain a workplace free from unlawful discrimination and harassment, and accommodate



software, using technology such as hidden cameras or global positioning systems (GPS), to track location, driving by or lingering near home, school, or work, threatening harm to a person's family, friends, or pets, performing other actions that control, track, or frighten, or using other people to try to communicate with you such as children, family, or friends

- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individuals
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words used to describe an individual, and suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations
- Verbal sexual advances, propositions, or requests
- Visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters

#### **Texas Penal Code § 42.07 Harassment**

A person commits harassment if they do any of the following with the intent to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, or embarrass another:

- Initiates communication by telephone, in writing, or by electronic communication and during the communication makes a comment, request, suggestion, or proposal that is obscene
- Threatens, by telephone, in writing, or by electronic communication, in a manner reasonably likely to alarm the person receiving the threat, to inflict bodily injury on the person, or to commit a felony against the person, a member of the person's family or household, or the person's property
- Conveys, in a manner reasonably likely to alarm the person receiving the report, a false report, which the conveyor knows to be false, that another person has suffered death or serious bodily injury
- Causes the telephone of another to ring repeatedly or makes repeated telephone communications anonymously or in a manner reasonably likely to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, embarrass, or offend another
- Makes a telephone call and intentionally fails to hang up or disengage the connection
- Knowingly permits a telephone under the person's control to be used by another to commit harassment
- Sends repeated electronic communications in a manner reasonably likely to harass, annoy, alarm, abuse, torment, embarrass, or offend another

Electronic communication includes but is not limited to communications initiated by email, instant message, network call, or fax.

When an employee has any question about what constitutes harassing behavior, they should ask their manager, director, or Human Resources. If staff observe what they believe is harassing behavior or feel they are being harassed at work by anyone, including supervisors, co-workers, vendors, or visitors, they must immediately notify their manager, director, or Human Resources. When employees believe the matter cannot be discussed or handled appropriately with their manager, they should contact their director or Human Resources and arrange a meeting to discuss their complaint. Employee notification to

GCTD will make any reasonable effort to accommodate the worker with a disability in the recruiting process.

### **Job Descriptions**

GCTD maintains job descriptions for each position and will post the job description on the GCTD job home page and or the GCTD selected job boards for candidates to read before submitting their application. All candidates will review and acknowledge their job descriptions after hiring. Employees may always request a copy of their current job description from their manager, director, or Human Resources. Job descriptions prepared by GCTD serve as an outline only. Due to business needs, employees may be required to perform job duties outside of their written job description. On occasion, GCTD may have to revise, add to, or delete job duties from an employee's job description per business needs with or without advance notice. If an employee's job description changes, affected employees will be notified of the change. Employees who have any questions regarding their job description or the scope of their duties should speak with their manager, director, or Human Resources.

### **Background Checks**

Only Human Resources is authorized to perform criminal history background checks on applicants or employees. All criminal history background checks must be pre-authorized and conducted only through Texas DPS or a pre-approved GCTD vendor. All applicants will be notified of their rights under FCRA where required. All criminal conviction history reports are confidential and may only be viewed by Human Resources and the Executive Director. When the designated Human Resources staff has processed the information obtained through a criminal history clearance, the program is exited, or, in cases where screenshots are printed, the information will be submitted for shredding by placement in the administration's confidential shredding storage vessel. If the information must be stored, it will be stored in electronic format by the GCTD authorized vendor.

### **Internet Searches**

Regardless of the position held, including Human Resources, employees are unauthorized to perform generalized internet searches, generalized social media searches, and the like on employees or applicants. Employees are prohibited from looking up an applicant or current employee at any time. Applicants or employees should never be asked to pull up their social media accounts at any time, including during an interview, or tell the interviewer about the contents of their social media pages. Any employee performing unauthorized background checks or using generalized social media searches on an applicant, employee, or anyone doing business with GCTD will be subject to termination. Employees who violate policies and procedures on social media or the like may have their accounts reviewed for internal investigatory reasons only, which are to be performed by Human Resources.

### **Interviews**

All interviews conducted must follow all cities, county, state, and federal laws including but not limited to EEOC, DOL, and TWC compliance. All interviews will be based on qualifying legal questions related to the position. Unethical or illegal questions are forbidden to be asked during an interview for any reason. Human Resources has created a FAQ guide to assist managers with interview techniques. All rating sheets, pre-formatted questions, and or notes must be turned into Human Resources upon completion of an interview. All interviews must always remain federally compliant. The interview process has been

- Delivery, distribution, or manufacture of drugs.
- Disorderly conduct
- Driving while intoxicated
- Drug trafficking
- False identification as a peace officer
- Felony convictions involving commercial vehicles.
- Fleeing or evading a police officer
- Forgery
- Fraud
- Grand theft auto
- Homicide by vehicle
- Human trafficking
- Improper photography or visual recording
- Improper relationship between educator and student
- Indecency with a children
- Indecent exposure
- Injury to a child, elderly individual, or disabled individual
- Intoxication assault
- Intoxication manslaughter
- Kidnapping and unlawful restraint
- Misapplication of fiduciary property or property of a financial institution that is punishable as a class securing execution of a document by deception that is punishable as a class A misdemeanor or a felony.
- Money laundering
- Obstruction or retaliation
- Possession or promotion of child pornography
- Possession with intent to deliver or possession with intent to distribute.
- Promotion of prostitution
- Reckless driving
- Robbery
- Sale or purchase of a child
- Sexual assault
- Sexual offenses
- Sexual performance by a child
- Solicitation of a minor
- Terroristic threat
- Theft or theft that was punishable as a felony.
- Trespass
- DUI convictions while holding a CDL.
- Unlawful restraint

Human Resources will initiate criminal conviction history and motor vehicle reference checks through a GCTD-approved vendor or Texas DPS. GCTD or an authorized vendor will inform applicants electronically or in writing that a pre-employment background check will be conducted when the application is made. All applicants with GCTD must have a driving record that indicates less than three safety or moving violations within the last three years. An applicant with three more safety or moving violations during the last three years will not be eligible for employment with GCTD. Any bar of employment mentioned above may invalidate a job offer to any candidate or current employee at any time.

The results of the screenings conducted determine the employee's ability to provide services with GCTD in the State of Texas following the guidelines consistent with the Texas Health and Safety Code, the Texas Department of Licensing & Regulation, the Department of Transportation, The Federal Transportation Authority, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, and or GCTD policies. Such information obtained is historical and, therefore, subject to updating. To this end, GCTD employees or volunteers must report any subsequent convictions or offenses for which they are charged to Human Resources within 24 hours of the charges. In addition, GCTD's approved vendor will perform E-consent for background checks and motor vehicle reference checks.

## **2.7 Confidentiality**

Employees, at times, could potentially access to confidential information regarding GCTD, including its business strategy, future, financial information, contracts, suppliers, customers, personnel information, or other information that GCTD considers proprietary and confidential. Maintaining the confidentiality of this information is mandatory. Employees must protect this information by safeguarding it and only using it for legitimate business needs. This duty of confidentiality applies whether the employee is on or off GCTD premises, on or off the clock, and during and even after the end of the employee's employment with GCTD. This duty of confidentiality also applies to communications transmitted by GCTD's electronic communications. Voluntary disclosure of information concerning any GCTD customer, vendor, or employee shall only be made upon the written authorization of the customer, vendor, employee, guardian, or parent of a minor, except in the case of a medical emergency.

## **2.8 Employment of Minors**

The FLSA's child labor provisions, which GCTD strictly adheres to, are designed to protect the educational opportunities of youth, and prohibit their employment in jobs that are detrimental to their health and safety. The FLSA sets the minimum age for employment (s for non-agricultural jobs), restricts the hour's youth under the age of 16 may work and prohibits youth under the age of 18 from being employed in hazardous occupations. In addition, the FLSA establishes subminimum wage standards for certain employees who are less than 20 years of age, full-time students, student learners, apprentices, and workers with disabilities.

## **2.9 Employment of Relatives**

GCTD is committed to a policy of employment and advancement based on qualifications and merit and does not discriminate in favor of or in opposition to the employment of relatives. Due to the potential for perceived or actual conflicts such as favoritism or personal conflicts outside the work environment, GCTD will not employ relatives in circumstances where actual or potential conflicts may arise that could compromise supervision, safety, confidentiality, security, and morale at GCTD. Employees must inform GCTD of any such potential conflict so GCTD can determine how best to respond to the situation. This policy applies to all current employees and candidates for employment. A family member is defined as one of the following: spouse or significant other, parent, stepparent, child, stepchild, grandparent, grandchild, brother, brother-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, first cousin, or in-laws (father, mother, son daughter). Employees are responsible for immediately reporting any changes to their Human Resources. If any employee enters one of the above relationships after employment or during employment. No Exception to this policy will be made without written consent of the Executive Director, and Human Resources, or the legal firm representing GCTD.

## **2.10 Introductory Period**

The first 90 days of employment are considered an introductory period for all newly hired employees. During this time, employees will learn their new responsibilities, get acquainted with fellow employees, and determine their satisfaction with the position. During this time, the employees' manager will monitor the employees' performance. The employees' manager will conduct a performance appraisal upon completing the introductory period. If GCTD finds the employees' performance satisfactory and decides to continue the employees' employment, the employee will be advised of any improvements expected. This is also an opportunity for employees to make suggestions to improve GCTD's efficiency and operations. Completing the introductory period does not entitle an employee to remain employed by

collected as part of an employee's use of GCTD technology. For example, information collected from the website may include web forms or emails. This policy becomes effective as soon as an employee accesses or uses any GCTD technology or mobile applications and is subject to change at any time.

#### **Information collected.**

GCTD collects information from company-owned technology. Collection of information may assist in but is not limited to:

- To personalize user's experience
- To improve our technology and mobile applications to serve employees better and customers
- To allow us to better respond to requests
- To ensure GCTD policies and procedures have not been violated

GCTD or its contractors will not sell, trade, or lease personal information to anyone, except when the purpose and manner of the disclosure have been disclosed to an employee before providing the information or when requested by law enforcement in connection to any investigation.

GCTD may hire other companies to provide services on our behalf, such as IT, credit card processing, etc. However, GCTD requires these companies to maintain the confidentiality of the information they receive and prohibit them from using the information for any other purpose.

GCTD is committed to the security of employees' personal information. Employees' personal information is contained behind secured networks. It is only accessible by a limited number of persons who have special access rights to such systems and must keep the information confidential. GCTD IT partners will implement various security measures to ensure technology safety is not compromised.

#### **Logged activity for analysis.**

GCTD may use data and provide aggregate data to others to generate statistical reports to manage operations. GCTD also tracks activity from its website in log files on web servers. These logs may analyze by third-party IT solutions GCTD has hired to provide website activity and trend data. The information inside the log files includes internet protocol ("IP") addresses, browser type, internet service provider ("ISP"), date & time stamp, referring & exit pages, and possibly the number of mouse clicks. This information is used to analyze trends, administer GCTD technology, track movement around any website, and gather demographic information. In addition, monitoring log activity assists in analyzing how our technology, mobile applications, and software are used.

#### **Security & intrusion detection**

GCTD's IT solution employs software programs to monitor network traffic to identify unauthorized attempts to upload or change information or otherwise cause damage for website security purposes and ensure that the services remain available to all users. Except for internal investigations, authorized law enforcement investigations, court orders, or other legal proceedings, no other attempts are made to identify individual users or their usage habits.

#### **Location information**



- Occasionally personal usage is permissible and must be minimum and not preempt business activities in any way. Such use may include checking the weather, maps, or news. GCTD will block sites that are restricted.
- During the use of any GCTD technology, including information systems, employees will be expected to adhere to city, county, state, and federal laws, and regulations.
- Data and technology resources shall only be used by authorized individuals and only for the purpose for which access is granted.
- Employees must control and secure physical and network access to information technology resources and data at all time.
- Employees are responsible for logging out of all systems and accounts when they are not being used.
- Employees should monitor access to their accounts and must change their password if they suspect unauthorized activity on any of their accounts
- Employees must report any weaknesses in security, incidents of misuse, or protentional violations to a GCTD manager or director.
- Employees should be aware that all data created on GCTD computer systems remains the property of GCTD, and the network and network devices are electronically monitored, logged, and audited to assure compliance with GCTD policies and procedures concerning privacy and security.

#### **Prohibited Information Technology Use Includes:**

- Downloading and streaming audio, video, or other bandwidth-intensive files without a business need and authorization from a GCTD manager, IT manager, and or director
- Using GCTD networks for instant messaging or other real-time presence tools such as Facebook, Facebook Chat, Instagram, Instagram Chat, WhatsApp, Snapchat, or any other application that generates a virtual workspace without a specific business need and authorization from a manager, IT manager, director, or executive director
- Using a GCTD network to view dating sites, gaming sites, gambling sites, or chat rooms.
- Using a GCTD network to download or install any software, programs, or applications to their computer unless approved by the IT manager, manager, director, or executive director
- Using a GCTD network to use a peer-to-peer (P2P) network outside of business needs and approval
- Using a GCTD network to view, download, upload, forward, print, or copy pornographic, sexually explicit, or otherwise objectionable material of any kind
- Revealing personal passwords or lending your equipment or software to anyone for any reason
- Attaching personal devices to GCTD networks without business need and permission from the IT manager, director, or executive director
- Storing or sending confidential data on a personal computer, device, or personal cloud-based storage
- Navigating a GCTD network to operate a personal business, conducting personal job searches, soliciting money, campaigning for political causes, promoting a cause, taking part in pyramid schemes of any kind, or conducting illegal and or unethical personal business

their lawful political activity engaged in or outside of work. Employees engaging in political activity must always clarify that their individual actions and opinions are their own and not necessarily those of GCTD and that you are not representing GCTD.

## **2.15 Separation of Employment**

Employment with GCTD is on an at-will basis unless otherwise specified in a written employment agreement. Employees are free to resign at any time, for any reason, with or without notice. Similarly, GCTD is free to conclude the employment relationship for any lawful reason, with or without cause and with or without notice. Any violation of a city, county, state, federal law, or GCTD policy & procedure violation may result in immediate termination of employment.

### **Voluntary Resignation**

It is preferred that employees who intend to resign from GCTD notify their direct manager, director, and or Human Resources in writing at least 14 business days before the effective date of the intended resignation. Employees who do not provide a 14-day (2 weeks resignation notice) may forfeit any earned accrued leave payout; Accrued leave may not be used during the 14-business days. For payout of earned accrued leave employees must reach one year one employment.

#### **REFER TO SECTION 6.1 FOR FURTHER**

**GUIDANCE ON THIS TOPIC** In instances where the employee leaves their workstation unattended for two consecutive days without contacting their immediate manager will be considered an immediate voluntary resignation and job abandonment. Employees who have a documented medical emergency due to no fault of their own and were unable to contact GCTD due to their medical emergency status will have their NCNS reviewed on a case-by-case basis by Human Resources and the executive director. Employees who are on an approved leave status are required to maintain contact with Human Resources during their approved leave and will be required to contact Human Resources within 24 hours but no later than 48 hours upon a request of contact from Human Resources. Failure to contact Human Resources within 48 hours after the initial request will be considered job abandonment.

### **Involuntary Separation**

GCTD is free to conclude the employment relationship for any lawful reason, with or without cause and with or without notice. Involuntary separation may happen due to company policies and procedures violations, gross misconduct violations, legal violations of city, state, and federal laws, or poor performance.

### **Exit Interview**

Employees who leave GCTD may contact Human Resources to arrange an exit interview. The purpose of the exit interview is to provide Human Resources with greater insight into an employee's decision to leave employment, identify any trends requiring attention or opportunities for improvement, and assist Human Resources in developing effective recruitment and retention strategies. Employee cooperation in the exit interview process is appreciated.

## **2.16 Company Issued Property**

Employees may be issued uniform, property, and or equipment items at no cost. Employees are personally responsible for the issued garments and general care of all issued property. All uniform items

available GCTD vehicle, mileage will not be reimbursed for the use of a personal vehicle. Employees are not reimbursed for mileage when using their personal vehicle to conduct GCTD business if an available GCTD vehicle is or was available for business travel.

This implies that worksites that are designated as continual work placements and are not temporary will not be eligible. For employees who have fluctuating work sites, mileage is not paid from home to the first designated work site or from the last designated worksite to home. In cases when employees leave their home to conduct GCTD business in their personal vehicle for instances such as meetings, training, or related activities but are not traveling to their office or workstation, they may declare such mileage after subtracting the regular travel mileage to their designated work site. The same will apply to business conducted on the employee's return home from the office or workstation at the end of the workday.

Once these conditions are satisfied, all other mileage in the conduct of GCTD business is considered reimbursable when employees use their personal vehicle for GCTD business. Reimbursements are payable on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month following the end of the reporting period in which the expenses were incurred and approved by the finance department. Expenses must be submitted on the last day of each month for the month prior. Example: If an employee has approved expenses in May, they will submit May's expenses on the last day of June. An employee's manager must authorize all travel within Brazoria, Galveston, and Harris counties for business-related purposes. Brazoria, Harris, and Galveston counties will not be eligible for per-diem meal rates in-region travel.

#### **Out Of Region Travel**

Out-of-region travel is outside Brazoria, Galveston, and or Harris counties. Mileage expenses incurred for using privately owned vehicles for GCTD business should be documented and approved by the employee's manager before travel and submitted within the expense reporting system.

Out of region travel reimbursements may include:

- Mileage if using your personal vehicle to conduct GCTD business
- Parking and toll fees
- Per-Diem meals

The executive director must approve out-of-region, state, or country travel. Per diem meal rates will be paid at the current federal rate and will only be approved for out-of-region travel. Out-of-region travel may consist of a hotel stay which GCTD may pre-pay. Any hotel accommodations paid upfront by GCTD will not include held incidental fees, which the hotel may request upon checking in. Incidental fees charged upon checkout may not be reimbursable to the employee. Incidental fees which will not be reimbursed to the employee include but are not limited to making long-distance in-room phone calls, ordering movies, ordering room service, purchasing snacks at the hotel's store or in-room services, or charging anything to the room. Out-of-region travel accommodations must be pre-approved and set up by the finance manager before travel.

Per-diem meal rates will be paid at the current federal rate. Employees must submit receipts for per-diem meals, mileage when using a personal vehicle to conduct GCTD business, parking, and tolls in the expense reporting system. It is the responsibility of the employee's manager to review and verify budgetary

office or worksite at the beginning of a day nor return to a set office or worksite at the end of a workday and that the benefit of the use of a take-home vehicle serves a business purpose.

It is the policy of GCTD that all employees shall follow these procedures for the assignment and utilization of take-home vehicles. Take-home vehicle authorizations will be based on verifiable and beneficial business needs for the delivery of services for GCTD and comply with Internal Revenue Service (IRS) guidelines for employer-provided vehicles.

#### **Definitions**

- Authorized employees  
Designated employee-operator of the GCTD vehicle conducting GCTD business
- GCTD business  
Any authorized work or activity performed by GCTD employees conducting business for GCTD
- De minimus personal use  
Infrequent and limited travel between work stops during the workday. Limited means travel of such a short distance that accounting for it is unreasonable. Examples: Stopping between two business stops for a meal, stopping at a convenience store, or to use the restroom while in route on GCTD business
- Take-home vehicles  
GCTD vehicles designated for the use of an employee in the normal performance of their duties and authorized for take-home use

Persons not involved in GCTD business will not be permitted to ride in GCTD vehicles. Transporting family members or private citizens is not permitted unless the party is involved with GCTD business. The executive director, in writing, may grant exceptions.

#### **Authorization of the Take-Home Vehicles**

- The approval for a take-home vehicle shall be to conduct GCTD business, based on business purpose and need, per IRS guidelines
- GCTD employees may be authorized a take-home vehicle only when a take-home vehicle request has been submitted and approved by the executive director, reviewed, and approved annually by the director of finance and administration and GCTD's risk management firm. Fleet management will retain a copy of all approved requests and forward copies to Human Resources and finance
- A take-home vehicle use authorization form must be completed and approved by the employee's department director and or executive director on or before October 1st of each year. The authorization shall be for a limited time, not to exceed one year
- If any changes to the basis for the authorization occur during the year, a new authorization form must be resubmitted and re-approved
- Department directors shall approve take-home vehicles when there is clear and convincing factual evidence, via a cost analysis, that the benefit of using a take-home vehicle serves a purpose. A copy of all documents used as a basis for authorization of a take-home vehicle shall be kept on file by fleet management for review or audit purposes
- In declared emergency events, the executive director may temporarily change vehicle usage to support GCTD operations

- Maintain the take-home vehicle authorization form with up-to-date information
- Do not use or allow the use of tobacco products in a GCTD vehicle
- Obey all city, county, state, and federal laws up to and including vehicle operation
- Pre-and post-trip inspections are the responsibility of the driver
- Report any maintenance concerns to fleet management
- Cleanliness inside and outside of the vehicle is the responsibility of the driver; vehicles may be inspected at any time for any reason by a GCTD manager, director, or the executive director
- EZ tags, toll tags, tolls, and parking fees are the driver's responsibility. Only valid charges for conducting GCTD business will be reimbursed through an expense report

#### **Required information for take-home vehicle authorization request**

- Home and or off-hours physical address where the vehicle will be parked. The address must include a city and a county
- Total daily commute miles
  - Round trip mileage from where the vehicle is parked during off-hours to the workplace and back to the off-hours parking address
- Economic Benefit
  - A detailed reason for why a personal vehicle cannot be driven to the regular workplace and a GCTD-owned vehicle can be used for business purposes. The economic benefit reasoning shall be included in the vehicle take-home authorization request

All take-home vehicles will be subject to the IRS fringe benefit guidelines and included in your earning and benefits calculations each pay period. Take-home vehicles are not guaranteed by the presence of any title or position held. Take-home vehicles may range in size and color, and specific vehicles are not guaranteed for any reason. Take-home vehicles must be turned in upon request from any director or the executive director.

### **2.19 Outside Employment**

Outside employment that creates a conflict of interest or affects the quality or value of an employee's work performance or availability at GCTD is prohibited. GCTD recognizes that employees may seek additional employment during off-hours. Any outside employment should not affect an employee's attendance, job performance, productivity, work hours, or schedule or adversely affect an employee's ability to effectively perform their duties or in any way create a conflict of interest. All outside employment must be free from conflict of interest between both companies. Outside employment should be reported to Human Resources in writing by email. Outside employment notifications will be reviewed by Human Resources, director of assets & operations, the executive director, and legal counsel. If a conflict of interest arises, employees will be made aware. Part-Time operators engaging in employment outside of GCTD shall not be permitted to work more than 12 hours per day combined. Operators must have one day's rest from combined work activity.

### **2.20 Personal or Finance Information Changes**

Changes in an employee's data such as an address, telephone number, dependents, direct deposit, w2, and or marital status must be changed in Human Resources or on the GCTD Human Resources approved portal within ten business days.

### **2.21 Personal Automobile Insurance**



actual or potential conflict of interest between an employee and a competitor, supplier, distributor, or contractor, the employee must disclose it to their manager. If an actual or potential conflict of interest is determined to exist, GCTD will take such steps as it deems necessary to reduce or eliminate this conflict.

### **Confidential Information**

Confidentiality is the hallmark of professionalism. GCTD employees must:

- Ensure all information that is considered confidential or privileged information or work is not publicly available is not disclosed inappropriately
- Ensure that all non-public information of any persons or organizations acquired by GCTD personnel in dealing with the outside organization on or behalf of GCTD is treated as confidential and not disclosed

### **Acceptance & or solicitation of gifts & benefits from customers and vendors**

In compliance with all applicable federal and state laws, employees may not accept or solicit any gift or benefit that one reasonably believes was given to influence decisions, secure preferential treatment, or secure contracts. Therefore, cash may not be accepted as a gift from a customer, patron, or vendor to a GCTD employee. Anyone seeking to make a cash donation to GCTD should come to the GCTD administrative offices to make the official donation and obtain a receipt for their donation signed by a director.

### **Purpose**

To assist employees in becoming aware of applicable ethics laws and providing guidance to employees concerning acceptable practices under the rules and procedures that are clear violations.

### **Definitions**

#### **Benefit**

Anything reasonably regarded as financial gain or monetary advantage (depending on the circumstances, may include gifts, awards, souvenirs, transportation, lodging, food and beverages, entertainment, and honoraria.

#### ***Community-wide Fund-Raising Effort:***

A GCTD fundraising event that is sponsored and organized through administration or a designated committee. Solicitations must be made to all vendors in the community and not only to vendors currently serving GCTD.

#### **Gift**

A benefit that may include, but are not limited to, the following: cash, checks, securities, subsidies, real property, personal property, referrals, offerings, goods, honoraria, favors, prizes, services, employment, business, or professional activities, membership, travel expenses, and compensation.

- Unsolicited non-monetary gifts from customers, friends, and family members are not prohibited so long as they are not given to influence or secure preferential treatment. However, cash gifts to employees are not permitted
- Gifts, grants, or other benefits may not be accepted by GCTD employees for any reason from any GCTD vendor or contractor if the employee has or may have a substantive role in the determination of vendor selection and if such a gift or benefit might be perceived as influencing the vendor selection
- Per state law, non-cash gifts valued at less than \$50 may be accepted unless the employee has any reason to believe that the gift is being offered to influence the employee or the employee's decisions. In addition, cash, or cash equivalents (e.g., gift certificates, gift cards) should not be accepted from any vendor or third party who is doing (or interested in doing) business with the GCTD

Under Texas law, employees are allowed to donate unsolicited gifts that they receive to either:

1. A governmental entity that has the authority to accept the gift; or
2. A recognized tax-exempt charitable organization formed for educational, religious, or scientific purposes

#### **Honoraria/Fees**

- GCTD employees may not solicit, accept, or agree to accept an honorarium in consideration for services that the employee would not have been requested to provide but for the employee's position or duties. However, under certain circumstances, an employee may accept an honorarium given as compensation for providing a service for which the employee has specific expertise as it relates to their position at GCTD for business purposes only. For example, GCTD employees may accept transportation, lodging, and meals in connection with a conference or similar event in which the employee renders services, such as serving as a speaker, panel member, or moderator
- If an employee is asked to present at a job-related conference or seminar and is paid permissible honoraria/fees, the honoraria/fees may be retained by the employee provided that:
  1. The travel expenses were paid by someone other than the GCTD
  2. The employee used personal leave without pay to attend; and
  3. The employee's supervisor gave prior approval for the presentation

Otherwise, the honoraria/fees must be given to GCTD to offset expenditures paid by GCTD.

