



**EERC**

ENVIRONMENTAL &  
ECONOMIC RESOURCE  
CENTRE

# HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

## **Background**

The Human Resource Management Policy of the ENVIRONMENTAL AND ECONOMIC RESOURCE CENTRE (EERC) hereinafter refers as the Human Resource (HR) Policy represents the basic rules and procedures for staff management and administration within the Organization.

The policy also incorporates rules, regulations, and guidelines, which are fundamental to the Human Resource Management. The document states in clear terms policies that apply to all employees of EERC regardless of position and category of employment. The policy is designed to serve the best interest of both the employer (EERC) and its employees.

The Finance and Administration Department will own the responsibility for making the policy available to all the employees for reference purposes and provide all necessary clarifications and interpretations, from time to time, and when required. If any employee has any question concerning the applicability of a policy or procedure, he/she should address the specific questions to the Finance and Administration Department.

The policies and procedures described here may be altered, modified, or discontinued as well as new policies and procedures may be introduced from time to time as required by the organization. Any such amendment will be communicated to the employees and incorporated in the Primer. Such amendment(s) will be effective from the date of communication to employees.

Where an employee feels that any policy needs to be amended, he/she may submit a request to the Finance and Administration Department with proper reference to law and/or rationale for consideration. The Governing Body and the Management may consider the appropriateness of the request and will take action accordingly depending upon the circumstances considering the practical aspects. This is aimed at promoting the image of the Organization and ensuring effective work-life balance among the staff.

## **Finance and Admin. Department**

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Legal Status

Environmental and Economic Resource Centre (EERC) is a legal non-profit Scientific Research Center focusing on sustainable practices and development in agriculture, environment, and natural resources in Africa. EERC is based in Nigeria with regional offices across the West, East, North and Central Africa. The Organization works in partnership with governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector to develop scalable agricultural and environmental management practices with real impact on poverty reduction, food security, ecosystem health, conservation, and livelihood development. EERC is registered in Nigeria with Corporate Affairs Commission with the registration number: CAC/IT/124060.

### 1.2 Objectives of the organization

1. Agriculture Development and Environmental Management.
2. Natural Resource Management.
3. Livelihood and Economic Development.
4. Human Resource and Capacity Building.

### 1.3 Organization Work Environment

EERC maintains an inclusive working environment that encourages initiative and drive and promotes enjoyment and satisfaction at work.

EERC enables its employees to work effectively and successfully for the organization and supports its employees' development.

## CHAPTER 2: TERMS & DEFINITIONS

The definitions of terms used in this Policy document are hereby discussed below:

<b>Organization:</b>	Environmental and Economic Resource Centre with an acronym of EERC
<b>Management:</b>	refers to either the Governing Body, the Executive Director or respective Regional offices' managers, depending on the context of use.
<b>Branch Office:</b>	refers to the regional offices of EERC spread across the West, East, North South and Central Africa including the field offices within the respective host countries.
<b>Concerned Employee:</b>	refers to an employee to whom the rules and procedures being discussed in this policy applies.

<b>Salary:</b>	refers to basic payment and allowances payable to staff on monthly basis based on individual contract terms or otherwise subject to terms of engagement.
<b>Employee:</b>	refers to staff of EERC engaged by a contract under a fixed term or temporary appointment.
<b>Fixed Term:</b>	engagement of employee by EERC under a contract agreement for a minimum of 12 months or more.
<b>Temporary Appointment:</b>	engagement of employee by EERC under a contract agreement for at least 3 months but not up to twelve (12) months.
<b>Consultant:</b>	refers to professional individual or firm engaged by EERC under a specific or defined term of contract.
<b>Probation Period:</b>	refers to a 6-month period under which a freshly employed individual is placed under watch and coaching
<b>Financial Year:</b>	the accounting year of EERC, which covers a period of 12 months and usually from January to December. However, the month constituting financial year for different purposes will be determined by the Finance and Administration Department.
<b>Employee Record:</b>	refers to the separate files maintained for each of the employees by the Finance and Administration Department in order to preserve all the records regarding such employee.
<b>Supervisors/ Line Manager:</b>	refers to the immediate superior of such employee who has the authority to supervise and delegate responsibility to the employee and to whom the employee is accountable for performance of such responsibility
<b>Project Head:</b>	any qualified staff whose name is registered with the donor as the main contact person on a specific project per time.
<b>Service Period:</b>	refers to the active period of duty of an employee with EERC and includes authorized and approved leaves and holidays but excludes unauthorized or unapproved leaves and absences.
<b>Regular Staff:</b>	regular staff is the one who is employed by EERC under a fixed term contract, after satisfactory completion of the probation period. Staff engaged under a fixed-term contract are eligible to allowances and pension services being operated by the Organization.

**Temporary Staff:**

a temporary employee is the one employed by EERC under a temporary appointment for a specific task to be completed within a short period of time

## **CHAPTER 3: TYPES & CATEGORIES OF ENGAGEMENT**

### **3.1 Classification of Engagement**

The employees of EERC are classified into either regular staff or temporary staff. The classification shall be based on the terms of the contract of engagement.

#### **3.1.1 Regular**

An individual employed either as a permanent staff or by contractual agreement for a specific period of time but not less than 12 months.

#### **3.1.2 Intern/Scholars**

An intern is a relevant individual engaged by EERC as an upcoming professional and is paid an allowance during the period of training.

#### **3.1.3 Volunteers**

A volunteers shall be any individual with personal expressed interest to work with EERC purposely to gain knowledge and for capacity building. Volunteers may or may not be paid by EERC.

#### **3.1.4 Casual Employee**

A casual employee is one who is employed in EERC for a service of casual nature

### **3.2 Categories of Employment**

Employees of EERC have been divided into the following categories based on the level, job responsibility, and authority of the work. EERC will specifically mention the category under which any new employee is hired in his/her respective appointment letter.

#### **3.2.1 Executive Staff**

Employees who are in any managerial or administrative capacity or are engaged in management of the affairs of EERC fall under this category.

#### **3.2.2 Program Staff**

Employees who are required to perform any skilled, professional and or technical work or services



## **CHAPTER 4: EMPLOYMENT STATUS**

EERC is committed to execute its programs in a way that ensures compliance with legal requirements as well as conformity to ethical and moral values. In order to implement this philosophy into practice, EERC has adopted the following policies. These policies will be pursued by the organization while recruiting as well as during the employment period of an employee with EERC.

### **4.1 Legal Compliance**

EERC will comply with all the laws and regulations of the land that applies to it without any exception. It will also comply with all donor rules and regulations that apply to its operation.

4.1.1 The Human Resource (HR) Unit of EERC will always be attentive and up-to-date regarding any new law or regulation or changes in any law or regulation that applies to it. As soon as any such incident occurs, the Governing Body and the management will