#### **Gifts, Benefits, and or other goods for a specific purpose**

GCTD employees who receive an invitation, offer of a gift, or benefit from a vendor or customer and are not sure that the offer is acceptable under this policy should disclose the situation to their manager, director, human resources, and the executive director, who will confer with the GCTD legal counsel. Legal counsel shall make a final decision concerning accepting the gift or benefit.

- *Gifts to support research or education* of staff may be accepted *only* if the donation is accompanied by a letter or other instrument from the vendor indicating that the specific purpose of the donation is to support GCTD research or education and is not intended to influence

2. No fee is charged to any invitee, or if a fee is charged for some portion of the event or a reduction is given, the same price is charged, or the same reduction is given to each invitee; and
3. The value to our organization outweighs any recreational or entertainment value of the educational event.

B. Informational presentations and discussions by industry representatives or companies may provide occasional meals (but not entertainment or recreational events) if the meals are "modest as judged by local standards" and "occur in a venue and manner conducive to informational communication and provide scientific or educational value." Programs referred to as "dine and dash," whereby "takeout" meals are offered to be eaten without a representative from the company or company representative present, are considered inappropriate and are prohibited. Attendees must be appropriate to attend the presentation. If there is food or other such items at the end of the presentation, the items need not be thrown in the trash and can be shared with others in the facility.

C. Companies may underwrite continuing education or other third-party scientific and educational conferences or professional meetings. However, these conferences or meetings must be primarily focused on promoting objective scientific and educational activities, and "the main incentive for bringing attendees together must be to further their knowledge on the topics being presented." Any financial support should not be extended directly to individual employee participants; instead, help could be provided to the GCTD sponsor of the conference and used to reduce the overall registration fee for all meeting participants. Further, when companies underwrite third-party conferences or meetings, the responsibility for and control over the selection of content, faculty, educational methods, materials, and venue should belong to the GCTD organizers of the conferences or meetings, not the company. Companies should not pay for the costs of travel, lodging, or other personal expenses of attendees at conferences. They may provide meals or receptions directly at the events if those activities comply with the sponsoring organization's guidelines, are modest in scope, and are conducive to discussion among faculty and attendees.

D. Gifts, travel, and or entertainment perks from vendors, which are limited to \$50, must be approved by the GCTD executive director and or legal counsel before acceptance. The questions that will be assessed to determine whether a perk is an appropriate gesture, or an inappropriate act include the following:

- Does the perk involve cash?
- Is the perk being conditioned
- Are only decision-makers being offered the perk?
- Is the perk of fair value related to GCTD practice of transportation, and does it entail a benefit to individuals served?

Gifts, such as pens and notepads, which are very modest in value, entail a clear benefit; are not provided more than occasionally and are not conditioned upon being appropriate. On the other hand, perks that are primarily intended for an employee's personal use, such as sporting tickets, are inappropriate.

Due to concerns about violating anti-kickback statutes, employees should assume that gifts from any vendor will not be approved for acceptance. To determine if the appearance of or actual violation will

needed, will be taken. Confidentiality will be maintained for the individual disclosing the violation unless the matter raises profound legal implications. GCTD will not take any adverse action against employees for solely disclosing perceived breaches of the ethics code of conduct. GCTD encourages all employees to be prompt, open, and forthright in reporting perceived ethical code of conduct breaches.

#### **2.24 Solicitation**

Soliciting money or public support for political, religious, social, or other causes while on duty or GCTD property is not permitted without the written consent of the executive director. Employees must not allow anyone to solicit from or otherwise disturb passengers, co-workers, vendors, or the public or allow unauthorized materials to be distributed or displayed on GCTD vehicles or property. It is prohibited to make suggestive remarks to passengers, co-workers, vendors, or the public or solicit addresses, emails, and telephone numbers.

#### **2.25 Law Enforcement Interaction**

Employees must cooperate with all city, county, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, fire departments, and EMS technicians. All interactions with the city, county, state, or federal personnel entities must be immediately reported to the employee's immediate supervisor and manager. While driving a revenue vehicle, employees must notify dispatch and their manager if any interaction between the various agencies listed above creates dangerous conditions and requires a departure from the established GCTD policies and procedures. A written report must be submitted before the completion of the work assignment. Employees must comply with all applicable city, county, state, and federal laws, and regulations while operating GCTD vehicles and equipment. Citations and fines imposed because of employee violations are the employee's responsibility.

#### **Arrest And or Conviction**

All employees or volunteers must report to Human Resources any subsequent convictions or offenses for which they are charged within 24 hours of the charge(s). Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, including termination. An arrest of an employee, regardless of being on or off duty, must be reported as soon as possible to their manager, director, transportation manager, and Human Resources. Employees must submit a written report to GCTD within twenty-four hours of an arrest or telephone and speak directly with their manager, director, transportation manager, or Human Resources to obtain permission for an extension of time to submit the written report. In addition, the transportation manager must be notified within twenty-four hours of any conviction or violation of the law. A conviction is defined as any court order or judgment that imposes any sentence or punishment for the violation of the law and includes deferred adjudication. Further, conviction includes the imposition of any sentence or punishment that is effective immediately or is appealed, deferred, or probated.

#### **2.26 Firearms Policy**

Employees may not carry firearms while operating a GCTD vehicle or inside a GCTD facility. Exceptions may be made at the executive director's discretion in partnership with legal affairs. Lawfully licensed employees may keep their firearm in a locked, privately-owned motor vehicle in a parking lot, parking garage, or other parking areas GCTD provides for employees. All items carried in an employee's vehicle are the employee's responsibility, and GCTD will not be responsible for lost or stolen property from an employee's private vehicle.

Employees involved in an accident/incident while operating a GCTD vehicle must report it immediately to the dispatcher, supervisor, and manager. The employee must complete a written report of every accident or incident occurring on the bus or on any property. Employees involved in a personal injury must:

- Notify their supervisor immediately
- If needed, ask for and obtain medical attention
- Complete an accident or incident report within 24 hours of the incident
- In the event of a preventable accident, the employee may be disciplined for failure to follow safety precautions, the severity of the accident, and the employee's record
- If a visit to a medical facility is made or an injury occurs, contact a manager, director, or Human Resources by phone or in person immediately after the medical facility visit. If unable to do so, the employee should be prepared to provide a medical reason for failure to notify. Employees must notify their manager, director, or Human Resources if they are instructed by the physician not to return to work. If able, the employee should return the disposition form to Human Resources upon leaving the medical facility. When the licensed physician releases an employee for regular duty, the employee must bring the doctor's release to the transportation manager, director of operations and assets, or Human Resources before reporting for duty. If the employee is under the care of a physician, the employee must first secure a back-to-work release from their licensed physician before returning to work

Every accident/incident must be reported to dispatch and management, no matter how minor. Even when the person claims not to be injured, refuses to give a name, or admits fault, the accident must be reported. Accidents near the vehicle shall be reported even though the vehicle is not involved. The operator will call the dispatcher immediately when involved in all collisions, injuries, accidents, or incidents, even though there is no apparent injury or visible damage. The accident report must be completed and turned in immediately after the employee has completed their work assignment. All reports must be turned in on the same day the accident or incident occurred. Every field on the accident report must be filled in unless it does not apply. Submitting an incomplete report will be noted in the employee's file. The employee shall have the following information available for the dispatcher:

- Location of accident
- Injuries
- Vehicle number
- A complete description of what happened

When a GCTD vehicle is involved in an accident, employees are to follow these procedures and record the necessary information:

- Contact the dispatcher. If the radio is inoperative, call the dispatcher at 1-800-266-2320. Follow the instructions from the dispatcher
- Aid must be summoned for injured parties. This is to be done only by calling the dispatcher, who will send any needed aid
- Obtain as many witnesses' statements as possible



- Employees must turn in the accident or incident report to the supervisor or manager on duty
- Employees must place litter in proper trash receptacles when noticed; when large clusters of litter or hazards are found, employees must notify dispatch and or their manager

Employees are prohibited from spitting on, damaging, littering, or vandalizing the property of anyone at any time, including GCTD property. Employees found defacing any property of anyone at any time, including GCTD property, will be terminated.

#### **Obscene display or distribution of material**

No person shall intentionally or knowingly display or distribute an obscene photograph, drawing, or similar visual representation, or other obscene material or recklessly display or distribute the material.

#### **Supervisor or Management Responsibilities**

The employee's immediate supervisor and or the authorized accident investigator will investigate on-the-job accidents. A detailed report of the circumstances of the accident must be submitted to the safety and training manager and director of operations and assets within 24 hours of the accident. Supervisors and management are responsible for making sure all injured employees receive proper first aid treatment by:

- Instructing the employee to go to a medical provider. The supervisor or manager will notify Human Resources within 24 hours of the accident
- The injured employee will be furnished with transportation to the clinic or hospital. An ambulance may be called in situations that warrant transportation by ambulance or EMS personnel
- The supervisor or manager must complete a written or electronic report of the accident. The supervisor or manager must have the employee complete the accident or incident report in detail when able

### **2.28 Traffic Violations**

The transportation manager, safety and training manager, director of assets and operations, and Human Resources must be notified of all traffic violations within 24 hours of receiving the violation. This rule applies regardless of if the traffic violation happened in your vehicle or a GCTD vehicle. Any convictions for any traffic violations while operating any GCTD vehicle must be reported immediately but not later than the first working day after the date of the conviction. Any license suspension or license revocation must be reported immediately and no later than the first working day after the date of the license suspension or license revocation. Employees may not drive any GCTD vehicle while their license is suspended or revoked.

Employees are responsible for their driving records at all times. Any employee driving a GCTD vehicle must report any moving violation as the law requires. Regardless of how minor, all employees involved in an accident must report to the accident immediately to dispatch, the safety and training manager, the transportation manager, and Human Resources. If involved in a moving violation while in a GCTD vehicle, employees are required to do the following:

- Do not move the vehicle unless directed by law enforcement personnel or GCTD management. Once directed to move the vehicle, drive only as far as to clear whatever hazard or obstruction you may have been causing. Do not continue the route

All GCTD vehicles have bio-hazard kits in the red emergency backpack. Spill kits include.

- Disposable gloves
- Disposable towels
- Plastic trash bags
- Bio-Hazard bag
- Germicidal cleaning solution-commercially packaged solution, 70% isopropyl alcohol, fresh solution of 10:1 water, and bleach
- Absorbent beads
- Waterless hand cleaner

#### **Waste Disposal**

- All contaminated items, cleaning supplies, and personal protective equipment must be securely bagged or containerized before discarding. If the bag or container is damaged or if the outside is contaminated, place it inside another container
- Marked bags or containers of bio-hazardous material cannot be discarded in a public sanitary landfill. The use of bio-hazard bags is suggested only when there is a need to process the contaminated items later
- Contaminated needles or sharp items must be placed in a container that is closeable, puncture-resistant, and leak-proof on the sides and bottom

#### **Cleaning & De-Contaminating a Spill**

- Always wear gloves
- Wipe up the spill with a towel or other absorbent material. Contaminated needles or sharp items such as broken glass or needles should not be picked up by hand, even if gloved. A mechanical means should be used to gather up these items
- Apply germicide to the surface until it is glistening wet. Keep germicide in contact for the recommended time, usually not less than three minutes, and then allow the surface to dry
- Dispose of all soiled cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment properly

If a spill is too large to be cleaned with a spill kit, remove passengers from the area and contact the fleet manager so the vehicle will be taken in to be bio-cleaned.

#### **First Response to Exposure**

- Administer first aid if trained and appropriate for the first aid being applied
- Clean wound if trained and appropriate for the first aid being applied
- If trained, bandage when needed as appropriate

Employees who are unsure what first aid may be needed in any situation must call dispatch. Employees should not guess how to handle a situation. An exposure incident is a specific eye, mouth, other mucous membranes, non-intact skin, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. An exposed employee should notify their supervisor and complete an incident report form as soon as feasible. Within ten days, GCTD will provide an exposed employee with the following: Identification and documentation of the source individual and their infectious status for HBV and HIV, unless identification is not feasible or prohibited by law. A free and confidential medical evaluation and follow-up may include:

control situations. Employees who encounter a questionable situation or have a specific need should contact their supervisor, manager, director, or Human Resources. Employees must consistently provide safe, courteous, and reliable service.

Employees must:

- Answer questions and provide informational material
- Assist all customers who may need assistance
- Direct customers to obtain further assistance if you do not know the answer to their questions
- Greet and acknowledge all customers
- Maintain clean and safe vehicles
- Operate safely while striving for reliable service
- Remain aware of customers' activity and maintain a safe environment
- Report policy violations without inconveniencing other customers or unduly delaying services

When operating a revenue vehicle, efforts must be made to ensure that customers are not passed up at any bus stop or pick-up location. Employees must exercise professional and rational judgment and never intentionally refuse service to any customer, including passengers riding revenue vehicles. Employees operating a revenue vehicle must notify dispatch for directions should safety issues develop on the bus that would involve any denial of service to customers.

GCTD will not tolerate retaliation, discrimination, or harassment against anyone for any reason. GCTD makes it a priority to promote accessibility, diversity, and inclusion for all. Employees and those operating revenue vehicles cannot refuse to provide anyone with transportation because they may perceive them to have a disability or need. When operating a revenue vehicle, persons requiring the assistance of a personal care attendant (PCA) may travel with their PCA at no additional charge if the PCA has been registered with GCTD. If the PCA is a first-time rider with a patron, let them board and have them contact GCTD dispatch. Service will only be refused for a rider engaging in "violent, seriously disruptive, or illegal conduct."

GCTD does not discriminate based on race, color, religion, marital status, age, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, pregnancy, genetic information, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, or any other status protected under federal, state, or local law.

### **2.31 Property Access**

Access to GCTD property is controlled. Only employees who have authorized entry into designated sensitive areas, such as the bus storage yard containing buildings and the maintenance shops, are permitted. Entry by non-employees into these sensitive areas must have prior approval from the transportation manager, mechanic fleet manager, director, or executive director. A GCTD employee must always escort all personnel who are not employed by GCTD to controlled access areas. Access to other GCTD areas, such as auto parking lots, administration, and operations, is controlled. Persons requesting access to those areas must identify themselves and the reason for their presence when requested. After

If there is a possibility of a flash flood:

- Move the vehicle immediately to higher ground
- Ensure the safety of all passengers
- Follow the flooded roadway detours list or use a route directed by local emergency personnel or authorities
- Do not drive into flooded areas. Two feet of water will wash away almost any vehicle
- Recognize areas where floodwaters have receded, possibly weakening roads that could collapse under the weight of the vehicle

Employees operating a revenue vehicle who encounter flooded roadways must contact dispatch for further instructions when it is safe to do so. To avoid damage to equipment, vehicles must never be operated through water over ten inches deep, and then the vehicle should be driven very slowly. This is easily determined when water reaches two inches above the first step of the vehicle.

### **2.33 Nuisances**

Any reasonably loud, disturbing, or unnecessary noises that cause material distress, discomfort, or injury to persons of ordinary sensibilities in a vehicle or any portion of a transit facility are declared a nuisance. Employees may not engage in the following acts:

- The playing of any radio, phonograph, musical instrument, portable stereo systems, or other instruments in such a manner or with such volume which causes material distress, discomfort, or injury to persons of ordinary sensibilities
- The use of any portable speakers, stationary speakers, or amplifiers in such a manner or with such volume or intensity causes material distress, discomfort, or injury to persons of ordinary sensibilities

Employees operating a vehicle must avoid unnecessary noise of any kind. Racing engines, excessive use of the horn, or fanning of brakes are strictly forbidden.

### **2.34 Security – hold-ups, hijackings, disturbances, weapons altercations**

Hold-ups, hijackings, disturbances, and altercations must be handled with extreme care.

Employees' first concerns must be regarding the safety of human life. Employees must remain calm and cooperate with the person or persons making the threat. Avoid violence whenever possible. This is not to say that an employee may not defend themselves if attacked; however, an attempt to avoid trouble before it reaches the point of violence is mandatory. Full cooperation with any law enforcement agency is expected.

When possible, make a note of the persons:

- Approximate height, sex, weight, and age
- Aesthetics, including hair, skin, and eye color
- Distinguishing marks, scars, or mannerisms
- Type and color of the clothing

Salary increases may consist of:

- Step advancement upon completing one year of employment and each year based on performance evaluations. Employees are not guaranteed step advancement of any kind for any reason
- Bonuses are defined by Human Resources and are restricted to exemplary performance as noted by the employee's manager or director. The executive director must always approve bonus pay. All bonus pay is a one-time, lump-sum distribution
- As approved by the executive director, salary adjustments may be made to the GCTD salary schedule. Salary adjustments may occur in designated job classifications via a response to a local market survey
- Employee promotion to a position requiring higher skills or increased responsibility
- Job reclassification due to a significant change in the job role. Such reclassification is made upon the recommendation of the employees' manager or director and approval by Human Resources, and the executive director

Employees who move from one position may not always keep the same pay rate or benefits offerings when moving into another position. The pay and benefit structures are unique to several factors, including FSLA status, position type, and job description.

#### **Bilingual Stipend**

Employees fluent in English and bilingual in Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, and or American Sign Language may be eligible for a \$100.00 annual language differential bonus. Employees who are bilingual in Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, and or American Sign Language will be required to pass a proficiency test before becoming eligible for the annual bonus. The need for cultural language diversity is important to GCTD and our community. Language diversity needs are based on demographic data provided by the census for the geographic areas GCTD operates. All payouts will be at the end of the fiscal year on the last paycheck of the fiscal year.

#### **3.3 Pay periods and paydays**

Employees are paid bi-monthly on the 15<sup>th</sup> and the last day of the month. When the regular payday falls on a weekend or bank holiday, employees will be paid on the last business day before the holiday or weekend. All work performed from the 1<sup>st</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup> will be paid on the last day of the month. All work performed from the 16<sup>th</sup> through the last day of the month will be paid on the 15<sup>th</sup>. Employees are paid by check or direct deposit; direct deposit is the preferred form of payment. Employees should reach out to their manager, director, finance, or Human Resources for further information.

#### **3.3 Overtime**

Non-exempt employees will be paid per federal and Texas state law. All overtime work by non-exempt employees must be authorized in advance by their manager. Only hours worked will be used to calculate overtime pay.

#### **3.4 Rest & Meal Periods**

GCTD allows unpaid lunch breaks to employees working over eight (8) hours. Employees working over eight (8) hours are given a minimum unpaid thirty (30) minute lunch break up to a sixty-minute (60) unpaid lunch break. All employees will be required to punch in and out for their lunch break regardless of

other in an out-of-the-time and attendance system for any reason. Employees must notify their manager of any pay discrepancies or unrecorded or mis recorded work hours. Falsifying time entries is strictly prohibited, including falsifying time to include working "off the clock." Employees who falsify time records or the time records of co-workers, or if an employee works off the clock without prior approval from their manager or director, will be subject to discipline up to and including termination. Employees should report to Human Resources any employee, manager, or director who falsifies time and attendance entries or encourages an employee to falsify time and attendance entries or work off the clock. All employees must submit their time within 24 hours of the last day of the pay period. Repeated failures to submit personal time sheets could result in disciplinary actions and up to possible termination.

Operators are expected to report to work on time, ready, willing, and able, to perform all assigned duties in a diligent manner.

The Transportation Manager/Scheduler will post schedules the week before in the Operator's mailbox. If an operator is going to be absent from the scheduled duty, they must contact their Transportation Manager no later than 4 am do not contact them any earlier than 4 am. All call-ins for absent of work must be done by phone. Text messages or leaving a voice mail is not permitted. It is ultimately your responsibility to know your schedule & show up on time for the next day.

It is the operator's responsibility to call in each day they are absent before 3pm. If the Operator fails to call in before 3pm, the Operator will not be put on the next day schedule and CANNOT use Accrued LEAVE. It will be logged in the time sheet as leave without pay (LWOP) and will be counted as an unauthorized absence.

Operators if ill or out because of family illness, must call into work each day by 3:00pm to inform supervisor of next day work status. (The only exception to the rule is if the operator submits to the Operations Manager a certified excuse stating the reason for a longer length of absence, in advance – not after the fact.)

#### **Time Theft & Misappropriation**

Time theft and misappropriation occur when an employee is paid for work that they have not done or for any time they were not actually at work. Time theft and misappropriation will not be tolerated.

Non-Exempt employees may not clock in on the mobile platform while traveling to or from work or to and from lunch. Employees must clock in at their designated work assignment when starting their shift and clock out at their designated work assignment when ending their shift. Employees must clock out when their assignment has ended, not while traveling to or from their home or other personal destination.

Exempt employees may clock in and out on the mobile platform phone while traveling to and from work or lunch if they have begun work or are finishing work, such as while on a phone call, virtual business meeting, or other work-related projects. Exempt employees who do not have a business need may not clock in and out while traveling to and from work or traveling to and from lunch.

forfeit their paid holiday. Attendance is monitored, and a record is maintained of each occurrence of employees who are absent from work. Employees who miss two or more working days because of illness or injury are required to furnish a return to work note from a licensed physician or nurse practitioner before returning to work and present it to their manager, transportation manager, or Human Resources. Employees who are absent from work to attend to a covered family member under the FMLA policy must notify their manager and Human Resources. GCTD employees relieved of their work assignment because of illness or personal injury must furnish a doctor's return to work note before returning to work and present it to their manager, transportation manager, or Human Resources. Employees may be prohibited from returning to work until the return-to-work note is obtained

### **Calling Out**

Employees must notify their manager of their intended absence not less than one hour before their scheduled report time. Employees who know they may miss the following consecutive day or days of work must call in each day no later than 3 pm, or they will not be put on the next day's schedule. Before returning to work, employees who are absent for more than one day due to illness and not on an approved leave of absence will need to furnish a valid medical return to work note from a licensed physician or nurse practitioner stating the employees may return to work without restriction. The return-to-work note must verify that the employee was seen by the health care provider and stipulate the period of incapacity or job-related restrictions and when the employee can return to work without restrictions.

### **Working From Home When Ill**

Certain office positions and non-operator positions may allow employees to work from home during their illness when approved by a director. Employees working from home during an illness are considered on restricted and or modified duty. Employees working from home during their illness will be required to furnish a return to work note from a licensed physician or nurse practitioner stating that they may return to work without restriction. The return-to-work note must verify that a licensed health care provider saw the employee and when the employee can return to work without restriction.

**Note COVID-19:** Employees who have been diagnosed with and or are quarantined due to exposure to COVID19 will be expected to follow the most up-to-date CDC guidelines. The Galveston County Transportation manager will guide employees through the process of returning to work after having been diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19.

**Note:** Human Resources and the executive director will have the final determination for anyone coming back to work after an illness by providing a medical note from a licensed physician or nurse practitioner.

Employees must not drive GCTD vehicles if their ability or alertness are impaired through fatigue, illness, intoxication, or any other cause that would create a safety hazard. Sleeping while operating a vehicle is prohibited. If impairment to operate a vehicle is found to cause injury to clients, employees, or revenue, GCTD will immediately suspend employees pending investigation by Human Resources, which may lead to immediate termination. Employees must park their vehicles in designated employee parking areas at each facility. All operators must carry the specified items below while on duty. The misuse of these items is a violation of company policies and procedures. Equipment necessary for the proper execution of an operator's duties includes, but is not limited to:

- Valid (TX) commercial driver's license

excuse stating the reason for a longer length of absence to the transportation manager. The certified medical documentation must be sent in advance and not after the fact. An example may be a doctor's note stating that the employee will be off for a specified date or period.

#### **Work failures – miss-out, unpaid sick, unauthorized absence**

Types of work failures are a miss-out, unpaid sick absence, and unauthorized absence. An occurrence of work failure can occur when one or more of the following events happen:

- One or more consecutive workdays or partial workdays of unpaid accrued earned leave absences occur
- A miss-out occurs
- An unauthorized absence occurs

#### **Miss-outs can occur when one or more of the following events happen:**

- An employee does not start on time for a work assignment
- An operator fails to make a relief on time
- An operator reports off sick less than one hour before an AM assignment scheduled report time
- An operator reports sick while on break and after working part of their assignment or between assignments
- An operator reports off sick after 9:00 AM for a PM assignment
- An employee reports off sick less than one hour before their start time

#### **An unpaid leave due to illness absence can occur when one or more of the following events happen:**

- Any unpaid accrued earned leave absence is any full or partial day leave absence that is not fully paid by accrued earned leave with a physician's statement
- An unauthorized absence is defined as an absence that was not requested and or approved by an employee's manager

Employees must report for their assignment at the scheduled time, or they shall be charged a miss-out unless they notify their manager, lead operator, transportation manager, manager, or director of their inability to report to work. Employees must notify their intended absence not less than one hour before their scheduled AM report time or after 9:00 AM for a PM report time. When an employee is prevented from reporting on time due to an emergency and presents proof of the emergency, the transportation manager, director, or Human Resources may waive the charge of miss-out. A return-to-work note must be provided to the transportation manager, director, or Human Resources when returning to work. The return-to-work note must be related to the date of the incident to have a miss-out report excused. Miss-outs may be changed to an authorized absence provided the miss-out was due to a medical emergency or an approved leave status such as bereavement, disability, or FMLA. Certain city, county, state, or federal documented accidents or disasters may qualify a miss-out to be changed to an authorized absence. Repetitious requests, patterns of abuse, and requests that do not justify time off work shall not be honored. Certain absences indicated as follows shall be excluded from the application of this policy: Jury duty, military leave, bereavement leave, day of admission of an immediate family member defined under FMLA policies to a hospital, removal from service by a GCTD designated doctor, occupational injury or illness, natural disaster including hurricane, fire, flood, or tornado if the employee is personally affected, or absences covered under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA).



employee). Note: No such deduction will take an employee's pay rate below minimum wage, or if a salaried employee, reduce an employee's salary below its predetermined amount)

- Administrative fees in connection with court-ordered garnishments or legally required wage attachments of my pay that is limited in the extent to the amount or amounts allowed under applicable laws

Employees are encouraged to review their paychecks for errors each pay period and immediately report any discrepancies to their manager or finance. As the law defines, employees will be reimbursed in full for any isolated, inadvertent, or improper deductions. If an error is found, the employee will receive an immediate adjustment, which will be paid no later than their next regular payday. GCTD will not retaliate against employees who report erroneous deductions under this policy.

For payroll or finance-related questions, please contact your manager or the finance department.

### **3.7 Wage Garnishment**

A garnishment is a court order requiring an employer to remit part of an employee's wages to a third party to satisfy a just debt. Once GCTD receives the legal papers ordering a garnishment, GCTD is required by law to continue making deductions from an employee's check until GCTD has withheld the full amount or until GCTD receives legal papers from the court to stop the garnishment. Once the debt is paid, GCTD will still need the legal papers to stop the garnishment.

### **3.8 Direct Deposit**

All employees are encouraged to use direct deposit and have their paychecks deposited into a bank account of an accredited participating bank or credit union.

### **3.9 Final Pay Due to Separation**

Employees involuntarily separated from GCTD will receive their final paycheck within 7 calendar days upon separation pending return of all GCTD property. Employees who voluntarily separate their employment with GCTD will receive their final paycheck at the next regularly scheduled payroll date provided the return of all GCTD property. Direct deposit will be canceled for separating employees, and the final live paycheck will be mailed to the last address we have on file for the employee.

## **4.1 Anti-Harassment & Discrimination; Zero Tolerance**

### **Diversity & Inclusion Policy**

GCTD is dedicated to creating and maintaining an atmosphere of diversity and inclusion for all. Company values are important and are only made better by gathering the experiences, knowledge, and perspectives of everyone. GCTD celebrates differences in age, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, family and marital status, and all backgrounds. GCTD's commitment to diversity applies to hiring practices, promotions, pay and benefits, terminations, training, team building, and more. Prospective employees and current employees alike are expected to treat each other with respect and dignity. We seek to foster an environment that promotes:

- A healthy, collaborative, and professional atmosphere
- Engagement from all employees

for legal relief.

#### **4.2 Discipline & Standards of Ethical Conduct**

As an at-will employer, GCTD may impose discipline whenever it determines it is necessary or appropriate. Discipline may take various forms, including verbal counseling, written warnings, suspension, demotion, transfer, reassignment, or termination. The discipline imposed will depend on the circumstances of each case; therefore, discipline will not necessarily be imposed in any sequence. Moreover, when GCTD determines it is appropriate, an employee may be terminated immediately. GCTD standards of ethical conduct guide the behavior of employees.

GCTD expects its employees to be courteous and treat fellow employees and patrons with respect. Words or acts of hostility towards anyone will not be tolerated and may be subject to disciplinary action. Employees may not engage in behavior that brings discredit to GCTD. Boisterous, profane, or sarcastic language or behavior with customers, regardless of verbal or written statements intended to offend others, is strictly prohibited. Employees are prohibited from committing acts of harassment, including but not limited to the use of slurs or derogatory statements involving race, color, religion, marital status, age, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, pregnancy, genetic information, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, or any other status protected under federal, state, or local law.

#### **Misconduct & Gross Misconduct**

Misconduct is defined as an action that:

- Caused a problem
- A violation of a rule, policy, or law that was within the employee's power to control or avoid

Examples of misconduct include but are not limited to:

- Failure to maintain required training
- Failure to abide by any GCTD program policies and or procedures
- Failure to notify one's supervisor of absence from duty
- Misconduct in violation of professional or ethical standards to include violation or misconduct of DOT ethical standards
- Inability to work cooperatively with fellow employees or external staff
- Inability to maintain an acceptable level of performance
- Excessive tardiness and or on-the-job absenteeism
- Misconduct and mismanagement of position by action or inaction
- Negligence of duties
- Negligence that jeopardizes the safety, life, or property of another
- Theft, abuse, or neglect of GCTD resources

#### **Gross misconduct**

Gross misconduct is defined at GCTD as any behavior that shows a complete disregard for employer rules, policies, procedures, and or violations of city, county, state, or federal laws that can seriously impact the business. Any defined violation of gross misconduct will result in an immediate unpaid

GCTD has a zero-tolerance policy regarding workplace violence and will not tolerate acts or threats of violence, harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior, either physical or verbal, which occurs in the workplace or other areas. This policy applies to all employees and non-employees, including but not limited to contractors, customers, and visitors. Workplace violence can include oral or written statements, gestures, or expressions that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical harm, property damage, or any intentional behavior that may cause a person to feel threatened.

Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Physically injuring another person.
- Threatening to injure a person or damage property by any means, including verbal, written, direct, indirect, or electronic means
- Taking any action to place a person in reasonable fear of imminent harm or offensive contact
- Possessing, brandishing, or using a firearm on GCTD property or while performing company business except as permitted by state law.
- Violating a restraining order, order of protection, injunction against harassment, or other court order

Fighting is prohibited at any time while on duty or on GCTD property. Employees must do everything reasonable to de-escalate potentially violent situations and avoid physical altercations. Employees may defend themselves only to the extent necessary. In the event of a physical altercation on a bus, operators are to open the doors allowing the offender or customers to exit. Once the offender has exited the doors, they should be closed to prevent the offender from re-entering the bus. Operators must not alight the bus for confrontation. Fighting with anyone while in, on, or off GCTD property will not be tolerated. Horseplay or roughhousing is not permitted while on duty, at any GCTD property, inside any GCTD vehicle, at any vendor location, or anywhere when in a GCTD uniform. Infractions of GCTD rules and policies include but are not limited to:

- Employees who are careless for the safety of others or themselves
- Employees who commit acts of discourtesy, insubordination, or gross misconduct
- Conduct unbecoming of an employee
- Not properly accounting for passengers or revenues
- ADA and Title VI violations
- Willful neglect
- Falsification of documents, concealing facts concerning matters under investigation
- Failing to report an accident or failing to make a proper effort to procure witnesses
- Violation of vehicle code laws and regulations
- Violations of city, county, state, or federal laws

Victims and witnesses of workplace violence will not be retaliated against in any manner. In addition, employees will not be subject to discipline for reporting a threat or cooperating in an investigation based on a reasonable belief. Employees who participate or are involved in retaliation or obstruct an investigation into conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including

### **4.3 Dress Code**

What we wear to work reflects GCTD's image and brand. Although dress code requirements may vary according to job responsibilities, we ask that employees' appearance always show professionalism, discretion, good taste, and appropriateness for the safe performance of job duties and location. The physical appearance and attire of staff should support the professional standards of service provided by GCTD. A professional image is expected of all employees. All employees must be clean, free from debris, and sanitary in their dress and appearance, including combed or brushed hair and bathed. Manager will send employees home if hygiene or appearance is not acceptable. Poor hygiene is considered a violation of the dress code. Offensive odors that the working conditions cannot explain may be addressed with the employee by Human Resources. GCTD managers and directors may exercise reasonable discretion to determine employee dress and appearance appropriateness. Employees who do not meet GCTD dress code standards will be sent home to change into appropriate attire or groom and return to work. Non-exempt employees will not be paid for the time required to return home and return to work and must clock out when leaving and clock back in upon return. Violations of the dress code policy can range from inappropriate clothing items to offensive perfumes and body odor. Reasonable accommodations will be made where required. GCTD recognizes the importance of everyone's individual religious beliefs within the organization. GCTD, per applicable law, will reasonably accommodate employees with disabilities or religious beliefs that make it difficult for them to comply fully with the dress code policy unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on GCTD. Accommodation of religious beliefs in attire may be difficult considering safety issues for staff members. Contact Human Resources to obtain a reasonable accommodation.

Please note fragrant products, including but not limited to perfumes, colognes, and scented body lotions or hair products, should be used in moderation out of concern for others with sensitivities or allergies.

The standard uniform requirements are as follows:

#### **Shirts or Blouses**

Employees may wear long or short-sleeved shirts throughout the year, and sleeves on either shirt shall not be rolled up. Spaghetti straps or mid-riff revealing attire is not acceptable for employees to wear. The polo dress uniform shirts with the GCTD logo must be worn when on duty by operators. The polo may be worn with only the top collar button unbuttoned. The length of the uniform shirt issued for operators must not exceed the length of the operator's wrist.

#### **Trousers**

Employees are not issued pants as part of any position or uniform. Khaki pants must be blue, black, or tan. Employees may wear dark-colored blue or black jeans free from fades, holes, rips, or tears. Employees are not allowed to wear designer jeans. Maternity alterations are optional for employees.

#### **Shoes or Boots**

Solid natural dark color boots or shoes may be worn with the uniform for operators. Operator boots must be leather, plastic, or natural animal skin that appears to have a shined finish. All operator footwear must have slip-resistant soles and match each foot. The height limit on heels is 1 ½ inch at the instep. The sole of any footwear must be no more than ½ inch thick. Employee shoes must be of professional appearance. Neat tennis or athletic shoes are appropriate. Straps, buckles, or rings of ornamental nature are not

Hair must be clean and well-groomed. Hair must not hang over the eyes or interfere with the vision for safety reasons. Longer hair will need to be tied, braided, or secured in a wrap to prevent injury. Hair may be placed in one braid, ponytail, or hair clip. Hairbands may be worn over the crown of the head to keep hair off the face. Headbands are not to be worn over the forehead. Ribbons and scarves are not permitted. Hair shall not be of an unnatural color which includes but is not limited to blue, pink, green, unnaturally red, purple, etc. Hairstyles shall not interfere with the optional wearing of the uniform cap or hinder safety practices in the workplace.

#### **Sideburns, Mustaches, and Beards**

Sideburns, mustaches, and beards must be clean, sanitary, odorless, free from unnatural discoloration, and groomed. A beard may be a full or partial beard worn in conjunction with or without a mustache and be of solid growth.

Employees driving revenue vehicles must be in regulation uniform during working hours. When in uniform, employees must wear the complete uniform as prescribed when reporting for duty. Employees must appear neat, clean, odorless, and orderly in their appearance and dress. Employees may not wear the uniform to discredit GCTD regardless of being on or off duty and regardless of their location. Operators must always wear their uniform; all other clothing or items worn outside an operator's uniform are not considered regulation and are non-compliant. When the retraining of an operator is required, operators must report in uniform with the required equipment. Employees who cannot wear a uniform due to a disability or has just cause may address the concern with Human Resources. Reasonable accommodations will be made where required.

#### **4.4 Pet Policy**

Animals that are registered service animals will be permitted in the workplace. Please inform a manager, director, or Human Resources if you intend to bring a service animal to the workplace. Animals that are not registered service animals will not be permitted in the workplace.

#### **4.5 Safety**

GCTD is committed to providing a safe, courteous, clean, reliable, and effective on-time service. The safety of everyone is of paramount concern. GCTD will provide the highest degree of safety that is practical to everyone, including GCTD patrons and customers. All employees are responsible for promoting and working safety. By remaining safety conscious, employees can protect themselves, their coworkers, customers, and patrons. Employees are expected to promptly report unsafe working conditions, incidents, accidents, and injuries.

The GCTD safety and training manager is authorized and directed to develop, implement, and administer a comprehensive and coordinated vehicle safety program to prevent, control, and resolve unsafe conditions which may occur. This authority includes the right to stop any operation which the safety and training manager feels is unsafe. It is the responsibility of each employee to cooperate with the safety and training manager and provide them with any requested information to assist in any investigation or inspection that they may undertake. It is the policy of GCTD to appoint a safety and training manager designated to develop and oversee the transportation health and safety program. The role of the safety and training manager includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Employees must complete an incident report before ending their shift

#### **Prank or Disturbing Phone Calls**

Employees receiving prank or disturbing calls shall:

- Report the call to the transportation manager or management
- Call 911 if determined necessary by the transportation manager or management and provide any distinguishing voice characteristics which may be helpful
- Employees must complete an incident report before ending their shift

If a door is found unlocked, the following action should be taken:

- Re-Lock the door.
- Contact the GCTD transportation manager or management
- The transportation manager or designated manager will perform an immediate search of the area and contact the alarm company
- The transportation manager shall complete an incident report within 24 hours

#### **Bomb Or Threat**

It is the policy of GCTD to maintain emergency procedures in the event of a bomb or threat. If a bomb or threat is received, the individual receiving the call should remain calm and try to prolong the conversation to:

- Receive or transcribe the exact message
- Determine where the bomb will explode and at what time
- Determine background noise such as distinguishing sounds, music, voices, traffic, etcetera
- Note distinguishing voice characteristics such as accent, pronunciations, etc. The callers' state of excitement and their attitude
- Try to determine if the caller is familiar with the facility by their description of locations

After the caller hangs up, the transportation manager, safety and training manager, and 911 must be notified immediately. The transportation manager and safety manager are responsible for all necessary decisions, issuance of orders, and preparations for the arrival of assistance no later than fifteen minutes before the designated time of bomb detonation. The transportation manager and or safety manager will decide whether to evacuate staff and customers.

- Vehicles are not to be started or used during the threat until an all-clear is given
- The transportation manager will meet the police upon arrival at the building's main entrance. The transportation manager will assist law enforcement officials with entry to any facility rooms, offices, or storage areas
- If the caller mentions a specific location, law enforcement initiates an immediate search of that area. Once the explosion is imminent, every person in the facility is evacuated upon the orders of the transportation manager

- Do not sniff, touch, taste, or look closely at the package or at any contents that may have spilled
- Do not shake or empty the contents of any suspicious package.
- Do not allow others to examine it
- Alert others in the area, leave the area, open any doors, and take actions to prevent others from entering the area
- Wash hands with soap and water to prevent spreading potentially infectious material to the face or skin
- Seek additional instruction for exposed or potentially exposed persons.
- Notify authorities to investigate a suspicious package
- Provide as many observational details as possible to help them prepare for response

All recommendations for improvements in the safety and security of GCTD and its practices shall be made to the safety and training manager, who will review with the director of operations and assets.

#### **4.6 Substance Use & Drug & Alcohol Testing Policy**

##### **Purpose**

To meet public safety responsibilities and to comply with the requirements set forth by state and federal regulations, including the requirements of TXDOT and the FMCSA regarding the prevention of prohibited drug use and misuse of alcohol in transit operations. A copy of this policy is to be included in the GCTD policy and procedure manual, which is distributed to all employees and always made accessible to all employees.

The use of alcohol, intoxicants, or other harmful drugs by employees on GCTD property or in a GCTD vehicle is forbidden. Employees must not be under the influence or impaired by alcohol, intoxicants, amphetamines, derivatives, or other harmful illicit drugs or medication. Employees must not have alcohol, intoxicants, amphetamines, or derivatives thereof items in their possession or the odor of intoxicants on their breath when reporting for duty or on or about GCTD property. An employee, who shows symptoms or is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or the residual effects of either, may be required to submit to an immediate reasonable suspicion drug or alcohol test. Smoking or the use of chewing tobacco, snuff, or other smokeless tobacco products is prohibited in all GCTD vehicles and only in designated areas at least 5 feet from any entrance at a GCTD building. Employees must not smoke while operating a vehicle, hold in their hand or mouth, or place on the instrument panel of the vehicle any cigar, cigarette, electronic, vapor-based cigarette, or pipe at any time or location. Operators may smoke upon arriving at the end of the line or layover area, time permitting, only while off the vehicle and not less than twenty feet away from the vehicle and not in public contact. Employees may only smoke in designated smoking-approved areas. Employees may smoke if this will not inconvenience customers. If operating a bus, time away from the bus must be minimal. If driving a bus, professional and ethical judgment must be used to avoid conflict with passengers. Employees off duty but in GCTD uniform are prohibited from engaging in the behaviors.

##### **Prescribed Medication Reporting**

A state-issued permit for operating a commercial motor vehicle.

**CDL Driver**

A person who performs safety-sensitive functions as an operator or a person issued a CDL may or may not drive any time during the year but is on-call to do so.

**NON-CDL Driver**

A person who performs safety-sensitive functions as an operator or a person who is not issued a CDL may or may not drive at any time during the year but is on-call to do so.

**Commercial Motor Vehicle**

A vehicle over 26,001 pounds (single vehicle or vehicle and trailer) or a bus/van manufactured to carry 16 people or more, including the driver.

**Confirmatory Test**

For drugs: a second analytical procedure to identify the presence of a specific drug or drug metabolite that is independent of the initial test. The confirmatory test for drugs uses a different technique and chemical principle from that of the initial test to ensure reliability and accuracy. For alcohol: An Evidential Breath Test (EBT).

**Drug Metabolite**

The specific substance is produced when the human body metabolizes a given drug as it passes throughout the body and is excreted in the urine.

**Drug Test**

The laboratory analysis of a urine specimen is analyzed in an approved laboratory.

**Failing an Alcohol and Or Drug Test**

For drugs: the test result indicates positive evidence of the presence of an illegal drug or drug metabolite. For alcohol: the test result indicates an alcohol concentration level of 0.04 or higher.

**Illegal Drug Examples**

Marijuana, opiates, phencyclidine (PCP), amphetamines, and cocaine.

**Initial Test**

For drugs: a screening to eliminate negative urine specimens from further consideration. For alcohol: saliva or evidential breath test.

**Medical Review Officer (MRO)**

A licensed physician reviews the results of drug tests and interprets positive confirmatory tests. The physician knows about substance abuse disorders and has the appropriate medical training to interpret and evaluate an individual's positive test result, together with the individual's medical history and any other relevant information.

**Passing an Alcohol or Drug Test**

For drugs: the test result indicates no positive evidence of the presence of an illegal drug or drug metabolite. For alcohol: the test result indicates an alcohol concentration level of less than 0.04.

**Positive Evidence**

The presence of an illegal drug or drug metabolite in a urine sample at or above the levels listed in federal regulations.

**Post-Accident Test**

An administered drug or alcohol test to an employee following an accident

**Pre-Employment Test**

A drug test is administered to an applicant who is being considered for employment in a position requiring a CDL and or the performance of safety-sensitive functions.



- A licensed physician (M.D. or D.O.)
- A licensed or certified psychologist or social worker
- Employee assistance professionals certified by the employee assistance certification commission
- Addiction counselors certified by the National Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors Certification Commission

### **Testing Program Manager**

An individual for GCTD who serves as the primary contact point for the substance abuse testing program. It is the responsibility of the testing program manager to serve as a primary authority regarding the program. The director of Human Resources and the safety and training manager will serve to accommodate all requests about the execution of the testing policy. All operator transportation positions are considered safety-sensitive, and therefore all potential applicants and current employees are subject to drug and alcohol testing as federal law requires. No employee may consume alcohol or ingest prohibited drugs while performing a safety-sensitive function for four (4) hours before and up to eight (8) hours following an accident or until the employee undergoes a post-accident test, whichever occurs first. The use and ingestion of prohibited drugs are always prohibited. The following conduct is considered prohibited behavior by employees:

- Reporting for duty or remaining on duty to perform safety-sensitive functions with an alcohol concentration level of 0.04 or higher
- Consuming alcohol within four (4) hours of reporting to duty
- Consuming alcohol while on duty, including while on-call
- Possessing alcohol while on duty
- Use or possession of illegal drugs
- Refusal to submit to a required alcohol or drug test
- Failure to report for pre-employment drug testing
- Failure to report for requested drug testing
- Inability or refusal to provide enough breath or urine for testing without a valid medical reason
- Tampering with or attempting to adulterate the specimen collection procedure
- Leaving the scene of an accident without a valid reason before the administration of appropriate testing
- Failure to report for testing within 2 hours of notification or request
- Failure to report for testing within 2 hours of a covered accident or incident
- Using a controlled substance before reporting to duty or while on duty, unless advised by a physician in writing that the substance does not adversely affect the ability to perform safety-sensitive functions
- Reporting for and or remaining on duty or performing safety-sensitive functions before being approved to return to duty by the substance abuse profession after receiving a positive test for alcohol or drugs
- The use of a controlled substance must be reported before reporting for duty.

### **Circumstance for testing**

Step 2: The collection site person administers an EBT to the individual and informs the testing program manager of the results.

If the results are:

- 0.2 or higher but less than 0.04, the employee is immediately prohibited from performing safety-sensitive functions for the next 24 hours without pay
- 0.04 or higher, the result is considered a positive test result, and the employee is referred to the return to duty DISA EAP representative

The following procedure is descriptive of the drug testing procedure:

- Step 1 The employee or applicant is instructed to go to the collection site.
- Step 2: The collection site person instructs the individual on how to provide a split specimen, and the individual provides the specimen.
- Step 3: The collection site person measures the temperature of the specimens, and if the temperature falls outside the acceptable temperature range, the collection site person measures the individual's body temperature orally.
- Step 4: The collection site person seals the tamper-proof bottles containing the specimens and the individual initials on both bottles signifying acceptance of the tamper-proof sealing process.
- Step 5: The collection site person gives the individual one of the standard urine custody and control form copies.

The following procedure is descriptive of the drug testing procedure:

- Step 6: The collection site person arranges to have the specimen shipped to a laboratory for analysis.
- Step 7: The laboratory analyzes the specimen and reports the test results to the medical review officer (MRO).
- Step 8: The MRO reviews the drug test results and reports negative results to the testing program manager. The MRO interprets each positive confirmatory test to determine if there is an alternative medical explanation. The MRO verifies a positive confirmatory test as positive or negative using the following criteria:
- Contacting the individual tested and conducting a medical interview
  - Reviewing the individual's medical history and any relevant biomedical factors made available by the individual
  - Reviewing all medical records made available by the individual to determine if the positive test is a result of legally prescribed medication
  - If necessary, requiring the original specimen be re-analyzed to determine the accuracy of the reported test result

When the MRO cannot contact an individual with a positive confirmatory test directly, the MRO will contact the GCTD testing program manager, who, in confidence, directs the individual to contact the

As required by DOT & FTA, records of transportation employees who fail a drug test must be maintained for five (5) years. The record must include:

- The prescribed or accomplished rehabilitation if any
- The functions performed by the employee
- The drug(s) that were detected in the specimen
- The outcome of the situation; and,
- The employee's age

If an employee is found to use illegal drugs or misuse alcohol, then the testing program manager refers the employee to the GCTD EAP representative, who informs the employee of the resources available to assist with the problems associated with substance abuse. The EAP representative will give the employee the contact information of a substance abuse professional. Disciplinary action taken against an employee found to use illegal drugs or misuse alcohol may include one or more of the following:

- Reassignment to a non-safety-sensitive position
- Placement on unpaid leave until approved to return to duty by the substance abuse professional and or
- Termination

Disciplinary action taken could be influenced by the employee's regularly assigned duties, tenure, and or past employment history. Disciplinary action, including termination, may be taken if an employee fails to comply with the procedures set forth herein.

GCTD will terminate an employee for:

- Refusing to be evaluated by a substance abuse professional or refusing to obtain rehabilitation, if required by the substance abuse professional after failing the drug or alcohol test
- Failing to refrain from illegal drug use or alcohol misuse after the first finding of use
- Refusing to take an alcohol or drug test
- Altering or substituting a specimen or attempting to do so

The substance abuse professional evaluates the employee and determines what assistance the employee needs to resolve problems associated with illegal drug use or alcohol misuse. After failing an alcohol or drug test and before returning to duty, the substance abuse professional must determine that the employee can perform safety-sensitive functions. Each employee identified as needing assistance or rehabilitation by a substance abuse professional must be re-evaluated by that professional to determine if the employee completed the rehabilitation program or resolved the problems associated with substance abuse before returning to duty. All communication between the employee and the licensed substance abuse professional is confidential. The professional may not reveal any information to anyone without the expressed written consent of the employee. Any employee will be tested if a supervisor has reasonable cause to believe the employee is using illegal drugs or misusing alcohol. Reasonable cause is based upon existing physical, behavioral, or performance indicators of probable use.

Types of drug testing at GCTD are:

- The circumstances requiring an employee to take an alcohol or drug test. The procedures used to test for the presence of alcohol and illegal drugs
- The requirement that a transportation employee submits to an alcohol or drug test
- An explanation of what constitutes a refusal to submit to an alcohol or drug test
- The consequences for employees operating in a safety-sensitive position were found to have violated the prohibitions of this policy, including the immediate prevention of the employee from performing safety-sensitive functions
- The consequences for employees found to have an alcohol concentration level of 0.02 or higher, but less than 0.04 and,
- Information relating to the effects of alcohol and drug use on an individual's health, work, personal life, signs symptoms of an alcohol or drug problem, and available methods of intervening when an alcohol or drug problem is suspected, including confrontation
- Referral to the employee assistance program or referral to management

Employees operating in a safety-sensitive position acknowledge receiving the educational material packet by signing an individual notice of alcohol and drug testing form. The form also notifies employees operating in a safety-sensitive position that refusal to submit to testing will initiate termination action against them. If the employee refuses to sign the form, then the supervisor will document that the employee received the packet of educational material and form. Failure to sign the form does not preclude the employee from being tested or affect its implementation. Supervisors who make reasonable cause testing determinations are required to have specialized training. Training consists of a 60-minute training class or video on drug abuse and a 60-minute class or video on alcohol abuse. The testing program manager maintains a record of all training taken by supervisors. Supervisor training covers the following elements:

- The impact of drugs and alcohol in the workplace and society at large
- Working knowledge of and methods for communicating GCTD's alcohol and drug testing policy, including testing procedures, positive evidence, and rehabilitation assistance resources
- Recognition of signs and symptoms of substance abuse and profiles of at-risk employees
- Understanding and documenting the behaviors, evidence, and circumstances that constitute reasonable cause for alcohol and drug testing
- Methods of confronting employees of suspected substance abuse that would lead to testing and any appropriate corrective action and confidentiality within the substance abuse testing program

GCTD is a drug-free workplace and will make an effort to create a work environment free from drug and alcohol abuse. To this end, GCTD values the wellness and effectiveness of its staff. In addition, GCTD views the non-use of drugs as one method to assure high-quality service to GCTD customers.

#### **Definitions:**

##### **Substance Abuse**

The excessive use of any controlled substance.

##### **Employee Assistance Program**

A service designed to provide emotional or financial counseling services to employees of an agency.

Level 2 – If it is proven that the employee has sold or ingested drugs while at work, this constitutes grounds for immediate dismissal.

Throughout the investigatory process, confidentiality must be afforded to the person accused of the violation. If a referral to the agency's EAP is tendered, such must be treated as confidential. Likewise, any reports of an individual's involvement with the EAP must be treated as confidential. Any referrals made that relate to this policy must be made with the office of Human Resources. Human Resources will ensure that the policy is upheld, and that information is shared only with those with a "need to know." GCTD will require these referrals to be mandatory. In such cases, the referred individual must attend the appointed sessions and be considered inactive treatment. Upon an employee's initial hiring, Human Resources will make drug treatment resources available. Human Resources will also keep this information available for employees and forward information on request.

#### Reporting Violations & Refusal

Gulf Coast Transit District (GCTD) and the MRO are required to report findings of positive drug and alcohol test results to Texas DPS within 10 days of receiving notice of a valid positive result of alcohol or drugs. GCTD and the MRO must report a positive drug and or alcohol test or refusal to test to the FMSCA Clearinghouse within two business days.

#### Contact Information

##### GCTD Designated Employer Representative (DER)

**Lisa Womack – Human Resources**

1415 33<sup>rd</sup> Street North Texas City, TX 77590

Phone: 800-266-2320

1415 33<sup>rd</sup> Street North Texas City, TX 77590

Email: [lwomack@gulfcoastransitdistrict.com](mailto:lwomack@gulfcoastransitdistrict.com)

##### Third-Party Administration (TPA)

DISA Global Solutions, Inc.

5141 Center Street Pasadena, TX 77505

Phone: 281-673-2400

##### Medical Review Officer (MRO)

University Services – Richard Weinstein, MD.

2800 Black Lake Place Philadelphia, PA 19154

Phone: (800) 624-3784

Email: [coc@userservices.com](mailto:coc@userservices.com)

##### Collection Facilities

DISA Global Solutions

302 34<sup>th</sup> Street South Texas City, TX 77590

Phone: 409-948-2220

- All DISA-approved medical facilities, including DISA third-party collection facilities.

##### Employee Assistance Programs

United Healthcare

888-887-4114

Employees are not permitted to access the electronic communications of other employees or third parties unless directed to do so by the executive director in collaboration with the IT manager. No employee may install or use anonymous email transmission programs or encryption of email communications.

Employees using devices on which information may be received and or stored, including but not limited to cell phones, cordless phones, portable computers, fax machines, and voice mail communications, are required to use these methods in strict compliance with the confidentiality section of this handbook. These communications tools should not be used for communicating confidential or sensitive information or any trade secrets.

Access to the Internet, websites, and other types of GCTD-paid computer access should only be used for GCTD-related business. Any information about GCTD, its products or services, or other types of information that will appear in the electronic media about GCTD must be approved before the information is placed on any electronic information resource accessible to others.

### **Media & Advertising**

Periodically, employees may be contacted by the press or other media for information. Employees must refer all questions and interviews to GCTD's executive director. The executive director will arrange for employee interviews and statements when appropriate.

Advertisements, cards, posters, or signs other than those placed by GCTD, or its agents will not be permitted on GCTD property or equipment. Employees cannot display advertising, political, sexual, illegal, defaming, harassing, or religious drawings, pictures, and or stickers on their company-issued equipment, company property, GCTD website, or GCTD social media accounts. The employee's responsibility is to discourage and report violations of posting or distribution of advisements, destruction, or destroyed property. Employees will not sell or distribute written or oral advertisements of any kind unless pre-approved by GCTD directors.

### **Social Media**

GCTD understands that social media is a way of communicating and sharing information with family, friends, and co-workers worldwide. The use of social media also presents certain risks and carries certain responsibilities. To assist employees in making responsible decisions about the use of social media, GCTD has established guidelines for the appropriate use of social media. The term social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the internet, including to your own or someone else's weblog, blog, journal, diary, personal website, social networking, website, web bulletin board, or a chat room, whether associated or affiliated with GCTD as well as any other form of electronic communication. Ultimately, employees are responsible for what they post online. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks and rewards involved. Ensure posts are consistent with GCTD policies. Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, threats of violence, or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct are prohibited. Keep in mind that conduct that adversely affects job performance, the performance of fellow associates, or otherwise adversely affects customers, suppliers, contractors, or people who work on behalf of GCTD may result in disciplinary action

Employees must refrain from using social media while on work time or equipment unless it is work-related as authorized by their manager. Employees may not use GCTD e-mail addresses to register on social networks, blogs, or other online tools utilized for personal use. It is prohibited from making any social media post, text, or video, including watching or participating in a video feed while operating a GCTD vehicle. Pressuring someone to respond to any social media post is considered harassment. GCTD prohibits taking negative action against any employee for reporting a possible media policy violation or cooperating in an investigation.

### **Third-Party Disclosures**

GCTD may become involved in news stories or potential or actual legal proceedings of various kinds from time to time. When this happens, lawyers, former employees, newspapers, law enforcement agencies, and other outside persons may contact our employees to obtain information about the incident or the actual or potential lawsuit. Employees who receive such contact should not speak on behalf of GCTD and should refer any call or demand requesting the position of GCTD to the executive director and human resources. Employees who have questions about this policy or are unsure what to do when such contact is made should contact their manager, director, human resources, or executive director.

### **Non-solicitation and non-distribution**

To avoid disruption of business operations or disturbance of employees, visitors, and others, GCTD has implemented a non-solicitation and non-distribution policy. For purposes of this policy, "solicitation" includes, but is not limited to, selling items or services, requesting contributions, and soliciting or seeking to obtain membership in or support for any organization. Solicitation performed through verbal, written, or electronic means is covered by the non-solicitation and non-distribution policy. Employees are prohibited from soliciting other employees during assigned working time. For this purpose, working time means when employees are expected to be actively engaged with assigned work. Employees may conduct solicitations during their unpaid nonworking lunch period, so long as it is done when the other employees are also on nonworking time. To avoid inappropriate litter, clutter, and safety risks, employees may not distribute literature or other items that are not work-related in working areas at any time. Working areas do not include break and rest areas, lunchrooms, or parking lots. Electronic distribution of materials is prohibited during work time. Literature that violates equal employment opportunity (EEO) and harassment policies (including threats of violence), or is knowingly and recklessly false, is never permitted. Non-employees are not permitted to distribute materials on company premises at any time. This policy is not intended to restrict employees' statutory rights, including the right to discuss terms and conditions of employment.

Employees should report violations of this policy to their manager, director, or human resources.

### **4.9 Cell Phone Use Policy**

The use of personal cell phones at work is discouraged because it can interfere with work and be disruptive to others. Employees who bring personal cell phones to work must keep the ringer volume low or placed on vibrate mode in the office and keep cell phone use confined to breaks and meal periods. Conversations should be had away from areas where other employees are working. When cell phone use interferes with the satisfactory performance of an employee's duties or disturbs others, the privilege of using a personal cell phone at work may be taken away, and other disciplinary action, up to and including termination, may be imposed.

GCTD may provide cell phone to employees in certain positions to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

- When discussing sensitive or confidential information, remember to talk in an area out of another listener's earshot
- Personal calls should be limited. Receiving and making personal calls on your cell phone should be limited to your break or lunchtime
- Never answer a call while providing services to a customer unless there is an emergency
- If you are on your office phone or in communication with someone else, do not interrupt the engagement to answer your cell phone unless it is an emergency
- Keep personal cell phones out of the hearing range of your office phone and silence them when engaged in online meetings
- It is not appropriate to walk into another employee's office while talking on the phone
- Under hazardous conditions such as heavy traffic or if the road or weather conditions are unsafe, the mobile device may not be used even with a hands-free device
- In case of an emergency where you must use the mobile device while in the vehicle, place the call on hold while the vehicle is moving; pull over at the nearest parking lot, road shoulder, or rest stop
- Employees must refrain from engaging in a stressful or emotional conversation while driving or in the workplace. If an event has caused immediate emotional distress and you are operating a vehicle, contact dispatch for further instruction if assigned to a route and driving.
- If driving a vehicle, keep your head up and eyes on the road, frequently checking the side and rear-view mirrors
- Do not use an electronic device in a school zone

#### **4.10 Employee Backgrounds**

GCTD may conduct criminal history checks on any employee or volunteer at any time it deems appropriate due to business needs. Employee criminal background checks, motor vehicle reference checks, and FMCSA clearinghouse checks will be performed. If the criminal history check identifies a conviction considered to be a bar to employment, the employee or volunteer shall be dismissed as unemployable immediately upon receipt of the criminal history report. A GCTD-approved vendor will monitor all employee motor vehicle records. Texas DPS driving records which indicate three or more safety or moving violations within three years may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Consideration may be given to any contention by the employee or volunteer concerning errors of fact or identity in the report. While the employee or volunteer is attempting to rectify the accuracy of the information, the employee or volunteer shall be removed from direct contact with customers. If the employee or volunteer fails to rectify the accuracy of the information within 90 days, then GCTD must terminate the employee or volunteer. All criminal conviction history reports for applicants, employees, and volunteers are confidential and may only be viewed by human resources and the executive director. In general, criminal history will be printed when it is necessary per DOT regulations or subpoenas. When the designated human resources staff has processed the information obtained through a criminal history clearance, the program is exited, or, in cases where screenshots are printed, the information will be submitted for shredding by placement in the administration's confidential shredding storage vessel. If the information must be stored, it will be stored in a separate personal file outside of an employee's regular employee file or in electronic format by the GCTD authorized vendor.



updated when needed and, at a minimum, on an annual basis by the safety and training manager and the directors. New employees must complete all required training to maintain employment. Employees must maintain recertification of required training. Employees who fail to obtain the minimum training as set forth or who are consistently delinquent in obtaining their recertification may be discharged for inability to perform work.

Training plans will be developed per position to meet city, county, state, and federal training requirements. All training assigned by GCTD to an employee will be added to the employee's training plan with a due date. All assigned training must be completed on or before their due date. Training not completed by the due date is considered late, and an employee is non-compliant. Employees who cannot meet training deadline dates must inform their manager or the safety and training manager, who will develop a plan of action that may include extending the due date. Training plans may not be changed without the request from the employees' director and the approval of the safety and training manager. Training will not be added or deleted to anyone's training plan without request from the employees' director and safety and training manager. Employees requesting a training plan modification, addition, or subtraction of training must seek approval from their director, who will request a modification from the safety and training manager.

Training that is not part of an employee's training plan or training which has not been assigned to the employee with a due date or where employees have registered themselves for training is considered elective training. Employees who have signed up for elective training in the learning management system may not complete elective training while on duty and clocked in unless an employee's manager has permitted them to complete elective training while on the clock to advance their knowledge in a particular subject. Elective training is a benefit of being an employee of GCTD. Employees may enroll and complete elective training outside of GCTD with the understanding that any elective training they have enrolled themselves into is not part of their position, is not required, is not requested to be completed by GCTD, and time will not be paid to the employee to complete these elective training modules that an employee may complete while off duty. Employees who have been authorized and requested by their manager to work from home due to circumstances such as inclement weather, disaster, etc., may be permitted to work on their assigned and required GCTD training. In such cases, employees will clock in and out of the time and attendance system per policy. All training activity is monitored. All time spent on required training assigned by GCTD will be on the clock, and all employees will be paid for completing their required training events. Each case is considered on an individual basis. Employees may present requests for training outside of GCTD and GCTD financial sponsorship for external training to their manager. A GCTD director must authorize all external GCTD training requests and or GCTD financial sponsorship of training.

#### **4.14 Conflict Resolution**

The primary purpose of the mediation program is to provide a responsive, informal, confidential, and effective means of resolving conflicts. Human Resources assists as an alternative to formal grievance proceedings. The mediation process allows the parties to explore options and solutions to resolve issues at the lowest possible level. Employees are given a chance to discuss issues raised, clear up any misunderstandings, determine the underlying root of the conflict, and find areas of concurrence that ultimately can be used to formulate a written agreement between the parties.

#### **Responsibility**

GCTD employee, the consumer may designate a representative. It is the responsibility of the representative to present the issues in the best interest of the consumer. An employee shall have ten (10) working days from the date of the incident or when they learned of the incident to initiate a complaint against another employee. All-time deadlines for vendors working with GCTD shall have their notice of grievance waived. The following bodies shall hear grievances:

#### Level 1

Initially, by the appropriate supervisor where disputes are between members of the same program. In disputes where staff does not work in the same department, the appropriate program supervisors will conduct a grievance hearing. The person protesting the action or condition must initiate the request for conflict resolution in writing. Next, an oral hearing is conducted. The supervisory decision must be written within five (5) working days. Copies of the decision should be forwarded to all participants, the appropriate parties, and human resources for review. If the conflict is resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, the process is completed. If not, the actions continue to Level 2.

#### Level 2

Within five (5) working days of the receipt of a decision, a staff person may request a formal appeal of the decision to the GCTD directors. Such a request must be in writing and present a case for the appeal of the rendered decision. A condition must be established that effectively casts doubt on the validity of the decision. The GCTD directors may appoint designees to serve in their absence. The GCTD directors will review each request for appeal and decide the merit. Decisions must be transmitted to the person requesting within five (5) working days. Requests may be denied or heard depending on the outcome of the review. If the decision is to hear the case, it must be heard within five (5) working days. Within 5 days, a final decision will be communicated to the primary participants. This decision will not be subject to further review. If the situation represents staff vs. the executive director, an external arbitrator from the GCTD board of directors or the law firm representing GCTD will be contracted to hear the case and decide. Human Resources or the director of operations and assets will negotiate such contracting. When outside parties such as customers or vendors are involved, the supervisor may document their verbal testimony on their behalf; no time frames apply. Outside parties may also request representation by an advocate of their choice. The supervisor will assist the outside parties' needs in this area. Any termination of employment is not subject to the grievance process described above but rather is the subject of an internal review process described regarding involuntary termination.

All requests for conflict resolution must be in writing with notice that the action is a grievance. In addition, all written documents should describe the specific act(s) or omission or action that has resulted in the grievance filing.

- All written materials must be in the hands of all participants at least twenty-four (24) hours before the hearing
- Decisions and related materials of the conflict resolution proceedings will be filed in human resources and reviewed by the GCTD team of directors for each decision's pertinence to GCTD'S policies and procedures
- Persons may be placed on administrative leave for any actions under investigation. If a supervisor requests termination, administrative leave may not exceed three days. This leave will be with pay

spouses may be covered as a dependent only when they certify to human resources that they are not eligible for other employer-sponsored coverage outside of GCTD.

Aside from those benefits required by state and federal regulations, GCTD also offers additional fringe benefits. Benefits may be added or deleted from the benefits package from time to time due to business needs or when required by law. GCTD reserves the right to make such changes. This handbook does not contain the complete terms and conditions of GCTD's current benefit plans. It is intended only to provide general explanations. For information regarding employee benefits and services, employees should contact human resources.

Benefit offerings are discussed and outlined in the benefits guides and discussed during the employment offer, during onboarding, and before benefits selections. Healthcare benefits and fringe benefits for eligible employees are available to eligible employees on the first day of the month following their 60<sup>th</sup> day of employment. When the 60<sup>th</sup> day is not on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month, employees must wait until the first day of the next month to become eligible. During the benefits eligibility waiting period, new employees are expected to complete all required personnel documentation and conditions of employment. Benefits for GCTD employees converting from Gulf Coast Center employees or contractors converting to GCTD employees are grandfathered into the fringe benefits. Grandfathered GCC employees are eligible for all GCTD fringe benefits starting 5/1/21. Gulf Coast Center employees who have not converted over to GCTD employees by 5/1/21 will not be eligible for fringe benefits until the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month following their 60<sup>th</sup> day of employment.

Note: Benefits will not be offered early to any employee except when negotiated during the initial job offer or when the executive director has made an extenuating determination based on need.

Note: When an employee becomes benefits-eligible, benefits will start on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the policy month following the initial waiting period of 60 days. The waiting period for medical coverage will not exceed 90 days.

Some GCTD Fringe benefits include but are not limited to:

- Accrued earned leave.
- CEU Credits for Eligible Training Courses
- Critical Illness
- Flexible Spending Plan
- Group and Term Life Insurance Coverage
- Maternity
- Notary (In House & Free of Charge)
- Paid Holidays
- Retirement Accounts
- Short- & Long-Term Disability Insurance
- Dental Insurance
- Medical
- Vision Insurance

#### **Parity Period**

A re-hired employee eligible for benefits before separation will have their benefits re-instated or become immediately eligible upon return.

### **5.2 Health Insurance: Medical, Dental, and Vision Insurance**

GCTD offers group medical, dental, and vision plans and health plans for eligible employees. Refer to

Vesting refers to the amount of benefit that may be returned to the employee upon termination of employment. Funds contributed by GCTD towards an employee's retirement are owned by GCTD until the employee's status of employment falls into one of the following categories:

- Separation due to death
- Separation due to termination or resignation
- Separation upon reaching retirement age

The distribution of funds to individual accounts is not computed until the end of each fiscal year. Complete payments are generally not made to departing employees until the end of the fiscal year in which the employee departed. Departing employees who have attained a level of vesting may, upon request, receive the portion of their funds (that portion last reported to the employee). Employees may be informed of their account status at the time of the exit interview with human resources. Refer to human resources for more information about retirement benefits.

#### **5.5 Flexible Spending Account (FSA)**

Under Section 125 of the IRS Code, GCTD has set up a flexible spending account for employees who wish to take advantage of this provision. This plan allows employees to withhold a portion of their salary on a pre-tax basis to cover the cost of qualifying insurance premiums, out-of-pocket medical expenses, and dependent care expenses (child and or eldercare) such as daycare expenses and in-home dependent care. An amount selected by the employee is deducted on a pre-tax basis to cover these expenses. Any unused amounts in the medical and dependent care account will be forfeited after the plan year's end. Refer to GCTD's benefits booklet for complete details and benefits or contact human resources for more information.

#### **5.6 COBRA**

Under the provisions of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) of 1986, if you are covered under GCTD's group health insurance plan(s), you are entitled to continue your medical, dental, and or vision coverage if your employment with GCTD ends. Under COBRA, GCTD must offer each qualified beneficiary (the employee and any covered dependents) who would otherwise lose coverage under the plan due to a qualifying event an opportunity to continue their insurance coverage. A qualifying event is defined as the termination of employment, a reduction in the number of hours of employment, death of a covered employee, divorce or legal separation, a dependent child ceasing to be dependent, eligibility of the covered employee for Medicare, or an employer's bankruptcy. Employees are always encouraged to contact human resources to learn more about benefits and COBRA rights.

#### **5.7 Critical Illness**

Critical illness insurance can help alleviate financial worries during a serious illness. A lump-sum cash benefit is paid to the insured person when diagnosed with a specific critical illness. This benefit provides cash at a time when it may be needed most. For more information about critical illness and any benefits, please refer to the benefits guide or human resources.

#### **5.8 Social Security Benefits (FICA)**

GCTD and the employee contribute funds to the Federal government to support the Social Security program during employment. This program is intended to provide you with retirement benefit payments and medical coverage once you reach retirement age. For more information, please contact finance.

disability-related leave requests to determine if leave is the most appropriate accommodation. The employee must provide a certification from their licensed health care provider for GCTD to support leave for medical reasons. Failure to promptly provide the required certification to GCTD will ensure the delay or denial of leave. Suppose an employee requires an extension of leave. In that case, the employee must request such an extension and have it approved before the expiration of the currently approved leave.

Employees who accept another job during their leave, engage in other employment or consulting outside of GCTD, or apply for unemployment insurance benefits may be considered to have voluntarily resigned from employment with GCTD.

### **Earned Accrued Leave**

Accrued earned leave may be used for vacation, sick, or other personal needs and is considered "with pay" if the employee has enough accrued earned leave to cover the requested time. Accrued earned leave accrues from the date of hire for eligible employees and is earned; earned accrued leave is distributed to the employee's leave bucket after each pay period. New hires cannot use their earned accrued leave until they become benefits eligible. Supervisors, managers, or directors may refuse to grant any amount of accrued earned leave deemed excessive if such requests jeopardize program functioning. All accrued earned leave is per pay period and will reflect in the time and attendance system after the leave is earned and not before. Earned accrued leave is halted when an employee does not work during the pay period. Accumulations of earned accrued leave are resumed when the employee returns to working status.

### **Earned Accrued Leave Accumulation**

- For employees with less than two years of employment, accrued earned leave accrues at 5 hours per pay period; the maximum accrual and carryover rate for new hires is 60 hours.
- Upon completion of two years of employment, accrued earned leave accrues at 6 hours per pay period; the maximum accrual and carryover rate is 100 hours
- Upon completing five years of employment, accrued earned leave accrues at 8 hours per pay period. The maximum accrual and carryover rate is 100 hours
- Upon completing nine years of employment, accrued earned leave accrues at 9.25 hours per pay period. The maximum accrual and carryover rate is 160 hours
- Upon completing thirteen years of employment, accrued earned leave accrues at 11 hours per pay period. The maximum accrual and carryover rate is 160 hours
- Upon completing seventeen years of employment, accrued earned leave accrues at 12.75 hours per pay period. The maximum accrual and carryover rate is 160 hours
- Upon completing twenty-one years of employment or if a director of GCTD, accrued earned leave accrues at 14 hours per pay period. The maximum accrual and carryover rate is 200 hours

Employees and or contractors transitioning from Gulf Coast Center into GCTD on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021, will not transfer earned leave hours but will keep their accrual schedule at the same rate.

Years Employed	Maximum Annual Days Earned	Allowable Annual Carry Over Balance
0-less than 2	15 days	60 hours
2-less than 5	18 days	100 hours

While GCTD will make a reasonable effort to return the employee to their former position or a comparable position following an approved leave of absence, there is no guarantee that the employee will be reinstated to their position, or any position, except as required by law.

## **6.2 Holidays**

Holidays are subject to approval each year by the GCTD board of directors and are subject to change. Employees who call out for their shift the day prior or after a holiday will not receive holiday pay.

### GCTD observed holidays.

- New Year's Day
  - Veterans Day
  - Martin Luther King Day –
  - President's Day – \*Holiday Schedule
  - Memorial Day
  - Juneteenth
  - Independence Day
  - Labor Day
  - Thanksgiving
  - Day After Thanksgiving
  - Christmas Eve – \* Holiday Schedule
  - Christmas Day
- 
- Floating Birthday – Taken Only Within Birthday Month

\* During a holiday schedule, GCTD will close at 12 pm

\* GCTD Holiday schedules may be amended at any time and are always subject to board approval

## **6.3 Maternity Leave**

This benefit is available to all full-time, regular employees upon 60 days of employment. Expecting mothers must first access accrued earned leave (generally 40 hours) to satisfy the qualifying period of short-term disability. They then receive pay as per the policy's coverage limits for a length determined by the insuring agency. Generally, six weeks of recuperation time depicts the normal birthing or recovery process. Contacting Human Resources accesses such benefits. Extensions of leave beyond the insured period may be possible by utilizing accrued earned leave or leave of absence without pay or Family Medical Leave.

## **6.4 Family Medical Leave (FMLA)**

Under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993, To qualify for FMLA, an employee must have worked for GCTD for at least 12 months, including at least 1,250 hours during the most recent 12 months.

### *Eligibility*

anyone or any department at GCTD. If requesting FMLA, employees must notify Human Resources of their intent to take FMLA within 30 days or as soon as possible. Human Resources must inform employees within five days of their FMLA eligibility and the FMLA process. Please direct any questions about FMLA to human resources.

#### **Continued Definitions and Policies Related to Leave Policies, Including FMLA**

**Spouse:** A husband or wife as recognized under state law for the purposes of marriage in the state or other territory or country where the marriage took place.

**Child:** A biological, adopted, or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in loco parentis, who is either under age 18 or age 18 or older and incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability at the time FMLA leave is to commence. A child, for the purposes of military exigency or military care leave, can be of any age.

**Parent** A biological, adoptive, step, foster parent, or any other individual who stood in loco parentis to you when you were a child.

**Next of kin** for the purposes of military care leave is a blood relative other than a spouse, parent, or child in the following order: brothers and sisters, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and first cousins. If a military service member designates in writing another blood relative as their caregiver, that individual will be the only next of kin. Employees may be required to provide documentation of next of kin status.

**A serious health condition:** An illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care provider. Ordinarily, unless complications arise, cosmetic treatments and minor conditions such as the cold, flu, earaches, upset stomach, minor ulcers, headaches (other than migraines), and routine dental problems are examples of conditions that are not serious health conditions under this policy. Employees who have questions about the types of conditions that may qualify should contact Human Resources.

**A health care provider:** A licensed person to practice healthcare, including a medical doctor, licensed doctor of osteopathy, physician assistant, podiatrist, dentist, clinical psychologist, optometrist, nurse practitioner, nurse-midwife, clinical social worker, or practitioner.

Under limited circumstances, a chiropractor or other provider recognized by our group health plan for the purposes of certifying a claim for benefits may also be considered a health care provider.

*Qualifying exigencies* for military exigency leave include:

- Short-notice call-ups/deployments of seven days or less (Note: Leave for this exigency is available for up to seven days beginning the date of call-up notice)
- Attending official ceremonies, programs, or military events.
- Special childcare needs created by a military call-up include making alternative childcare arrangements, handling urgent and nonroutine childcare situations, arranging for school transfers, or attending school or daycare meetings
- Making financial and legal arrangements
- Attending counseling sessions for yourself, the military service member, or the military service members' son or daughter who is under 18 years of age or is 18 or older but incapable of self-care because of a mental or physical disability
- Rest and recovery (Note: Fifteen days of leave is available for this exigency per event).
- Post-deployment activities such as arrival ceremonies, reintegration briefings, and other official ceremonies sponsored by the military (Note: Leave for these events are available for

Leave taken for these reasons may be taken in a block or blocks of time. In addition, if a health care provider deems it necessary, or if the nature of a qualifying exigency requires, leave for these reasons can be taken on an intermittent or reduced schedule basis.

#### **Paid Leave Utilization During FMLA Leave**

FMLA leave is unpaid. If an employee takes parental, family care, military exigency, or military care leave, they must utilize available earned accrued leave. If an employee takes personal medical leave, they must utilize available earned accrued leave. Employees receiving short- or long-term disability or workers' compensation benefits during a personal medical leave will not be required to use earned accrued leave benefits. Employees may elect to utilize accrued benefits to supplement these benefits and to cover any unpaid waiting periods for short or long-term disability.

#### **Fitness for Duty Requirements**

Employees who take leave because of their serious health condition(s) (except those taking intermittent leave) are required, as are all employees returning from other types of medical leave, to provide a medical return to work certification. Employees will not be permitted to resume work until a medical return to work certification is provided by a licensed physician.

#### **Health Insurance**

GCTD will maintain health insurance coverage during leave on the same basis as if the employee was still working. Employees must continue to make timely payments of their share of the premiums for such coverage. Failure to pay premiums within 30 days of when they are due may result in a lapse of coverage. If this occurs, employees will be notified 15 days before coverage lapses that coverage will terminate unless payments are made. GCTD may pay the employee's portion of the premiums during their leave and recover the costs upon returning to work. Coverage that lapses due to nonpayment of premiums will be reinstated immediately upon return to work without a waiting period. Under most circumstances, if employees do not return to work at the end of the leave, GCTD may require reimbursement for the health insurance premiums paid during the leave.

#### **Reinstatement**

Upon returning to work at the end of the leave, an employee will generally be placed in their original or equivalent job with equivalent pay and benefits. Employees will not lose any benefits that accrued before leave was taken.

#### **Spouse Aggregation**

If an employee and their spouse are both employed by GCTD, the total number of weeks to which you are both entitled in the aggregate because of the birth or placement of a child or to care for a parent with a serious health condition will be limited to 12 weeks per leave year. Similarly, spouses employed by GCTD will be limited to a combined total of 26 weeks of leave to care for a military service member. However, this 26-week leave period will be reduced by the amount of leave taken for other qualifying FMLA events. This type of leave aggregation does not apply to leave needed for the employee's own serious health condition, to care for a spouse or child with a serious health condition, or because of a qualifying exigency.

### **6.5 Workers Compensation Leave**

Workers' compensation is a no-fault system designed to provide medical benefits to all employees for work-related injuries. Workers' compensation insurance coverage is paid for by employers and governed by state law. The workers' compensation system provides medical treatment coverage and expenses, occupational disability leave, rehabilitation services, and payment for lost wages due to work-related injuries. Employees who are injured while on the job while working at GCTD, no matter how minor the injury, must report the incident immediately to their manager and or the safety and training manager. Consistent with applicable state law, failure to report an injury within a reasonable timeframe could



with reasonable adjustments to the employee's responsibilities

- The authorized signature of the licensed or certified medical provider

The employee may submit the medical certification to Human Resources. An MDA will be made by the employee's unit in conjunction with Human Resources. Once a determination is made, the employee will be notified by their supervisor. All MDAs will be reviewed periodically by Human Resources in cooperation with the program manager to evaluate employees' progress toward a return to their regular duties. Human Resources may request an updated medical certificate at reasonable intervals based upon the nature of the illness or injury. In addition, Human Resources, in conjunction with the program director, may arrange for a second medical opinion. Funding the request for a second opinion is the employee's responsibility. Employees on an MDA may experience some temporary changes from their regular assignments in the areas of daily work hours, scheduled shifts, regular days off, and holiday leave. An MDA will not alter the employee's salary but may affect differential pay. Funding of the employee's position will continue to be the responsibility of the employee's department regardless of the location of the MDA. If GCTD determines that an appropriate MDA does not exist, the employee shall remain on paid leave or leave of absence without pay until appropriate placement can be identified or the employee's condition improves sufficiently to allow their return to duty. If the employee refuses an MDA, accrued earned leave may be terminated. That employee may then be allowed to use other forms of paid leave, be placed on a leave of absence without pay, or be terminated, or other administrative sanctions may apply. Any employee injured in the line of duty and who refuses a modified duty assignment shall be reported by Human Resources to the Injured Workers Insurance Fund. A request may be made to terminate any employee's temporary, total benefits. A written release, which allows the employee's return to full duty, is required from the attending medical provider, whether from leave or modified duty status. Such release shall include:

- Date of return to full responsibilities and duties of their position. The authorized signature of a licensed or certified medical provider.

#### **6.6 Emergency Natural Disaster & Bereavement Leave**

Regardless of emergency bereavement the emergency leave will not exceed three (3) workdays. Additional leave for reasons outlined below may be granted using accrued earned leave or leave of absence. These time frames are designated as three days per related emergency. Emergency leave is always with pay for the three days but is restricted to regular, full-time employees only. Any leave requested after three (3) days of emergency leave may be taken in another form, such as accrued earned leave, etc. The following conditions qualify for emergency leave:

- Emergency bereavement leave shall be taken in the event of the death of an immediate family member. An immediate family member is defined as a spouse, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, sibling, or the equivalent of a spouse's relations. All bereavement leave must include documentation upon return, such as a notice or service announcement

#### **6.7 Jury Duty**

Leave for jury duty may be requested for the period necessary to complete this responsibility contingent upon an appropriate court's notification that an employee's services are requested. A copy of the summons must accompany the request for leave for jury duty. When accompanied by the summons, the

extended periods of absence but not more than twenty-two working days with pay. The executive director may approve other periods without pay.

During the utilization of military leave, GCTD will pay the difference between military payment and full GCTD pay. In addition, GCTD will assure employment in an equivalent position and pay upon the employee's return from active duty per state and federal laws. The Uniformed Services Employment & Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) of 1994 clarifies and strengthens the Veterans' Reemployment Rights (VRR) Statute. For questions about USERRA, consult with Human Resources.

#### **6.10 Family Military Leave**

Employees with a spouse or registered domestic partner serving in the United States Armed Forces, National Guard, or Reserves may take up to ten (10) days of unpaid leave when their spouse or domestic partner is on leave from deployment during a military conflict. To be eligible for this leave, the employee must work an average of at least 20 hours per week and have a spouse or domestic partner who is either

(1) a member of the United States Armed Forces deployed during a military conflict to a designated combat theatre or combat zone; or

(2) a member of the National Guard who has been deployed during a period of military conflict; or

(3) a member of the Military Reserves deployed during a period of military conflict. Eligible employees are required to notify GCTD of their intention to take such leave within 2 days of receiving official notice that the spouse or domestic partner will be on a qualified leave and provide documentation certifying that the spouse or domestic partner will be on leave from deployment during the time the leave is requested.

#### **6.11 Short- & Long-Term Disability**

Short-term disability is often used for extended illness requiring medical intervention. The exclusionary period for short-term disability is 40 hours. Employees may choose to use their accrued earned leave for the exclusionary period. Short term disability ends when:

- The employee returns to work
- When the employee is deemed able to return to work by a licensed physician
- When the employee retires
- When the maximum benefit has expired

When the maximum short-term disability benefit time has elapsed, employees may be eligible for long-term or critical illness disability coverage if they elected this during the open enrollment period.

Employees who have exhausted their maximum short-term disability benefit and are ineligible for long-term disability or critical illness may be terminated after 90 days with the option for re-hire when the employees' health allows. If it becomes clear that the employee's return to work is imminent, the executive director may authorize paid short-term disability benefits laps or a leave of absence without pay.

\*Note, for full-time employees enrolled in medical, dental, and vision plans, benefits will expire 26 weeks from when the employee works less than 30 hours per week or whenever the employee separates,

GCTD directors may grant administrative leave for employees undergoing a review of their employment status. Generally, administrative leave is granted regarding termination of employment or in cases where an investigation is forthcoming, and it would prove beneficial to temporarily provide a break in employee attendance to resolve work-related issues. In all workmen's compensation claims, the employee is placed on such leave and is paid the regular monthly salary in full pending their approval for benefits. Paid leave in such cases may not exceed 40 hours.

## **6.14 Leave Provisions**

### **Failure to Return**

If an employee fails to return to work or does not request an extension of leave before the expiration of the leave, they will be deemed to have voluntarily terminated their employment. GCTD is not required to grant requests for open-ended leaves with no reasonable return date under these policies or as disability accommodations.

### **Alternative Employment**

While on leave of absence and while still employed as a GCTD employee, employees may not work or be gainfully employed either for themselves or others unless express, written permission to perform the work has been approved by the executive director or Human resources. Employees who are on a leave of absence and are found to be working elsewhere without permission may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **Interaction with State and Local Laws**

Where state or local family and medical leave laws offer more protections or benefits to employees, the protections or benefits that are more favorable to the employee, as provided by these laws, will apply.

### **Abuse of Leave**

Employees who are found to have provided a false reason for leave will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **Designation of Leave**

If GCTD becomes aware of any qualifying reason for FMLA leave, GCTD will designate it as such. An employee may not refuse FMLA designation under this policy.

### **Retaliation**

GCTD will not retaliate against employees who request or take leave under this policy.

It is the goal of GCTD to operate efficiently and provide exemplary stewardship of public funds. To this end, an employee who is absent from employment without being on approved leave may be terminated. The terminated employee may be eligible for re-employment by applying for employment through the application process. All leave requested as a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will be reviewed by Human Resources and granted on a case-by-case basis. For example, an employee on military caregiver leave will be terminated after an absence of 26 weeks in 12 months. All approved absences of leave must have the appropriate documentation to substantiate such leave. An example of appropriate documentation may include a licensed physician's evaluation and approval of time off from the workplace. The employee's responsibility is to maintain contact with Human

The operator must also check the interior of the bus for cleanliness. Buses that are not clean and presentable must be reported to the dispatcher or the lead operator before use. In addition, damage or discrepancies observed during the operator's pre-pull-out safety inspection must be reported to the manager. If an operator does not report new damages on vehicle prior to departing the bus yard, they will be charged with damages.

### **Smoke & Fire**

Vehicle fires can escalate and quickly spread and produce heavy, incapacitating smoke. The following guidelines will help minimize the risk of human injury or damage to GCTD equipment by making safety a priority:

- Stop the vehicle at the first available safe location if possible. Activate hazard lights and set the parking brake
- Open all vehicle doors and evacuate passengers from the vehicle. Attend to patrons who are mobility impaired as quickly as possible
- If possible, shut off the engine. Activate the manual fire suppression release system if it has not automatically activated and if it is possible to do so safely
- Protect people first, then property. Evacuate customers upwind of the fire at least 200 feet
- Check for injuries and assist anyone who is in immediate danger
- Call the dispatcher by phone
- Reassure and assist customers, let them know that help is on the way

Fires and smoke aboard vehicles require an immediate response. Employees' safety and the safety of passengers and life are a top priority. Operators should provide instructions to patrons in a calm, clear, and concise manner.

### **Fire Extinguisher**

All vehicles are equipped with a dry powder extinguisher, which can be used on all types of fires related to vehicle incidents. Report to the dispatcher the use of a fire extinguisher for a replacement. Write up an incident report if a replacement was not made for reasons beyond your control.

## **7.3 Traffic Signals & Stop Signs**

When approaching an intersection, employees must be in control of the vehicle so a safe stop can be made before entering the crosswalk, passing the limit line, or entering the intersection should the signal change to red. When waiting at a signal, do not proceed into either the crosswalk or the intersection until the signal turns green and it is safe to enter. When approaching an intersection controlled by a traffic signal, do so at a rate of speed that will permit a stop with normal application of the brakes before entering a crosswalk or intersection, should the signal change to amber or red. Use professional and reasonable judgment when entering an intersection to avoid being caught by signals or traffic, which will result in the vehicle blocking the intersection, crosswalk, violating a traffic signal, or being involved in a collision. When waiting at a signal, do not accelerate until the signal is green and it is safe to proceed, or the intersection is safe to enter.

### **7.8 Emergency Triangle Use**

Emergency triangles must be set up every time the vehicle is stopped due to an emergency. For example, if you are on a one-way street with traffic only coming from behind you, place one triangle 10 feet, 100 feet, and 200 feet behind your vehicle. If you are on a two-lane road with traffic in both directions, place emergency triangles within ten feet of the front and rear corner of the vehicle to make its location and the third triangle 100 feet behind the vehicle. Finally, if you are stopped on a hill or curve, place one emergency triangle 500 feet from the vehicle to warn oncoming motorists.

### **7.9 Starting Engines & Idling**

Before starting the engine, the operator must ensure that the parking brake has been properly set and the gear selector has been placed in the park position. If the engine fails to start within 30 seconds, release the starter switch or button and wait at least 60 seconds to allow the starter motor to cool before using it again. When building up air pressure, do not accelerate the engine more than one-third throttle (fast idle), as higher acceleration will cause damage to the engine. Racing the engine at any time is forbidden (Park and Ride).

#### **Engine Idling**

When buses are delayed three minutes or more, and while loading passengers in traffic or at railroad crossings while trains are passing, etc., it is not desirable to cut off the engine. The operator will set the emergency brake and put the gear shift into park.

### **7.10 Air Pressure (Park & Ride)**

Never attempt to move a bus when the air pressure is less than 90 PSI. The operator must verify that the air pressure builds to at least 120 PSI before driving any bus out of the yard. While in service, the operator should monitor the air pressure gauge to ensure that the air pressure does not fall below 90 PSI during routine operation. If the air pressure drops below 90 PSI during routine operations, stop the bus and report the condition to the dispatcher.

### **7.11 Gauges**

Employees must observe all gauges and indicator lights at frequent intervals to ensure all systems are functioning properly. The air gauge must be observed to ensure sufficient air pressure is maintained to operate the brakes properly. Gauges and indicator lights must never be obstructed from view in any manner at any time.

### **7.12 Emergency Buzzer & Warning Lights & Hazard Flashers**

Buses are equipped with an emergency buzzer and warning lights controlled by the master or engine control switch. This switch activates the gauges on the dash, the warning lights, and the emergency buzzer system. If you experience the activation of an emergency buzzer or warning light, do not attempt to continue running; pull off to a safe area, shut the engine off, and call the dispatcher immediately.

#### **Hazard Warning Flashers**

Bus hazard warning flashers must be used when the bus is disabled, stopping at railroad crossings, stopping between marked and unmarked stops, courtesy stops, or using lift or ramp equipment.

MPH – Total Stopping Distance = 3 x MPH = 60 feet  
30 MPH – Total Stopping Distance = 4 x 30 MPH = 1 foot

The best way to maintain a safe total stopping distance is to allow one vehicle for every 10 MPH. The total stopping distance is substantially increased when streets are wet and slippery.

### **7.15 Door Operation**

The operator has complete control of opening and closing the front door on all vehicles. The front door must not be opened until the vehicle is completely stopped. Vehicles must not be operated at any time with the front door open unless instructed.

#### **Front & Rear Door Interlock Operation (Park & Ride)**

The door key unlocking the front or rear door should not be opened until the bus has come to a complete stop. When the door is open, a brake interlock is set up. At the same time, an indicator light on the dash comes on. The bus cannot be put into motion while the brake interlock is set up and the indicator light is on. If you need to release the air to the doors on buses, set the emergency brake transmission in neutral, and use the emergency valve located adjacent to the doors. The front or rear door interlock should not be used as a brake. The foot brake will continue to be applied while stopped at an intersection. The operator must not move the bus while the indicator light is on.

#### **Closing Doors**

In the process of closing the front (Park and Ride) and rear doors, the operator shall:

- Check to make sure the doors are clear before closing by utilizing the mirrors that are available to check for passenger clearance
- Observe the door until they close
- Be careful with passengers attempting to rush out the doors when they are closing

Do not attempt to reverse the door key from the “rear door opens only” position to “both doors open” while passengers are alighting. When loading and unloading passengers, the operator shall not keep their hand on the door key. When the doors are being closed, the operator shall keep their hand on the door key and eyes on the doors until the doors are completely closed. The rear door should be closed first and then the front door. Accidents are often prevented since the operator can reverse the door key if someone should step into the door as it is closing.

### **7.16 Tires & Rims**

Operators must operate vehicles in such a manner that the tires do not meet the curb, sharp or large objects, or anything that could cause damage to the tires. Damaged tires and rimes must be reported to dispatch and noted during the post-trip inspection.

#### **Tires With Low Air**

When a front tire is gradually going down, the vehicle may pull to one side. On smooth streets, the tire will make a rumbling noise. Notify the dispatcher as soon as a low tire is detected. During a blowout, try to stop the vehicle in as straight a direction as possible, applying the brake gradually, moving out of the traffic flow, and applying the four-way flashers.

following a vehicle less than 300 feet or approaching an oncoming vehicle at a distance less than 500 feet. Headlights may be used to signal another operator for transferring passengers or for emergencies.

### **7.23 Operating in Yard**

Operators must be alert and aware of the danger of injuring other employees and colliding with other vehicles when maneuvering equipment in the yard. Vehicles approaching at angles will yield to the vehicle on the right. Vehicles must be operated safely according to conditions but never exceed five MPH. Operators must observe one-way lanes as well as all other stops. This applies to all vehicles operating within the yard. Vehicles backing out of stalls have the right-of-way. Others must always yield.

Foot brakes must be tested before leaving the yard. Employees must report slack or defective brakes to the dispatcher immediately.

### **7.24 Backing the Bus**

Before backing the vehicle, employees must be sure that the movement can be made safely. Intermittently sound the horn and exercise extreme caution in making a move. If another employee is available, the employee should be requested to monitor the vehicle's rear during the backup movement. Operators must not back up a bus in the bus yard except when necessary. If it becomes necessary to back up a bus while off property, operators must obtain the assistance of another GCTD employee, such as another operator, supervisor, or law enforcement officer. Before backing the vehicle, the operator must be sure it can be done safely. The operator should sound the horn intermittently and back the vehicle no faster than one mile per hour. Often, the idle speed will accomplish this. Keep the operator's window open to aid in hearing anyone trying to signal. The person aiding must always be visible in the left mirror. Contact the dispatcher if you do not have assistance available. The dispatcher will dispatch assistance if required.

### **7.25 Pull-out and Pull-ins; Off route trips**

Employees must never park their vehicles for layover in unauthorized places. Unnecessary detours or delays are strictly forbidden. During pull-out and pull-in from service, the operator shall pick up all passengers desiring to ride the bus. Pull-out time is the time the vehicle is due to leave the stall. Pull-in time is when the vehicle is due to return to the stall. Late bus relays will be reported to the transportation manager on the same date only when the vehicle arrives late at the relief point.

### **7.26 Supervision of Operator While on Duty**

After leaving the yard, the operators are under the direct supervision of the dispatcher, lead operator, transportation manager, and safety and training manager. Employees must comply with their instructions while on duty.

### **7.27 End of The Line Inspection**

Each time the operator arrives at the end of the line, the vehicle's interior shall be inspected for lost articles and any damages during the trip, such as cut seats, broken glass, etc. After making a relief, an exterior inspection will also be made at the end of the line. If damage or valuable articles are found, report them to the dispatcher. Employees will report the damage to the operator's post-trip inspection.

inquire if the next stop will suffice. If the patron insists, the bus should make the requested stop at the nearest safe location. Whenever an emergency arises, and it is necessary to stop at anything other than a marked bus stop, caution must be exercised to ensure the safety of passengers. For example, when making a courtesy stop to board or alight a customer in a wheelchair, the operator should look for a firm and level surface where the bus ramp or lift platform can safely be deployed. If the operator determines the location is unsafe, the operator will identify and direct the customer to the nearest, safest location. If the customer insists on boarding or alighting in a hazardous location, the operator will contact the dispatcher for instructions. Check mirrors for approaching passengers. Stops should not be made in construction zones except for marked temporary stops.

### **7.33 Transfer Connection**

Operators must call out transfer points as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and must make every effort to assist the passengers from buses on connecting lines to be allowed to board their buses.

### **7.34 Comfort Stations**

In the case of an emergency, an operator may stop at a comfort station not located at the end of the line or along the line's route to use a restroom. Operators must first notify the dispatcher using the appropriate PTT radio, properly secure the bus and equipment, and inform customers of the short delay. Operators may not stop the vehicle for purchasing food and beverages or conducting personal business. Conducting personal business while operating any GCTD vehicle violates company policies and procedures. Operators may stop along the route to use the restroom in emergencies. However, if the stop is at a business that sells food or beverages, further delay in making a purchase is prohibited and violates the policies and procedures. Operators shall contact dispatch using the appropriate PTT radio to advise them of the need to stop their vehicle. Upon return to the vehicle, the appropriate message must be sent to advise dispatch that the operator has returned to the vehicle.

### **7.35 Railroad Crossing**

The operator will bring the vehicle to a complete stop at all controlled railroad crossings. If a train is on track or gate is down:

- Set the parking brake
- The transmission must be in the parked gear
- Turn head and check both directions for clearance

Operators must approach every railroad crossing during the last one hundred feet at a speed not exceeding fifteen miles per hour and be in the curb right lane with the hazard lights flashing. Do not pull up next to a set of railroad crossing arms that are down, as you may get boxed by cars if the train stops. If you see a train crossing, stop at the intersection before the railroad crossing so you can detour if necessary. Leave yourself an out. Operators must exercise extreme care and take every precaution to make certain that railroad crossings can be safely negotiated before driving a vehicle over such crossings. Operators must not allow any portion of their vehicle to rest on or over railroad tracks. Please note that your vehicle's tail end should not rest on or over the railroad tracks. The operator will slow down at spur tracks and use every precaution before proceeding across.



These activities should occur only when the bus is stopped and when it is safe to do so. Employees must not assume any unnatural or unsafe driving position, particularly slouching in the driver's seat, and must not engage in any activity that could, in any way, interfere with the proper observation of traffic or the safe operation of the vehicle. Employees should drive with both hands on the steering wheel's rim, whether turning or going straight, and should never drive with the hands-on spokes, farebox, or door handle. When driving in icy conditions, extreme caution should be used. If the vehicle gets stuck or immobilized, passengers are never permitted to get out and try to push the vehicle. Passenger safety should always be considered first.

### 7.39 Turns

When making a right or left turn, the vehicle's speed must be regulated to assure the safety and comfort of the passengers. Speed should be adjusted according to the conditions at the location (pedestrians, traffic, weather, etc.) and never be more than 10 MPH. Check all mirrors before and during right and left turns. The turn signals should be activated approximately one hundred feet before any turn. Operators must sound the horn when making turns in heavily congested areas. When Making a Right Turn:

- Position the vehicle so that no other vehicle can go between the right side of their vehicle and parked vehicles on the curb
- Approach the intersection approximately four feet from the curb. Turn slowly to give yourself and others more time to avoid oncoming traffic
- Proceed with extreme caution and use their mirrors to maintain proper clearance to avoid contact with fixed objects
- Do not sweep the curb when turning due to possible contact with curbing. Distance from the curb at service stops should be maintained at ten to fourteen inches to avoid rear overhang from going over the curb
- Exercise caution to avoid pedestrian accidents. Both before and during the turn, be aware of the positions of pedestrians; pay particular attention to people
- When making a right turn after a traffic light has turned green, check all mirrors, and observe all crosswalks (left, right, and straight ahead of the vehicle)
- Exercise caution when cyclists, motorcyclists, or individuals on skates or other such devices are present. Do not make a right turn until it is safe to do so

#### When Making a Left Turn:

- Before making a left turn, position the bus in the proper left lane.
- Approach the intersection under control, paying close attention to traffic conditions
- Flashing yellow arrows
  - Be aware that before entering the intersection, it is the operator's responsibility to confirm that the entire turn can be completed safely without the presence of a pedestrian in the crosswalk
- Allow oncoming traffic to clear before beginning a left turn. Under ideal conditions, begin the left turn when the left shoulder is aligned with your reference point on the street onto which the bus is turning
- Exercise caution to avoid pedestrian accidents. Both before and during the turn, be aware of the positions of all pedestrians

obstructions. Low wires, overhanging trees, branches, or other obstacles, which create a hazard, must be reported to the dispatcher. Use caution and maintain 10-14 inches from the curb when operating low-floor buses.

#### **7.43 Obstruction of Passageways**

No person shall obstruct the entrance or exit aisle of a bus or any portion of a transit facility to which the public has access, regardless of the means of creating the obstruction and regardless of whether the obstruction arises from the person's acts alone or in concert with the acts of others. Obstruct means to render impassable or to render passage unreasonably inconvenient or hazardous.

#### **Funeral processions**

Operators must not drive through or otherwise interrupt a funeral procession.

#### **Emergency Vehicles**

Upon approaching an emergency vehicle emitting an audible signal, siren, or flashing lights, the operator must yield the right-of-way immediately and move as close as possible to the right side of the highway or street, and clear of any intersection. The operator must remain in this position until the emergency vehicle passes, except when otherwise directed by law enforcement officers. If approaching a stopped emergency vehicle with a signal, siren, or flashing lights, the operator must move over a lane when available or slow down to twenty miles per hour or less until fully passed.

#### **School Buses**

The operator must not pass a school bus from either direction when school children are boarding or alighting, when the flashing red lights are operating, or when the stop sign is extended. All vehicles must stop and wait for the flashing red lights to stop flashing before proceeding.

#### **7.44 Litter**

No person shall dispose of, allow, or permit the disposal of litter in a bus or on any portion of a transit facility except in a designated receptacle.

#### **7.45 Roller-skates & Roller Blades**

No person using roller skates, skateboards, rollerblades, or any means of coasting, toy vehicles, or similar devices shall enter the bus or any portion of a transit facility.

#### **7.46 Shirts & Shoes**

No person shall enter or remain in a bus or on any portion of a transit facility without a shirt or clothing covering the upper and lower portions of the body. In addition, no person shall enter or remain in any bus or any portion of a transit facility without shoes or sandals on both feet.

#### **7.47 Unattended Vehicles**

When it is necessary to leave a bus unattended, contact dispatch and use the following procedures:

- Idling Procedures:

## Before Departing

- Keep a hand on door control until the door closes completely
- Check interior and exterior mirrors, verify customers are clear (inside and out) of the area around the doors
- Caution is recommended before departing a bus stop as customers move about the bus to find a seat, hold onto a stanchion bar, or grab rail.
- Activate the left turn signal before moving the bus
- Check left exterior mirrors, verify left lane is clear
- Check the area in front of the bus, left to right
- Check right exterior mirrors; again, verify the area around the front door is clear
- Check the left lane again before departing the bus stop, glance quickly over the left shoulder, and check for vehicles in the blind spot
- Ensure the traffic signal is green for your direction of travel and it is safe to depart
- If behind another vehicle, wait until the vehicle has moved at least fifteen feet ahead before departing
- On dry pavement, accelerate gradually at an even rate
- On wet or slippery pavement, accelerate slowly and gradually

Executing the following procedures can help avoid accidents at bus stops:

- Signal intentions before the bus stop well in advance
- Stop as far forward as possible and parallel
- Keep right turn signal activated while boarding and alighting customers

## 7.52 Fare Collection

Operators must know the fare structure to ensure the proper fare is collected from each patron. The operator must make a reasonable effort to collect the proper fare courteously and respectfully. Special attention should be given to possible cases of fraudulent or counterfeit passes, as well as the use of expired passes or transfers. Operators are encouraged to report suspected cases to the dispatcher for further investigation or follow-up. For the safety of our operators, if a fare dispute arises after a reasonable effort to collect the proper fare, the operator must not pursue the matter and notify the dispatcher. Fare structure and fare media are revised periodically. Please check the bulletin board for updates.

### BUS FARE STRUCTURE

ONE WAY FARE.	\$1.00
SENIORS (OVER 65)	\$0.50
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES	\$0.50
STUDENTS (TO AND FROM SCHOOL)	\$0.50
UNDER	FREE
TRANSFERS	FREE
COUPON TICKETS	\$15.00
HALF FARE RIDE TICKETS	\$7.50

Employees must devote full attention to driving and traffic conditions without engaging in prolonged, unnecessary conversation or activity when operating a GCTD vehicle. In addition, employees must not conduct any transaction requiring the removal of both hands from the steering wheel while the vehicle is in motion or engage in any activity that could interfere with proper observation of traffic and the safe operation of the vehicle.

#### **7.58 Approaching & Leaving Service Stops**

The operator should maneuver the vehicle as far out of traffic and as close to the curb as conditions will permit, thus giving passengers a safe place to alight.

##### **Leaving Service Stops**

Before leaving a service stop, the operator shall:

- Ensure that all doors are closed
- Be sure that the vehicles on the left do not turn right in front of the bus
- Let the car ahead move at least one car length or 15 feet, allowing for a normal stop if the bus should need to stop suddenly
- Check all auto and pedestrian traffic by using both left and right outside mirrors before proceeding
- When leaving service stop, use a left turn signal

#### **7.59 Boarding & Alighting**

All customers should be allowed to board and alight safely. Some customers may require more time and distance when boarding and alighting. Some customers may be physically unstable or struggling with packages, children, etc., which does not allow them to use their hands. Customers should be afforded more time and distance before departing the bus stop if they need. More time may be needed for a customer to secure a seat, holding onto a stanchion (pole), handrail, or a hanging strap. More distance may be needed when stepping off and away from the bus. Remember to monitor the interior and exterior mirrors when pulling into, servicing, and pulling away from the bus stop.

#### **7.60 Overtaking Vehicles**

When overtaking and passing other vehicles ahead, the following should be kept in mind:

- Is it necessary to pass the vehicle?
- Does the vehicle's driver intend to turn left into some driveway or alley?
- Does the motorist know the GCTD vehicle is trying to pass?
- Can the operator see far enough ahead, and is there enough time to pass before being forced back by oncoming traffic?
- Has the GCTD vehicle entirely passed the vehicle before the operator attempts to return to the curb?

##### **Pulling alongside Another Bus**

Pulling alongside another bus to discharge or take on passengers is a dangerous practice and is not permitted. In addition, an operator will not allow passengers to board or alight in unprotected situations.

pre-trip inspection sheet. First Aid kits are stored in all vehicles. Kits are restocked, if necessary, when inspected. These items are obtained from the safety and training manager who handles supply orders

### **Fire Suppression Equipment**

A 5-pound ABC dry chemical fire extinguisher is mounted in each vehicle, beside or behind the rear driver's seat. The extinguisher will be inspected at various intervals to ensure proper pressure. The indicator should always be within the green zone. If the indicator enters the red zone, the extinguisher is removed from the vehicle and replaced by operations personnel. The safety and training manager shall inspect the extinguisher annually and replace or recharge and test it. A fire inspection tag shall be affixed with the current year and date and inspecting signature. All emergency kits and fire extinguishers must be mounted in the vehicle. A safe-cut seat belt cutter is mounted in the dash area of all vehicles.

### **7.65 Safety in Yard and Other Facilities**

To avoid pedestrian accidents in the yard, and other facilities, adhere to the following yard safety instructions:

- Enter and exit the yard or other facilities only at the appropriately marked entrances and exits
- Make a complete stop at all stop signs, stop lines, and occupied pedestrian crosswalks
- Adhere to the five MPH maximum speed limit, or the posted speed limit (slower speeds may be warranted due to inclement weather or yard conditions)
- Drive cautiously and watch for moving vehicles and or pedestrians

### **7.66 Protective Gloves**

Operators who desire protection from dirt, grease, or grime may wear light cotton or leather gloves for this purpose.

### **7.67 Un-responsive or Sleeping Passenger**

Passengers may fall asleep while riding in GCTD vehicles. Anyone asleep or unresponsive for more than one round trip or several hours may need assistance. The passenger may be suffering from a medical condition, disoriented, lost, under the influence of medication, intoxicated from a substance, or experiencing a mental health disorder. Employees who find patrons sleeping or is unresponsive and have been on the bus for more than one round trip:

- Attempt to contact the passenger using the PA system if available. The operator should ask the passenger questions such as "excuse me, what is your destination" or "excuse me, what stop would you like to get off at"? Employees will not shake, touch, or yell at a customer to wake them
- If the passenger does not respond, contact dispatch
- Follow the dispatcher's instructions. The dispatcher will dispatch a supervisor to aid
- Bus service will continue until the supervisor reaches the bus

Once the supervisor arrives to meet the operator at a predetermined location, the supervisor will conduct a welfare check and determine if law enforcement and or EMS are needed. Always remember before

- Urgent mechanical problems
- A situation involving danger, but the danger is not increased by the operator making the call or talking on the radio. This would include situations off the bus too
- Weather situations, including flooding
- All other urgent but non-life-threatening messages

### **Radio Rules**

Employees will never allow anyone other than authorized GCTD employees to operate the radios. Operators will never request dispatch information for passengers. It is against GCTD policy to repeat or make known to unauthorized persons anything you overhear on your radio. Conversations between others sharing your radio channel must be regarded as confidential.

### **7.71 Passenger Complaints**

Politely refer the passenger to call the dispatch number at 1-800-266-2320. Do not engage in an altercation with the customer. Instead, employees should use their communication skills to de-escalate the situation when necessary.

### **7.72 Providing Assistance on Request**

Operators should always be prepared to aid customers who are in need. Always be alert to other indicators, such as hesitation, confusion, or slow movement. Passengers will sometimes need assistance to ensure they are on the correct bus, find a seat, identify their stop, transfer to another bus, etc. Attempt to notice someone who may need assistance and politely ask them if you may assist them. Employees may never force, coerce, bribe, or threaten someone who does not wish to be assisted. Operators must aid any customer that requests assistance utilizing the service. Operator assistance may include, but is not limited to, the following types of assistance:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Activating the bus kneeling feature (Park and Ride)                                      | • Providing verbal or written directions to a transfer point   |
| • Activating the lift platform or ramp   | • Asking passengers in the priority seating area to give up their seats.   |
| • Deploying the boarding ramp  | • Assisting passengers onto or off the lift, up or down the ramp, or boarding or alighting the bus                   |
| • Pushing the wheelchair up or down the ramp or pushing the wheelchair on and off the lift | • Assisting passengers in depositing a cash fare and transfers in the farebox if they are unable to do it themselves |
| • Announcing a specific destination or stop on approach                                    |  |
| • Providing general information  |  |

Employees at any time may never place their hands on the customer, their mobility device, wheelchair, scooter, walker, cane, or property without first asking the customer's permission unless the customer is in the process of falling or stumbling. Employees may not carry a customer for any reason unless evacuating the bus in an emergency. When being relieved by another operator, inform the relief operator if any passenger has requested or requires specific assistance. The following assistance will always be provided, whether requested by passengers or not:

- If the annunciator system is not working, operators will announce stops in a loud and deep voice at major intersections and transfer points for that route. Operators may not yell or shout

passengers are unwilling to cooperate with the securement process. If unable to properly secure the wheelchair, contact the dispatcher for further instructions. In any wheelchair securement situation, space to maneuver is limited. In these situations, let the passenger know what you will do before securing the wheelchair, as you may accidentally brush against the passenger.

EXAMPLE: "Excuse me, I am going to place this strap under your wheelchair's seat I want to apologize if I accidentally bump into you; may I proceed"?

In cases where the passenger is in a wheelchair, the operator must:

- Allow passengers in the wheelchair to maneuver into the tie-down areas by themselves or with the aid of an attendant or assistance from the operator
- Have the wheelchair secured by the operator on both sides. Operators will ensure that the 7-point restraint system is used on all wheelchairs and scooters. If a passenger refuses to have their wheelchair secured, the operator should contact the dispatcher for instructions
- Do not remove tie-down devices until the bus is completely stationary at the service stop

#### **7.74 Priority Seating Area**

The operator can ask persons seated in the priority seating area to make room for a person in a wheelchair or those who may need the seat; however, an operator cannot force anyone to give up their seat. If this happens, the operator should immediately plan on how to best transport the passenger; the driver will need to contact dispatch for assistance with a plan of action.

#### **7.75 Rear Door Exit**

Although customers are expected to exit the bus through the rear doors on park and ride routes, allow those who need to use the front doors if convenient.

#### **7.76 Use of Lift or Ramp**

The lift or ramp is to be operated for any passenger on request. A passenger does not have to be in a wheelchair or use other mobility aids, such as crutches or a cane, or exhibit symptoms such as shortness of breath, as a lift or ramp usage condition. Operators will ensure that the area is clear near the ramp before and during deployment and redeployment of the ramp. Operators shall visually inspect the area inside and outside, and if needed, operators shall announce "stand clear of the door" or "ramp deploying."

#### **Boarding Using the Ramps**

GCTD prefers passengers in wheelchairs and scooters to board a ramp-equipped bus in a forward-facing position (looking into the bus), but the customers may decide to board forward or backward. The passenger is not required to board the bus first or last. The operator must use their best judgment to determine the boarding order. If the passenger cannot get up the ramp because the combined weight of the passenger and wheelchair is too heavy or large to allow them to do so, contact the dispatcher for instructions.

#### **7.77 Lift Malfunctions**

If the bus ramp does not deploy mechanically, the operator will be required to manually deploy the ramp if passengers on the bus need the ramp to exit. The operator will not have to deploy the ramp to board

### **7.83 Blue Straps**

The blue straps have been designed to create better securement locations on non-standard wheelchairs and scooters and help operators secure these mobile devices with greater ease. When the situation is appropriate, use blue straps to secure non-traditional wheelchairs. In all situations, wheelchairs and scooters must be properly secured on the bus regardless of the securement system used. Using the blue straps does not mean operators no longer need a 7-point securement system. The 7-point securement system is still required on GCTD vehicles. Only place the blue straps on the non-removable portions of the wheelchair's frame. In most situations, this will mean placing two straps on the seat post of the wheelchair for the front securement hooks. The back two securement hooks can be placed on the wheelchair's frame, or the blue straps placed on the wheelchair's frame. Tying two blue straps together is never allowed under any circumstances. It is the responsibility of every operator to count the straps and request replacements if any are missing. Operators who pull out of the garage can request replacement straps from the supervisor. Operators who relieve should contact the dispatcher if replacement straps are needed. If a strap or straps need to be replaced, present them to the fleet manager, who will arrange to replace them.

### **7.84 Assisted Walking Devices**

Customers who may have mobility will sometimes use assisted walking devices. These are made of metal tubing and allow users to shift weight from their legs to their hands. These devices may look like folding metal chairs with wheels at the bottom. They are called rollators but function the same as walkers. Walker devices must be kept from moving while the bus is in motion. This can be accomplished by folding the device and placing it in front of a forward-facing window seat by its owner sitting in the adjacent aisle seat. Otherwise, customers may firmly grasp their walker during the trip to keep it from moving and blocking the aisle. Some walkers cannot be folded or safely controlled by their users. In these cases, a walker can be secured in a wheelchair station. Under no circumstances will a customer be allowed to stand using a walker or sit on a rollator while the bus is in motion – even if the device is secured in a wheelchair station. If a wheelchair station is needed but unavailable, inform the passenger before boarding. Grocery carts and child strollers are not mobility devices. They must be folded or controlled by customers.

### **7.85 Assisting Visually Impaired Passengers**

Visually impaired passengers may request operators to escort them across the street. If asked, an operator may provide the assistance when the following conditions exist:

- It is at a controlled intersection with a four-way traffic light or stop sign with marked pedestrian crosswalks
- The operator and customer must observe all signals and marked paths. Jaywalking or crossing against a red light is prohibited
- It is not performed at or across a wide roadway with five or more lanes, including a turn lane
- The operator messages the dispatcher using the PTT they have returned to the vehicle

The level of assistance provided by the operator is that of guidance, such as extending an arm or enabling the customer to place their hand on the shoulder of the operator as they walk across the street. This does not include carrying personal items or bags or supporting the bodyweight of the customer requiring assistance. If the operator determines they are unable to comply with the request due to not meeting all the above conditions or an unsafe situation exists, the operator must follow these steps:



In the event of violations of these rules by any passenger who fails to abide by the requirements of these rules after two or more warnings concerning such behavior, the transportation manager, director of operations and assets with the executive director reserves the right to deny service to such person for a period of one day and up to six months. Dispatch must be contacted before an operator refuses to transport any public member who violates rules established by GCTD. Only dispatch or management can authorize the decision to deny transport to anyone. Operators must use the QR code provided by safety and training manager to document all events involving passenger behavioral incidents. GCTD operators will ensure all passengers a professional, safe, and uninterrupted ride when using services. Operators should expect to perform their duties free of abusive or disruptive behavior from customers. GCTD adopted bus rules to inform passengers of acceptable and unacceptable behavior while using GCTD services and facilities. The bus rules apply to all passengers that use GCTD services, including customers, guests, contractors, and GCTD employees or retirees. Operators must become familiar with the bus rules for their safety and the customers. Operators who observe or are informed of a patron violating the bus rules should make the offender aware that they are not compliant. This should be done politely using the intercom if equipped.

Operators may never get out of their seats or walk to the vehicle's back to confront the patron. Operators may not escalate the situation into a confrontation. Always use effective communication skills to help de-escalate the situation. The operator's role is to inform the customer, not enforce. If someone is a hazard to others and engages in disruptive or offensive behavior, operators must contact the dispatcher immediately for further assistance. Not every situation will require action beyond informing the customer. The bus rules raise awareness and help point out unacceptable behavior. Informing customers courteously of what is not permitted ensures other passengers may experience a more professional ride. Remember, if anyone refuses to comply with the bus rules after being requested to stop the behavior, contact the dispatcher for assistance. Operators must not stop the bus or delay service for a code of conduct violation unless dispatch has authorized it.

#### **Smoking on Vehicles or In GCTD Buildings**

When passengers smoke on board or attempt to board with a lit cigarette, electronic cigarette, cigar, or pipe, the operator must politely remind the customer that smoking on a GCTD vehicle is prohibited by law. If the passenger refuses to stop smoking, the operator must not persist. Instead, the operator must report the incident to the dispatcher for instructions. Customers and employees are prohibited from smoking in GCTD vehicles or inside any GCTD building.

#### **Transporting Pets & Service Animals**

If it is not readily apparent that the boarding animal is a service animal, ask the customer if the animal is a service animal. If the customer does not reply or hesitates, you may not inquire further. Employees may never ask a customer question concerning their disability status or the status of their companion animal. People who use service animals cannot be isolated from other patrons or treated less favorably.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that service animals should always be under the handler's control. The service animal must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered in public places unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the person's disability prevents using these devices. The ADA does not require service animals to wear a vest, ID tag, or specific harness. Covered entities such as GCTD do not require documentation or proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal as a condition for entry. Employees may not ask passengers for documentation or proof of the service animals' status. The ADA does not restrict which dog breeds are defined as service animals. If a particular service animal is out of control and the handler does not take effective action to control it, or if it is not housebroken, that animal may be excluded after contacting the dispatcher for further instructions. Service animals may include but are not limited to Guide dogs, guide dogs or puppies in training, signal or service animals, or medical service animals. Two service animals may

information, or age. In addition, employees may not engage in controversial topics, which may cause anxiety or heightened emotions, such as politics, controversial subjects, or the working conditions of GCTD. This policy is in effect for all employees while on duty or in uniform, on or off the clock.

#### **Information**

Operators must familiarize themselves with the area in which they operate to be helpful and informative when passengers request information. Operators who are unsure of the information requested must politely suggest the passenger call GCTD information at 1-800-266-2320. Informative pocket schedules are available for passengers on all buses. It is best not to contact dispatch to request information on the customer's behalf. Employees can also direct the customer to call 211 for additional resources they may find helpful. If the situation becomes dangerous, employees must call dispatch or their manager.

#### **Fare Collection Enforcement**

A reasonable and professional effort must be made to collect the proper fare. If a dispute arises between the operator and the passenger, the operator must not pursue the matter and notify the dispatcher for further instructions.

#### **Detaining Passengers**

Operators must never prevent passengers from leaving the vehicle unless it protects them from danger or hazards outside the vehicle. Use professional judgment and courtesy when handling these situations. If there is a dangerous situation on the bus, operators must stop at the first safest place, secure the bus, and open both doors. The dispatcher must be notified of all situations and actions the operator takes immediately and await further instructions.

#### **Articles Permitted Inside Vehicles**

The following articles may be carried inside GCTD vehicles, provided such articles are not placed in a location where they will interfere with the entrance, exit, and use of aisles by passengers or with the vehicle's safe operation.

##### Baggage

Small articles such as ordinary hand baggage and packages can be carried or stowed without inconveniencing other passengers.

##### Carts, Walking Aids, Carriages, & Strollers

Baby carriages or strollers can be carried only when folded. Carriages or strollers that cannot be folded must be strapped down or secured. Children are not permitted to be in or play around carriages or strollers at any time. One personal shopping cart may be carried on board if it does not block the aisle. Walk aid and stand-up walkers. Passengers with walk-aids will be permitted to board GCTD vehicles at any time. Walkers must be folded so as not to interfere with the free use of the aisle.

##### Skateboards

Skateboards are permitted if they do not interfere with the free use of the aisles.

##### Bicycles

These are permitted on the bus when the bike rack is full or when a bike rack is unavailable.

##### Respiratory Equipment

Customers can board with respiratory equipment and or a portable oxygen tank. No more than two small oxygen tanks approximately 24" in length or one large tank approximately 4' in length is allowable. Operators must not assume responsibility for articles and shall so courteously advise passengers.

- Employees operating or driving a GCTD vehicle may use a personal cellular phone when on personal time in the GCTD building or for short messages while on reserve, so long as it does not interfere with their ability to receive notification of an assignment
- Employees operating or driving a GCTD vehicle may use a cellular phone during emergencies when contacted by and at the direction of a dispatcher or supervisor while parked in a safe location. An emergency is defined as a situation in which property or human life is in jeopardy, and immediate contact with emergency personnel and family is essential. Employees should provide family or emergency contacts with the telephone number 1-800-266-2320 if there is a need to contact you while operating a vehicle.

#### **7.87 Employees Riding The Bus**

Employees boarding the bus must move to the rear of the bus. Employees must not visit the operator on duty and must not occupy a seat to exclude paying passengers. The rear exit door shall be used as an exit only. Employees will not enter through the rear door.

#### **7.88 Authorization To Drive GCTD Vehicles**

Employees assigned or operating a GCTD vehicle must not permit other persons, including off-duty employees, to operate the vehicle at any time. Exceptions to this rule would be qualified supervisory personnel or student operators when scheduled, mechanics, or unless a GCTD manager or director grants other permission.

## **Appendix Guides**

### **Appendix A: Ethical Code of Conduct**

All employees must abide by the ethical code of conduct guidelines that inform and direct workplace behaviors. The ethical code of conduct has been created by GCTD, with guidelines set by the FMCSA, DOT, and the State of Texas. The ethical guidelines presented are standards of conduct that assist in directing ethical and professional decision-making. It is with the hope that these guidelines will assist when complex ethical dilemmas challenge employees. In addition, the success of GCTD is dependent on the continued public trust earned through ethical and professional service by all employees.

GCTD will conduct business honestly and ethically wherever operations are maintained. We strive to improve our services, products, and operations and maintain a reputation for honesty, fairness, respect, responsibility, integrity, trust, and sound business judgment. GCTD employees must adhere to high standards of business and personal integrity as a representation of our business practices at all times.

Employees will not knowingly misrepresent GCTD and will not speak on behalf of GCTD unless specifically authorized. The confidentiality of trade secrets, proprietary information, and similar confidential commercially sensitive information about GCTD or GCTD operations, or that of our customers or partners, is to be treated with discretion and only disseminated on a need-to-know basis.

Violation of the code of ethics can result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment. The degree of discipline imposed may be influenced by the existence of voluntary disclosure of any ethical violation and whether the violator cooperated in any subsequent investigation.

GCTD is committed to respecting and treating all persons equally and providing a fair and inclusive

- Employees must be aware of their actions and recognize the potential impact on their professional relationships with others
- Employees must complete annual training to ensure their effectiveness in working with culturally diverse client populations
- Employees must comply with Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Employees must comply with all cities, county, state, and federal safety requirements, including but not limited to operating with a valid driver's license and or CDL when required, complying with GCTD drug testing requirements set forth by the FMCSA and DOT, always utilize seat belts in GCTD vehicles, and refrain from text messaging and video calls or engaging in distracted driving behaviors
- Employees must comply with all federal civil rights laws, regulations, and requirements
- Employees must consult with their supervisor, manager, or director when a conflict arises between fulfilling responsibility to any customer, patron, or vendor
- Employees must maintain knowledge about the cultures and communities within which they work
- Employees must maintain professionalism towards all individuals, groups, cultures, or beliefs of any customer, employee, patron, and vendor
- Employees must not commit theft, fraud, waste, or abuse at any time, including time theft or theft of resources, intellectual or not
- Employees must not defame GCTD, any GCTD employee, or vendor with slander or libel statements
- Employees must not engage in acts of violence while on or in GCTD property at anytime
- Employees must not engage in commercial sex acts while on or in GCTD property at anytime
- Employees must not engage in forced acts or forced labor while on or in GCTD property at anytime
- Employees must not engage in human trafficking while on or in GCTD property at anytime
- Employees must not engage in the exploitation of customers, patrons, vendors, or community members at anytime
- Employees must not engage in the sale or distribution of illegal drugs on or in GCTD property at anytime
- Employees must not use office letterhead, title, badge, or otherwise refer to their position with GCTD to induce or intimate an employee, customer, patron, or vendor at any time, including seeking favor, providing preferential treatment, giving gratuities, discounts, favors, or offer other unwarranted personal or private benefits
- Employees must not use the GCTD name or likeness for personal gain
- Employees must participate in efforts to establish and maintain employment conditions that are conducive to high-quality services
- Employees must protect everyone's right to privacy and confidentiality except when such confidentiality would cause harm to others when GCTD guidelines state otherwise or under other stated conditions such as city, county, state, or federal laws
- Employees must refrain from bullying, sexual, workplace, or discriminatory harassment
- Employees must respond appropriately to the unethical behavior of co-workers. Employees must report unethical behavior or perceived unethical behavior to a supervisor, manager, director, or

- *Age, race, religion, color, national origin, gender, sex, sexual orientation (including transgender status, gender identity, or expression), pregnancy (including childbirth, lactation, and related medical conditions), physical or mental disability, genetic information, marital status, AIDS/HIV status, military service, veteran status, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local laws.*

GCTD is dedicated to the fulfillment of this policy concerning all aspects of employment, including but not limited to recruiting, hiring, placement, transfer, training, promotion, rates of pay, and other compensation, termination, and all other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment. GCTD will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation of all allegations of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or any violation of the Equal Employment Opportunity policy in a confidential manner. GCTD will take appropriate corrective action if and where warranted. GCTD prohibits retaliation against employees who provide information about, complain about, or assist in investigating any complaint of discrimination or violation of the Equal Employment Opportunity Policy

GCTD does not:

- Discriminate based on race, color, religion, marital status, age, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, pregnancy, genetic information, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, or any other status protected under federal, state, or local law
- Discriminate in employment practices against individuals-based race, color, religion, marital status, age, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental disability, medical condition, pregnancy, genetic information, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, or any other status protected under federal, state, or local law
- Create or tolerate harassment based on sexual orientation or gender identity, including harassment by customers or clients, including intentionally and repeatedly using the wrong name and pronouns to refer to a transgender employee
- Discriminate because an individual does not conform to a sex-based stereotype about feminine or masculine behavior (whether or not GCTD knows the individual's sexual orientation or gender identity)
- Require a transgender employee to dress or use a bathroom per the employee's sex assigned at birth
- Retaliate against an employee for opposing employment discrimination that the employee reasonably believes is unlawful, filing an EEOC charge or complaint, or participating in any investigation, hearing, or other proceeding connected to Title VII enforcement.

## **Appendix B: Compliments & Complaints**

GCTD will process and investigate all complaints and compliments from customers or anyone in the community. The Executive Director Assistance investigate complaints and compliments. The objectives of the complaint procedures are to:

- Provide an opportunity for individuals to report a complaint or compliment
- Document and investigate the allegations in a timely and thorough manner

Any person who believes that they have been discriminated against based on disability by GCTD may file an ADA complaint. The complainant should complete the GCTD ADA complaint form. Complaints can be transmitted via telephone at 1-800-266-2320, via email at [customerservice@gulfcoasttransitdistrict.com](mailto:customerservice@gulfcoasttransitdistrict.com) via snail mail, or in-person at 1415 North 33<sup>rd</sup> Street North, Texas City, TX 77590, or on the GCTD website at [www.gulfcoasttransitdistrict.com](http://www.gulfcoasttransitdistrict.com). Information found on this website can be provided in an alternative format upon request. Please contact GCTD by calling 1-800-266-2320 to provide the request. GCTD will do its best to provide the requested alternative format within a reasonable time. GCTD will investigate complaints received no more than 180 days after the alleged incident. Beyond that time, complaints will be classified as comments.

Complaints will be immediately forwarded to the Executive Director's Assistant at GCTD. For a complaint to be investigated, the complainant must provide an address, telephone number, or email address. Those complaints without contact information will be classified as comments. Any complaint alleging discrimination based on disability will be designated as an ADA complaint. The Executive Director's Assistance at GCTD will be responsible for contacting the appropriate individuals involved in the complaint to get the information needed to complete the investigation, including, but not limited to, any video or audio recordings of the incident. The Executive Director's Assistant of GCTD will have thirty days to complete to review and complete the investigation. Once the investigation has been completed, the Executive Director's Assistant of GCTD will decide the validity of the complaint and what, if any, remedial actions will be taken to address the complainant's concerns. The Executive Director's Assistant at GCTD will write a decision regarding the complaint and then present the decision with all investigation documentation to the executive director. The executive director will provide feedback before a final decision is made. The Executive Director's Assistant will notify the complainant in writing of GCTD's decision regarding the complaint after the investigation has been completed. If the complainant disagrees with the determination by the GCTD Executive Director's Assistant, they can appeal the decision in writing within ten days from the receipt of the determination letter. The appeal letter should state why the complainant believes the decision was in error. The appeal letter must be sent to:

Attention: ADA Concerns / Executive Director's Assistant  
Gulf Coast Transit District  
1415 33<sup>rd</sup> Street North  
Texas City, Texas 77590

#### **ADA Complaint Tracking & Record Retention**

The GCTD Executive Director Assistant will be responsible for tracking all ADA complaints to establish trends in allegations of discrimination. In addition, the GCTD Executive Director Assistant will maintain a summary log of all ADA complaints. All complaint documents and materials gathered during the investigation are maintained for no less than seven years.

#### **Appendix D: Title VI Civil Rights Act**

This act requires that "no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." The U.S. Department of Transportation distributes substantial federal financial assistance each year for thousands of programs and activities, or programs conducted by diverse entities, including but not limited to State and local governments. Federal law requires entities receiving this assistance to provide all communities with equal access to these programs. Specifically, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI), 42 U.S.C. § 2000d et

### **Basis of a Title VI Complaint**

- Intentional discrimination or disparate treatment “A challenged action was motivated by an intent to discriminate, that the decision-maker was not only aware of the complainant’s race, color, or national origin, but that the recipient acted, at least in part, because of the complainant’s race, color, or national origin.”
- Disparate impacts or effects “A recipient, in violation of agency regulations, uses a neutral procedure or practice that has a disparate impact on individuals of a particular race, color, or national origin, and such practice lacks a “substantial legitimate justification.”

### **Filing a Title VI Complaint**

Anyone who feels discriminated against because of their race, color, or national origin may file a complaint. People can file a Title VI complaint with GCTD, Texas Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, and Office of Civil Rights.

Mail: 1415 33rd St. N, Texas City, TX 77590  
Website: [www.gulfcoasttransitdistrict.com](http://www.gulfcoasttransitdistrict.com)  
Email: [customerservice@gulfcoasttransitdistrict.com](mailto:customerservice@gulfcoasttransitdistrict.com)  
Phone: 1-800-266-2320

### **Complaint Process**

- Reception of a completed Title VI complaint
- Written Acknowledgement to the complainant within 15 days
- Determination of jurisdiction
- Begin investigation
- Deliver investigative report with summaries of the incident, interviews, findings, recommendations
- Review by the GCTD Executive Director Assistance and Assets Manager, and Director of Operations/Title VI Coordinator
- Notify findings to the complainant

### **Tips to Avoid Title VI Complaints**

- User professional and prudent judgment
- Think before you speak and watch what you say
- Treat everyone with dignity, respect, inclusion, and professionalism at all times
- Provide multiple paths to positive communication and open dialogue
- Understand the needs of others. Not everyone has been on the same journey in life
- Be empathetic towards everyone
- Contact your manager
- Always keeps records and documents
- Contact Human Resources



# Manager Standard Operating Procedures

Issued through: \_\_\_\_\_, Director of \_\_\_\_\_  
Gulf Coast Transit District

Approved by: Sean Middleton, Executive Director  
Gulf Coast Transit District

Issued Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Manager Standard Operating Procedures

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# Manager Standard Operating Procedures

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# Manager Standard Operating Procedures

## Section 1 – General Requirements

### SOP 1.01 – Agency Mission Statement

#### PURPOSE

This SOP provides context between Gulf Coast Transit District's mission and the impact the Manager position has on its success.

#### Mission

Our mission is to create, offer and continuously improve a flexible network of regional public transportation options and mobile solutions. We envision a future in our growing community in which, we provide convenience, choice, reliability, economical, opportunity and sustainability.

#### Vision

All people can live, learn, work, and play conveniently and independently without driving. Families are strengthened and sustained through cost-effective and convenient transportation choices for all family members.

### SOP 1.02 – Transportation Department Statement

#### PURPOSE

This SOP illustrates the role of the manager in relation to the entire transit system.

#### PROCEDURE

Gulf Coast Transit District's transportation system exists to provide vital mobility to the community and Managers provide a key role in its success. In support of Gulf Coast Transit District's Employee, Managers focus on professionalism, dependability, courtesy, and safety.

### SOP 1.03 – Manager Regulations

#### PURPOSE

This SOP sets the baseline expectations for the manager position.

# Manager Standard Operating Procedures

## **SOP 1.05 – Arrests, Convictions and Citations**

### PURPOSE

This SOP provides direction to the manager if he/she is arrested for an alleged crime, convicted of a crime, or cited by law enforcement, whether on or off duty.

### PROCEDURE

All arrests, convictions, traffic violations, or legal action while on or off duty must be reported to their director as soon as possible, no later than the manager's next workday. A written report must also be submitted as soon as possible.

## **SOP 1.06 – Chain of Command**

### PURPOSE

This SOP articulates the chain of command for carrying out orders and reporting to superiors.

### PROCEDURE

While on duty, the manager will work under the following chain of command:

1. Appropriate Department Director
2. Executive Director

The chain of command includes the following requirements:

- The manager has overall control of the entire system within their department.
- Manager can supersede any order, assignment, or special assignment to ensure safe and reliable service.
- The manager has control over the immediate situation in the field; safety of employees and passengers is the priority.



# Manager Standard Operating Procedures

## PROCEDURE

Each manager is issued a proximity card to gain access into the manager' area and other secured areas of GCTD. Due to the nature of the expensive equipment and property located in this area (i.e., laptop computers, radios, keys, etc.), Manager must always keep their card with them. Sharing cards is not permitted. In the event a card is lost or stolen, the manager must report it immediately to the Director or Executive Director, and an Incident Report must be completed.

## **SOP 1.09 – Lunch Breaks**

### PURPOSE

This SOP regulates the manager' mandatory daily lunch period.

### PROCEDURE

Managers are expected to take their lunch break. manager' lunch break may be adjusted as needed by the Director or Executive Director (when on-duty).

When on lunch break, do not turn off your PTT radio and/or cell phone. The PTT radio and/or cell phone must remain on in the event the dispatcher must contact you. Be alert and respond to any calls from the dispatcher while on your lunch break.

Lunch breaks will be scheduled so that they do not occur during the morning and afternoon peaks. At these peak times, service must be monitored to assure our patrons receive good public transportation.

Working through a lunch break is discouraged and shall be approved in advance by the Director or Executive Director.

All employees must take a lunch and be clocked out and not working.

It is the manager's responsibility to make sure that all employees clock out and take a lunch before approving their timesheets.

## Manager Standard Operating Procedures

should always be used to avoid embarrassing an employee in front of customers and vendors.

### PROCEDURE

The following describes the preferred manner for contacting employees who are in violation of company policies or procedures. Remember to use tact and good judgment while conducting yourself in a professional manner when contacting employees, and that the goal is to correct unwanted behavior.

Before contacting an employee, please consider the following:

- Is this an issue, which requires immediate contact, or can it wait until the employee arrives at the end of line, or pulls into the yard?
- Can it wait until tomorrow?
- Will I be able to contact the employee in a discrete manner?
- Will the contact cause a delay of service?
- What is the employee's temperament?
- Should I have a witness?
- Generally, issues that directly affect service or safety should be addressed as soon as safe and practical to do so.

Employees should be contacted in person; using the PTT radio or dispatcher to inform employee that they are in violation is strongly discouraged. If the manager is unable to quickly contact the employee, the dispatcher can be asked to inform the employee that a manager will be contacting them.

When contacting an employee on route, request that the employee step off the bus, and then proceed to the back of the bus, or another discrete location to discuss the issue.

You should begin by introducing yourself, explaining why you are contacting the employee, the impact of the unwanted action, and allow him/her to respond.

Do not use accusatory language; be observant of your body language and tone of voice. Explain to the employee the preferred method of performing the task.

Try to get employee commitment to perform as requested; for example, you may say "I

## Manager Standard Operating Procedures

This SOP details the procedures the manager shall follow to document their daily work hours.

### PROCEDURE

The manager is responsible for:

- Accurately recording hours and effort report for regular time, overtime, holidays, vacation time.
- Properly explaining the use, or accumulation, of earned leave.

Falsification of timecards will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **SOP 1.15 – Fare Box**

#### PROCEDURE

Operators DO NOT handle or remove fareboxes!!

### **SOP 1.16 – Reporting a Workplace Injury**

#### PURPOSE

This SOP provides requirements for reporting a workplace injury.

#### PROCEDURE

Should a manager suffer an occupational injury, it must be reported to their director immediately. A written report must be submitted on the day of occurrence in accordance with their directives.

GCTD will provide first-aid or make arrangements for medical attention as required. Medical attention will be provided by the Manager's personal physician.

All injuries will be reported to the HR Director immediately by the Director of that department.

After returning from seeing a doctor the manager will report the status to their Director, HR Director, Executive Director, and the Safety Manager. Other regulations regarding occupational injury will be administered by the Safety Manager.

## Manager Standard Operating Procedures

### **Pants**

Uniform pants shall be dark blue, black, or Khaki in color, clean, pressed and have no visible wear areas.

### **Shorts**

Uniform shorts shall be dark blue, black, or Khaki in color and may be worn when assigned to work.

When wearing shorts, they must have a neat appearance and the height of the shoes or boots must not be more than six inches. Shorts can be worn in combination with polo shirt and baseball cap.

### **Dress Shirt**

The button-down uniform dress shirt shall be neat, clean, and pressed. Dress shirts must not have stains or visible wear areas.

A necktie is optional when wearing the long sleeve dress shirt.

### **Polo Shirt**

Polo shirts must not have odors, stains, or visible wear areas.

### **Belt**

A black leather belt that is conservative in style is required. Belt buckles must be conservative in both style and size.

### **Shoes/Boots**

All footwears must completely cover the foot and shall be clean and neatly polished. When wearing boots, the pant legs must always remain outside the boot. The heel of the boot must not be taller than 1 ½ inches; the sole must not be more than ½ inch thick NO CROCS or sandals.

### **Jacket**

The uniform jacket must be from the approved uniform supplier. Sleeves must not be rolled up.



## Manager Standard Operating Procedures

Mustaches shall be neatly trimmed and of natural color.

Manager beards must be neatly clipped.

### **Fingernails**

Manager fingernails shall be neat and clean. They shall not interfere with the performance of duties such as the safe operation of a motor vehicle.

### **Jewelry**

Earrings must not exceed one inch in diameter. Earrings shall be conservative, professional, and businesslike in appearance.

Manager shall not wear eyebrow rings, tongue studs or rings, lip studs or rings. Jewelry or personal ornaments shall not be affixed to any part of the uniform or equipment.

### **Sunglasses**

Prescription and non-prescription sunglasses worn by managers shall be conservative in style and professional in appearance. Plastic or composite frames shall be a dark color, free of ornamentation, and conservative in style and color. The temple width of the frame shall be no wider than one-half inch and in no case shall the frame obstruct the peripheral vision. Wire frames shall be black, gold, or silver in color. Lenses shall be dark shades of gray, green, or brown and shall not be reflective. Gradient (light sensitive) lenses are acceptable but must return to a neutral color when not in sunlight. Sunglasses may not be worn at night, indoors, or in darkened areas. A plain corded leash may be used with sunglasses.

# Manager Standard Operating Procedures

## **SOP 3.03 – Employee’s Policy & Procedure Handbook**

### PURPOSE

This SOP explains the relevance of the Employee’s Policy & Procedure Handbook to the activities of the Manager.

### PROCEDURE

As the managers are responsible for enforcing the Employee’s Policy & Procedure Handbook, the managers must be knowledgeable of all employee rules and procedures. All rule violations cited on a Report of employee Performance must relate specifically to the manual.

## **SOP 3.04 – Inspection of GCTD Vehicle**

### PURPOSE

This SOP illustrates the importance of having safe equipment for the manager to operate. This starts with inspecting the GCTD vehicle before leaving the GCTD property.

### PROCEDURE

Prior to driving a GCTD vehicle, the manager is responsible for conducting a pre- trip inspection of said vehicle. While the inspection need not be documented in writing, any defects found must be documented GCTD a pre-trip memorandum sent to the Fleet Director prior to departing the yard.

The pre-trip inspection should, at a minimum, include walking around the vehicle looking for the following:

- Body damage including dents and/or scratches.
- Tire damage (screws, nails, etc.) and low air pressure

## Manager Standard Operating Procedures

- Any citation or arrest issued to a manager, whether on or off duty, must be reported to their director.
- Support vehicle keys shall be returned to the appropriate cabinet at the end of shift. If you take the keys home, you may be required to immediately return to the office with them.
- Using a support vehicle to run personal errands is prohibited.
- The Manager coming off duty will be responsible for restocking the support vehicle with supplies.

The following procedures also apply within the GCTD property:

- The horn must be used when backing vehicles to warn pedestrians and other vehicles passing in the area.

### **SOP 3.06 – Support Vehicle Equipment**

#### **PURPOSE**

This SOP details the required equipment for the managers' support vehicle.

#### **PROCEDURE**

The following items should be well stocked in the support vehicle:

- First Aid kit
- Fire extinguisher

It is the responsibility of the manager to supply the support vehicle with required equipment prior to the end of shift. Discovery of missing supplies should be reported to the Fleet Director, but this does not negate the responsibility to immediately re-supply the vehicle.



# Manager Standard Operating Procedures

## PURPOSE

This SOP governs how special assignments are filled by managers.

## PROCEDURE

Manager work schedules can change due to a variety of circumstances such as special event service or parades. These variations are a natural and expected part of public transportation. On days where managers work schedules are modified to accommodate any service requirement, work will be assigned by the Executive Director or his delegate in the most fair and equitable manner that meets the service needs of the day.

Managers that are regularly scheduled to work will be assigned to shifts that are most like their regular shift adhering to eligible-to-work rules. Work will be assigned to the most senior manager first and continue with the remaining regularly scheduled Manager.

Finally, day off personnel will be conscripted in reverse seniority order observing eligible-to-work rules to fill any remaining work.

The Executive Director or Director may modify these procedures as needed to ensure that service and business requirements are met in emergency situations.

## **SOP 4.04 – Holiday Work Assignments**

### PURPOSE

This SOP explains how holiday work assignments are filled by manager.

### PROCEDURE

If the holiday has the same schedule that would normally occur on the day the holiday falls, then the manager that regularly work the day of the holiday will work their normal shift. On Holidays with a schedule that is modified from the normal schedule for the day, managers will sign for holiday work assignments according to the following procedures:

## Manager Standard Operating Procedures

### PURPOSE

This SOP governs how Managers shall request (in advance) time off for personal reasons (doctor appointment, funeral, etc.).

### PROCEDURE

Requests for personal time, and vacation should be made to their director, at least two weeks ahead of time, through Datis. The Director will research and then respond with an approval or denial of the request. This process should be used when seeking time off for scheduled events, such as doctor and dental appointments.

Time off for emergencies will be handled on a case-by-case basis by your director.

Manager`s will not approve employee leave if the employee does not have accrued leave in their bucket without director`s approval.

### **SOP 4.07 – Calling Off**

#### PURPOSE

This SOP governs how the Manager shall notify the Directors of an unplanned absence.

#### PROCEDURE

During regular business hours (0800 – 1700 hours), a manager calling off due to illness, emergency, or other reason must call your director to report the absence.

In all cases, your director should be contacted as early as possible to report the absence so that attempts can be made to find a replacement manager.

GCTD's attendance policy shall govern absences, clearing back after an absence, and submission of a doctor's note for extended absences.

### **Section 5 – General Duties**

#### **SOP 5.01 – Reporting for Duty**

#### PURPOSE

## Manager Standard Operating Procedures

off, he/she is to notify the dispatcher and be prepared to be contacted by cell phone (placed on vibrate if necessary to avoid distractions).

### **SOP 5.03 – End of Duty**

#### PURPOSE

This SOP governs the end-of-shift duties for the manager.

#### PROCEDURE

The following is a description of procedures to follow at the completion of the day's shift:

- At the end of duty, each manager will turn in their Accident/Incident Reports, and any other reports. Each report must be completed and submitted by the end of duty. Depending on the type of report submitted, any photographs, memory cards, diagrams or charts must also be submitted at the end of duty.
- Turn in and secure support car keys in the appropriate cabinet. Turn in all other required equipment.
- Pass on any relevant information (detours, closed bus stops, contacts with employee, etc.) to their director. If their director is not on duty, pass this information on to the dispatcher. This information will also be shared with appropriate Managers who need to be aware of relevant information.

### **SOP 5.04 – Electronic Device Usage**

#### PURPOSE

This SOP directs the manager to maintain safe usage of all electronic devices when on duty.

#### PROCEDURE

Use of a cell phone or any other electronic device while operating a GCTD vehicle is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, cell phones, tablets, MP3 devices, mobile data terminals (MDTs) and laptop computers. You are permitted to respond to radio calls while operating the vehicle if it is safe to do so.

The manager may use a cell phone to make a brief incidental phone call to complete duties, but only when the vehicle is stopped and parked.

# Manager Standard Operating Procedures

## **SOP 5.07 – Radio Operations**

### PURPOSE

This SOP details the procedures for operating GCTD's handheld radio system.

### PROCEDURE

GCTD's managers and dispatchers use a radio system that is owned and operated by GCTD. It is every manager's responsibility to always maintain professional communications when using the radio system. GCTD expects full cooperation between the managers, dispatchers, and all units, regardless of position.

There is no privacy in radio communications. A certain level of transparency comes with the job of being a public sector employee and a manager. Managers and dispatchers should always remain cognizant of this fact and maintain the highest level of professionalism in all communication whether it is on the radio or other messaging systems. Along the same lines, users need to safeguard confidential information related to the transit system or its employees. Also, managers may come across personal information related to complainants, victims or citizen information that may not be appropriate to broadcast over the radio. When in doubt, don't broadcast the information.

Radio operations include the following procedures:

- Communications between managers and dispatchers shall be conducted in a business-like manner, using plain language.
- No extraneous comments are permitted or allowed; only essential communications shall be transmitted.
- Managers shall keep the dispatcher advised of their "in-service" and "out-of-service" status during the entire time they are on duty.
- Managers who receive a call from the dispatcher shall respond by giving their current location.
- Assignments from the dispatcher shall be acknowledged without further comment unless additional information is needed.
- Managers responding to a dispatched call will advise the dispatcher of their arrival at the assigned location.

## Manager Standard Operating Procedures

- If amplifying information is vital to ensure that traffic is fully understood, be brief.
- Let the receiver ask for details.
- Wait a fraction of a second after pushing the talk button and before speaking.
- Don't speak louder in a noisy environment. If you speak louder than is needed for normal speech, the radio will distort your voice, reducing, rather than increasing, intelligibility. Instead:
  - Turn down the volume.
  - Shield the microphone from the wind.
  - Speak across the microphone.
  - Use a normal speaking voice.

### Using GCTD's Radio System

Using a radio is mostly common sense but it takes time to learn protocols, etiquette, and conduct. Much of this is outlined in these procedures and by the FCC. The best way to begin learning how to use the GCTD radio system is to see how others use it and follow procedures.

GCTD's dispatchers, operating from the Texas City Admin Building, monitor and orchestrate radio communications. The Dispatch Center acts as a switchboard, or hub, for all radio communication to/from buses and managers in the field.

### Conduct and Basic Radio Etiquette

Managers utilize radios to send and receive messages and vital information. Only essential information should be communicated. Transmissions should be brief yet descriptive enough for the receiver to fully understand. The best approach for transmitting a message is to plan the message before sending it. Always take a moment before transmitting to construct your message by briefly talking yourself through it - sort of like a short mental rehearsal. Using this approach will help you to transmit concise messages while conveying a professional image.



## Manager Standard Operating Procedures

- What time the employee was relieved and what instructions the employee received. The employee will be instructed to report to, or call, the HR Director no earlier than 1000 hours the next business day.

The HR Director will decide what discipline is warranted (including suspension). To put it in perspective: Managers write the violation, and the manager handles the discipline process.

If you have a recurring issue where an employee has been contacted by yourself several times regarding a violation, inform the director so that the issue receives the proper attention.

The following are examples of reasons to remove an employee from service:

- Acts of gross negligence or oversight which resulted in an accident or incident in which someone was seriously injured, or significant damage occurred to private property.
- Accidents/incidents which resulted in a fatality.
- Accidents/incidents in which it is in the best interest of the Employee to not continue in service (e.g., Employee assaulted or witnessed a traumatic event).
- Employee involved in fight.
- Employee not in possession of driver's license.
- Employee violated work rule that put passengers and self in serious risk.
- Employee involved in accident/incident and fails to notify the Dispatcher.

### **SOP 5.09 – Report of Employee Performance**

#### **PURPOSE**

This SOP explains the importance and purpose of the manager's documentation of poor employee performance.

#### **PROCEDURE**

Clear and exact documentation is essential when completing a Report of employee Performance. Follow the following instructions when completing this form. Keep in mind that the idea of your contact with the employee is to correct unwanted behavior.

# Manager Standard Operating Procedures

## **SOP 5.11 – Railroad Crossings**

### PURPOSE

This SOP provides clarification on oversight of Employee at railroad crossings.

### PROCEDURE

Managers conduct railroad crossing inspections to monitor compliance with company policy, traffic laws, and general safety. Managers will not park at railroad crossings for the specific intent of conducting inspections but will instead conduct inspections while driving behind or ahead of a bus, or when safely parked away from the crossing.

When conducting a railroad crossing observation, the Manager will observe the following:

1. Employee must stop at all railroad crossings (except spur tracks where they must yield before proceeding).
2. Employee must come to a full complete stop (no rolling stops).
3. Employee must stop in the curb lane (except for sites that have been previously inspected and approved by Safety).
4. Employee must slow down and activate hazard lights within the last 100 feet of the first rail.
5. Employee must look in both directions before crossing the tracks.
6. If the railroad crossing has a protective gate, the Employee must stop at a point where the bus will not interfere with the lowering of the gate.
7. In traffic, after the train has cleared, the Employee will make a complete safe stop before crossing the tracks.
8. Employee will not proceed through, go around, or go under crossing gates at any railroad tracks without being instructed to do so by police officer or railroad personnel.

Managers shall not move or alter any railroad gate or equipment for the sake of allowing a GCTD vehicle to pass through. If attention is needed at any railroad crossing where a GCTD vehicle is being prohibited from safely crossing, the Manager shall contact a Dispatcher to consider alternate routes or contacting the railroad company.

## Manager Standard Operating Procedures

Only the Executive Director has the authority to make statements to the media. Be courteous but firm when referring them to the Executive Director. Do not say "no comment." If the media representative persists, notify the Dispatcher that the representative has requested to speak with the Executive Director.

If the media is present at any accident/incident, the dispatcher should be immediately notified.

### **SOP 5.14 – Insubordination by Employee**

#### PURPOSE

This SOP provides guidance to the manager when he/she must issue a direct order to a subordinate and that order is not followed.

#### PROCEDURE

Insubordination is the failure to follow the clear, direct order of a manager the subordinate must understand the consequences of failure to comply. The failure to comply must result in the Manager again giving the order with consequences.

The directing Manager shall state the following: "I am, again, giving you a direct order. You shall \_\_\_\_\_. If you do not comply with this direct order, you are committing an act of insubordination, and therefore, you will be taken out of service immediately. If it is necessary to remove you from service, you are placing yourself in a position that you could be subject to disciplinary action or discharge."

The result of the direct order shall not place the subordinate in direct danger, shall not be illegal, and shall not be unethical per GCTDs Employee Code of Conduct.

It is recommended, where possible, that a witness be present to hear the direct order. In all circumstances, the manager must document, in writing, exactly what occurred.

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### **SOP 5.17 – Sick/Injured/Fatigued Employee**

#### PURPOSE

This SOP directs the manager on what actions to take when an employee reports that he/she is sick, injured, or fatigued.

#### PROCEDURE

If an employee reports that he/she is sick, injured, or fatigued, ascertain whether immediate medical assistance is required. If relief is requested, contact the dispatcher, and explain the employee's problem and make arrangements for relief. Exercise sound judgment in any situation where an employee may be seriously ill but refuses medical aid or states that he/she is able to continue until relieved. Safety should always be the foremost concern.

DO NOT ALLOW an employee to continue if he/she is nervous, fatigued, dizzy, sleepy, or experienced blurred vision or any other condition that would impair his/her ability to operate a vehicle safely. Order the employee to hold at that location and contact the dispatcher for medical assistance.

Handle with discretion any requests for relief from employee for personal accidents, such as dirty or unsanitary uniforms, torn zippers or seams, or any other situation which could result in embarrassment for the Employee. No employee is expected to ride line service back to the admin if he/she is injured, ill, or has a dirty uniform. Make arrangements for relief to take place. Transport or assist in coordinating the transportation of the employee back to admin.

### **SOP 5.18 – Transporting Customers**

#### PURPOSE

This SOP provides the manager with guidelines to follow if he/she needs to transport a customer in their support vehicle.

## Manager Standard Operating Procedures

Late buses will be put back on schedule only through coordination with the dispatcher. employees are not allowed to give themselves a turn back, or implement any other schedule adjustment, without approval of the dispatcher or manager.

### **SOP 5.20 – Using Turn backs.**

#### PURPOSE

This SOP details the role of the manager in implementing turn backs to put a bus back on schedule.

#### PROCEDURE

A turn back is a method of getting a late bus back on schedule and shall only be implemented by a dispatcher or manager, through coordination between both. When coordinating a turn back, the manager needs to consider the following:

- A turn back must not be performed on the last trip of the day.
- The scheduled headway and recovery time will be factored into a decision to turn back a bus.

### **SOP 5.21 – Missed Reliefs**

#### PURPOSE

This SOP details procedures for addressing a missed employee relief so that service is minimally disrupted.

#### PROCEDURE

Missed reliefs are routinely handled between the to-be-relieved employee, the dispatcher, and the manager. Occasionally the director may be requested to intervene. On rare occasions the manager may transport the relief employee to the bus.

In service buses are not to wait at the relief point for the relief employee. If the relief employee does not show, the employee-to-be relieved shall contact the dispatcher and continue in service until relief can be made.

## Manager Standard Operating Procedures

- Irregularities in the street/pavement including potholes in bus zones.
- Damaged or irregular sidewalks and curbs in the vicinity of a bus zone.
- Loose or misplaced excavation covers.
- Broken or damaged bus stop benches and shelters.
- Low-hanging tree limbs; and
- Any other hazard in and around bus zones which may impact customer and pedestrian safety.

### **SOP 5.24 – Yard Monitoring of Pullouts**

#### PURPOSE

This SOP governs the manager's monitoring of pullouts from the yard.

#### PROCEDURE

A manager has the responsibility to ensure that employee are in their bus ready to depart on schedule. Be familiar with the layout of the bus yard and where buses are assigned. Know the functions of destination signs, and fare box, to assist the Employee if needed.

When monitoring pullouts,

- Take every initiative to assist in getting the buses out on schedule from the bus yard. The manager must be available and in position to monitor all service pull outs from the first bus until end of tour.

### **SOP 5.25 – Abandoned Vehicles on GCTD Property**

#### PURPOSE

This SOP provides direction to the manager if they observe an abandoned vehicle on GCTD property.

#### PROCEDURE

## Manager Standard Operating Procedures

procedures and approved by HR and the Executive Director. All managers will handle the termination with another manager present as a witness to what is said by both parties. The termination will always remain calm and professional. If the employee becomes loud or aggressive, the employee is to be escorted out of the building and all documentation of the terminated employee actions will be filed with HR.

### **Section 6 – Accident/Incident Investigations**

#### **SOP 6.01 – Accident Investigations**

##### PURPOSE

This SOP provides the manager with the parameters for investigating at the scene of an accident.

##### PROCEDURE

Accident investigators are responsible for investigating accidents involving all GCTD vehicles.

Upon arrival at the scene of an accident, the manager must be easily identified as a GCTD official. This is executed by wearing the full, proper uniform.

The manager will advise the dispatcher of his/her arrival at the accident scene, provide the dispatcher an initial notification and updates at least every 15 minutes. The manager will also inform the dispatcher when the scene is cleared. The initial notification will include the following:

- Presence of law enforcement, fire department, and medical support at the scene
- Number of vehicles involved and general condition of bus.
- Status of Employee and patrons

Priorities upon arriving at the scene are (1) life safety, (2) incident stabilization, and (3) protection of property. After this, the manager is to investigate the incident/accident and collect evidence.

The manager must document all visual observations with photographs and notes and must document the verbal statements made by the GCTD employee, the driver and occupant(s) of any other vehicles involved, and any witnesses to the accident.

The GCTD employee involved, and any other GCTD employees who are relevant to the



# Manager Standard Operating Procedures

## **SOP 6.03 – Accident/Incident Reports**

### PURPOSE

This SOP explains the importance of the manager's accident/incident report in the overall investigation of an accident or incident.

### PROCEDURE

The manager's Accident/Incident Reports are very critical to the Safety Department as they can provide insight to an incident or accident that an untrained individual may miss. They also serve as legal documents, permanently recording GCTD's investigation of an incident. It is the position of the Executive Director, regarding Accident/Incident Reports, that the Safety Department are customers of the Fleet Transportation Department, and we should strive to deliver the best product possible. Each manager is expected to conduct themselves with a high level of professionalism at the scene of an accident or incident.

The following requirements must be completed for every incident/accident report:

1. Enter the time you were dispatched to an incident/accident. In case you were not dispatched but drove up on the incident, record that time on the report.
2. Always insert a diagram on the report, even if vehicles or individuals have relocated.
3. Identify the responding police jurisdiction on the report.
4. Secure the scene. If safe to do so, strategically park the support car to protect the scene. Activate your vehicle's emergency warning devices, check in with dispatcher to indicate that you have arrived at the scene. Put out reflective triangles (if possible, have the employee set out the triangles to allow you to start taking pictures).
5. Evaluate the scene. The Director of Fleet must be notified of all accidents. Is there a need for another manager, the police, fire or EMS, Maintenance, or Safety manager? If so, call the dispatcher for additional assistance.
6. Each manager has been issued a tablet to take photographs. Immediately begin taking pictures. The accident scene may change very quickly, and pictures taken before any changes are made will help other investigators understand how the accident happened. Take photographs of the incident and surrounding area.



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14. Discussions should be focused on pursuing the investigation of the accident. This can be a moment of high stress for the Employee, and other motorists, and any comments made by the manager may be misunderstood.
15. If an employee was required to submit to a drug/alcohol test, do not include this information on the accident/incident report. Simply attach the necessary paperwork to the accident/incident report.
16. List what instructions were given to the employee (return to yard, turn back on time). If the employee was relieved of duty, state so, noting that he/she was instructed to report to the office.
17. If there was significant negligence on the employee's part, the employee shall be relieved of duty and instructed to report to the office at 10am the next business day.
18. Submit all reports, diagrams, accompanying paperwork at the end of your shift.
19. Accident/incident reports should be completed in the office.
20. All accident/incident reports must be completed using the Trackit accident/incident software. No handwritten reports will be accepted.
21. All managers assigned to assist with an incident/accident, or who were at the scene of an incident/accident, are required to submit an incident/accident report stating their observations, and what role or assistance they provided.
22. If the Director determines that the report needs corrections, modifications, or is incomplete, it will be returned to the manager for immediate action.

### **SOP 6.04 – Post-Accident Drug & Alcohol Testing**

#### **PURPOSE**

This SOP explains the manager's role in determining if a post-accident drug and alcohol test is required after an accident or incident.

#### **PROCEDURE**

Post-accident drug & alcohol testing is governed by federal guidelines and GCTDs Drug & Alcohol Policy. Specific critical procedures must be followed whenever a GCTD revenue vehicle or GCTD employee is involved in an accident involving property damage, injuries, or fatalities. The following procedures shall guide the Manager:

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DO NOT direct the employee to take the bus back to the yard. The employee must not be placed behind the wheel of any GCTD vehicle until he/she has cleared the Post-Accident Drug & Alcohol Test. If there are no Employee on reserve or manager available, contact Maintenance for assistance in transporting the vehicle back to the yard.

Federal regulations require strict adherence to testing protocols. Managers must be prepared to communicate these requirements to an Employee if there are any challenges:

- Employees involved in an accident that requires testing must remain readily available for testing.
- Employees are prohibited from using alcohol for eight hours following an accident or until the post-accident testing is completed, whichever occurs first.
- In the event the alcohol test is delayed beyond two hours, the Manager will document the reason for the delay.
- If an alcohol test is not administered within eight hours following the accident, all efforts to administer the test will cease; the Manager will document the reason for the inability to test.
- In the event the drug test is not administered within 32 hours form the time of the accident, all attempts to administer the drug test will cease; and
- A refusal to test is equivalent to a positive test result.

Non-safety sensitive employees involved in an accident that, per company policy, requires a drug and alcohol test, shall NOT be tested under DOT authority. It is extremely important to use the NON-DOT authorization form in these cases.

### **SOP 6.05 – Drawing Diagrams/Sketches**

#### PURPOSE

This SOP explains the requirements for, and importance, of the manager's accident diagram/sketch.

#### PROCEDURE

## Manager Standard Operating Procedures

This SOP provides key guidance for managers in taking photographs at collision scenes.

Photographs are extremely important evidence that may be used to defend GCTD in insurance claims and legal action. It is critical to take accurate photos and it is always better to take too many photos, as opposed to not enough photos.

### PROCEDURE

The following guidelines shall be used when taking photographs:

- Prioritize how urgent photographs are compared to other responsibilities at the accident scene.
- After urgent business is taken care of, take photographs as soon as possible after arriving at the scene.
- Take photographs of changeable factors, such as fluids and debris
- Take photographs of other contributing factors, such as narrowing roads, curves, grade, sand, ice, water, or gravel on roadway, and reduced visibility due to fog, smoke, or dust.
- Take photographs of:
  - Position of vehicle(s)
  - Damage to vehicles(s)
  - Damage to fixed objects (trees, buildings, poles, etc.)
  - Debris, skid, and brush marks on the road.
  - Landmarks (street signs, buildings, houses) and any contributing factors (traffic signal out, pothole, barricades);
  - License plate of vehicle(s)
  - Bus number
  - All four sides of all vehicles
- Show the object and, whenever possible, its relationship to other objects at the scene
- Do NOT photograph sick, injured, or deceased persons.

### **SOP 6.08 – Equipment Failure Claimed**

#### PURPOSE

This SOP provides direction to the Manager when an employee claims that an accident or incident was caused by equipment failure.

# Manager Standard Operating Procedures

## Section 7 – Bus Mechanical Issues

### SOP 7.01 - Introduction

#### PURPOSE

This SOP governs the limitations of what a manager can do mechanically to prevent service delays and road calls.

#### PROCEDURE

In the interest of high quality and timely service, the manager may make minor repairs and mechanical adjustments to GCTD buses. Minor repairs should never extend beyond the manager's training. When in doubt, defer to Maintenance personnel.

The following are examples of simple repairs or adjustments that can be made by a manager:

- Unjamming a fare box

### SOP 7.02 – Air Pressure

#### PURPOSE

This SOP explains what the manager can check for when an employee reports an air pressure problem on his/her bus.

#### PROCEDURE

A bus should never be moved when the air pressure is less than 80 PSI and air pressure should build to at least 120 PSI before leaving the yard. When in service, air pressure should be monitored closely. If the air pressure will not build up to the desired level, release the bleeder valve on the air tank, reactivate the valve, and attempt to build air pressure back up.

### SOP 7.03 – Kneeling

#### PURPOSE

This SOP identifies the steps that the Manager can take when the bus is stuck in the kneel position.

## Manager Standard Operating Procedures

requested to step aside as to not impede the loading of special event buses while having questions or concerns addressed.

- Managers cannot lend priority or preferential treatment to groups or classes of patrons. Patrons must board buses until maximum capacity.
- Accommodations shall be made for individuals with disabilities and seniors when boarding.

Boarding passengers quickly and as safely as possible is the top priority during ingress/egress. To this end, the following guidelines should be followed:

- Front doors must be used to board passengers.
- Once the buses are loaded to capacity they must immediately depart in service.
- If a bus is not loaded to capacity, but reaches a dwell time of 10 minutes, it must depart in service.
- Special Event Staff and Managers shall assist with directing passengers to the correct boarding location(s).
- All passenger counts must be as accurate as possible. Counting passengers shall in no way interfere with the efficient boarding of passengers.
- Ensure employee have made all necessary preparations (i.e., destination sign change, paperwork organization, etc.) prior to their bus being instructed to depart.

On rare occasions, a special event may be so large that it will require "all available buses" to assist. When this occurs, the manager will send a text message to the entire fleet instructing Employee, that if they are available, to report to a specific location to assist. Employee will be exempt from this order if he/she is (1) already working an assignment, (2) is close to beginning an assignment, or (3) is close to, or has exceeded 14 hours of work for the day. In many cases, the Employee will be needed only for one trip. Fatigued employee will not be required to work in this case.

### **SOP 8.02 – Safety and Security**

#### **PURPOSE**

This SOP provides guidance to the manager for special event-related security and safety issues.

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- Employee must wear complete, neat, pressed uniforms and be properly groomed as defined in Section II, Uniform and Grooming of the Manual.
- Employee who are assigned to Special Event service shall be instructed on the route of service and where the bus stop(s) are located for the service prior to the start of service.
- Managers are responsible for properly setting the destination on their vehicle's head sign. The only time that "Out of Service" is to be displayed is during deadhead to and from the garage.
- All employees shall maintain a constant state of readiness while awaiting instructions. Leaving the vehicle is prohibited, unless instructed otherwise by a manager.
- To maintain a constant state of readiness buses must have their engine running during times of potential departure.
- Employee must be prepared for sudden assignment changes.
- Employee must correctly account for mileage, trips, and boardings.
- Employee are prohibited from placing their personal belongings and/or other items anywhere other than the designated overhead compartment (this includes but is not limited to the dashboard, atop the right front wheel well, behind the Employee seat, behind the fare box, etc.)
- Employee must notify the dispatcher and/or manager GCTD radio prior to and upon returning from all restroom breaks.
- Employee must always wear seatbelt while driving GCTD vehicles.
- Employee must ensure they are at the correct drop-off location before unloading passengers. They should contact the Dispatcher if uncertain.
- Employee are prohibited from exceeding 5 mph within park-and-ride lots, parking lots, and transit center roadways.
- Employee must report any unsafe conditions or hazards immediately to the Manager in charge of the location and/or the Dispatcher.
- Employee' use of cellular phones is strictly prohibited while in service.
- Employee must make sure to communicate clearly and professionally GCTD the radio. Employee must be prepared to provide a location and direction of travel if asked by any Manager staff.
- Employee must exercise EXTREME CAUTION when traveling through a dedicated bus lane. Employee must watch for slower vehicles illegally merging into the lane or making right turns from adjacent lane in front of buses.



# Manager Standard Operating Procedures

## **SOP 9.02 – Flash Flood Warning**

### PURPOSE

This SOP explains GCTDs planned response for a flash flood warning, to which the managers play an important role. Specific procedures must be followed if a Flash Flood Warning is announced for Brazoria and Galveston Counties.

### PROCEDURE

A Flash Flood Warning will be issued when a flash flood is imminent or occurring in the warning area. A flash flood is a sudden, violent flood after a heavy rain, or occasionally after a dam break. Most flash floods occur when there is a heavy amount of precipitation falling in an area and that water is then channeled through streams or narrow gullies. Flash floods may take minutes or hours to develop. It is possible to experience a flash flood without witnessing any rain.

If a Flash Flood Warning is in effect for Brazoria and Galveston Counties, the Manager is to implement the following procedures:

- Make sure your vehicle is fueled up and is in good operating order.
- Determine who the Incident Commander is. The purpose of the Incident Commander is to have one person coordinating all activities related to the event, to provide information to internal stakeholders, to allocate additional resources as needed.
- Assist employee who have stopped their buses because they cannot proceed.
- Monitor areas that are known to flood. Report locations that are flooded to Incident Commander and place affected areas on detour.
- Avoid sending messages to employee, it is preferred that they receive updates from the Dispatchers.
- Monitor weather updates, and update dispatchers, managers, and employees as needed.
- Inform the dispatch Incident Commander if severe weather/flooding/detouring is occurring; and
- Work schedules may be adjusted depending upon company needs.

If a Flash Flood Warning is issued, all personnel may be placed on standby, meaning they may be summoned to report to work.

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- Winter Storm Outlook – Winter storm conditions are possible in the next 2 to 5 days.
- Winter Weather Advisory – Winter weather conditions are expected to cause significant inconveniences and may be hazardous. When caution is used, these situations should not be life threatening.
- Winter Storm Watch - Winter storm conditions are possible within the next 36 to 48 hours. People in a watch area should review their winter storm plans and stay informed about weather conditions.
- Winter Storm Warning – Life-threatening, severe winter conditions have begun or will begin within 24 hours. People in a warning area should take precautions immediately.

If working outdoors during a winter storm, follow these guidelines:

- Dress in several layers of lightweight clothing, wear gloves or mittens, and a hat that covers your ears.
- Wear waterproof insulated boots to keep your feet warm and dry and to maintain your footing in ice and snow.
- Be alert for signs of frostbite and hypothermia, two dangerous and life- threatening emergencies.
- Consider your physical condition when performing strenuous tasks in cold temperatures.
- If driving, be observant for hazards such as disabled vehicles, icy road conditions, hills, and pedestrians. Also, lower your support vehicle's speed.

### **SOP 9.05 – Extreme Wind/Tornados**

#### PURPOSE

This SOP provides guidance to the manager when on duty and out in the field during a tornado or high winds.

#### PROCEDURE

A tornado is a violently rotating column of air extending from the base of a thunderstorm down to the ground. Tornado intensities are classified on the Fujita Scale with ratings between F0 (weakest) to F5 (strongest).



# Manager Standard Operating Procedures

## Section 10 – Emergencies

### SOP 10.01 – Bomb Threat

#### PURPOSE

This SOP provides guidance to the manager when involved in a phoned-in threat including, but not limited to, a bomb threat.

#### PROCEDURE

Most threats are received by phone, but all threats are serious until proven otherwise. Act quickly but remain calm and obtain as much information as possible.

For threats received by phone, follow these guidelines:

1. Remain calm and keep the caller on the line for as long as possible. DO NOT hang up, even if the caller does.
2. Listen carefully. Be polite and show interest.
3. Try to keep the caller talking to learn more information.
4. If possible, write a note to a co-worker to call the Dispatcher so authorities can be notified. If a co-worker cannot help, as soon as the caller hangs, up, immediately notify them yourself.
5. If your phone has a caller ID display, write down the incoming phone number.
6. Write down as many details as you can remember. Try to get exact words. Take note of such things as the caller's voice (accent, demeanor, slow, rapid, etc.) and background noises (animals, street noises, music, etc.).
7. Immediately upon termination of the call, do not hang up. From another phone, call the Dispatcher and await instructions.

For threats received by a handwritten note, follow these guidelines:

1. Contact the dispatcher immediately and await instructions.
2. Handle the note as minimally as possible.

For threats received by email, follow these guidelines:

1. Contact the dispatcher immediately and await instructions.
2. Do not delete the email.

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Suspicious substances can include fine powder, residue, fog, mist, oily liquid, or odor with no identifiable or explainable source. It is also based upon two or more people showing similar signs of distress or physical reaction. Not all powders or liquids are suspicious substances. And not every sick person is a victim of an attack or release.

Signs of a suspicious substance include:

- An unexplainable or pungent odor.
- A suspicious package emitting a vapor or odor.
- Abandoned or out-of-place aerosol or manual spray devices.
- A broken bag, envelope, bottle, light bulb, or other potential dissemination device that has residue or a threatening note attached.
- A cloud, mist, fog, fine powder, dust, liquid, or oily residue with no explainable source.
- Two or more people having trouble breathing, uncontrollable coughing, collapse, seizure, nausea, blurred vision or disorientation; and
- Small animals such as birds appear to be dead or dying in the area.

Appropriate responses to the signs of a suspicious substance should include:

- DO NOT touch, move, or cover the substance or object.
- Remain calm and evacuate everyone from the affected area.
- Shut down HVAC systems to avoid spreading contamination.
- Avoid contamination by isolating and securing the area.
- Attempt to move people uphill and upwind from the area; and
- Report the situation to the Dispatcher including your location, the number of victims and a description of the substance and/or any symptoms displayed by victims.

Routes of exposure can include entry into the body through:

- Absorption: through the skin or eyes.
- Injection: through broken or punctured skin.
- Ingestion: through the mouth; and
- Inhalation: breathing in through the mouth or nose.

### **SOP 10.03 – Hazardous Material Incidents**

## Manager Standard Operating Procedures

Upon notification, the dispatcher will send to the scene a manager, maintenance personnel as necessary. If necessary, emergency responders will be notified. The manager shall prepare an Incident Report that will include what spilled, when it was spilled, how much spilled, cause of spill, what environment was affected, what was the response action, who responded (including outside agency) and who took pictures.

Notifications will require the Dispatcher to have the following information from personnel at the scene:

- Exact location of where the bus is at
- How much fluid is leaking (drip every few seconds, steady stream, pouring/gushing out, etc.)
- Description of fluid (color, smell, etc.)

### **SOP 10.04 – Fire in Bus Yard**

#### PURPOSE

This SOP guides the manager to appropriate action if responding to a fire in the bus yard.

#### PROCEDURE

If a fire is detected in the yard, the manager must inform the dispatcher. Be prepared to provide an exact location of where the fire is located, any immediate dangers. Activate the nearest fire alarm if necessary; assist with evacuation if needed.

The dispatcher will contact the fire department; the manager shall coordinate with first responder entrance into the yard/property.

The manager may be needed to move buses/vehicles in the yard and/or serve as a liaison to Unified Command (if activated).

### **SOP 10.05 – Emergency Medical Procedures**

#### PURPOSE

This SOP explains the manager's role in responding to a medical situation on, or near, the bus.

# Manager Standard Operating Procedures

## **SOP 10.07 – Shooting/Violent Incident on Bus**

### PURPOSE

This SOP provides direction to the manager in response to a shooting, or other violent incident, on a GCTD bus.

### PROCEDURE

In response to a shooting, or other violent incident, on a GCTD bus, the manager's safety is of utmost importance. **DO NOT BE A HERO!**

Upon direction from the dispatcher, and in coordination with law enforcement, a manager will be designated as the Incident Manager. The Incident Manager is responsible at the scene to provide updates to the Incident Dispatcher; request additional resources (manager, maintenance personnel, etc.), assist the employee, passengers, and emergency responders, ensure detours are established, and ensure service disruptions are minimized. Due to the sensitive nature of the situation, updates to the dispatcher shall be made GCTD telephone, not handheld radio.

Upon arrival at the scene, the Incident manager shall provide an initial update to the Incident dispatcher. At a minimum, updates should be provided every 15 minutes until the incident is cleared.

If the manager arrives at the scene before law enforcement, but the threat has dissipated, the manager should provide a suspect description to the Dispatcher consisting of the following:

- Time the incident occurred.
- Number of suspects
- Sex, race, and approximate age
- Height and weight
- Clothing description
- Distinguishing features (beard, tattoo, scars, etc.)
- Weapon (if any)
- Direction in which suspect(s) departed.
- Method of travel (on foot, auto, etc.)
- Vehicle description (make, model, year, color, and license plate number).

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- Do not touch sink or faucet with bare hands – use towel to shut off faucet.
- Avoid hand-to-face contact.
- Handle trash carefully:
  - Assume any bag may contain a needle or other sharp object.
  - Never use hands or unprotected skin to compact or crush trash bags.
  - Never hold trash bags close to the body.
  - Keep loads in trash bag light to avoid bag breakage and back injury.
- Maintain barrier protection:
  - Keep a barrier between yourself and the contaminated material.
  - If someone is bleeding, hand him/her a bandage or towel.
  - If available, wear disposable gloves.
  - Bandage your cuts before putting on gloves.
  - Unbroken skin is a barrier against bloodborne pathogens. However, infected blood can enter through any cuts, abrasions, or damaged skin.
  - Depending on the situation, use the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)
    - Latex, vinyl, or nitrile gloves
    - Goggles or face shields
    - Face masks or respirators
    - Protective gowns, coveralls, or aprons
    - Boots or shoe covers
  - When using PPE, check for damage before use. DO NOT use damaged PPE. Stop any activity that could lead to exposure until PPE is available.
  - Roll gloves inside out when removing them to prevent touching contaminated surface.
  - If clothing is contaminated, attempt to remove without skin contact; if removing a shirt, do not pull it over the head as it could expose the mouth, nose or eyes; use surgical scissors to cut clothing off if necessary.
  - If donning multiple PPE items, the most contaminated PPE item (usually the gloves) should be removed first.
  - Remove PPE before leaving work area to prevent cross-contamination.
  - Properly dispose of used PPE in the nearest receptacle.
  - Wash hands and exposed skin immediately after removing PPE. Hand-washing is an important transition from one activity to another. Hands should be washed immediately after removing gloves.



# Manager Standard Operating Procedures

## PROCEDURE

Each person in the chain-of-command has the authority to shutdown service within their sphere of influence due to extreme safety concerns. This authority shall be exercised with extreme caution and deliberation with the primary concern being the safety of life and property as the foremost considerations. Examples of justified reasons to shutdown service include extreme weather, natural disasters, or criminal activity or threats. If the manager shuts down service on a particular street or in a neighborhood or larger area, communication of the decision must be made immediately to the Dispatcher. In turn, the Dispatcher will broadcast the decision up the chain of command and requested resources will be sent to support the manager. A decision to shut down the entire GCTD system will be made by the Director and/or Executive Director (who has a view of the big picture) or person of higher authority.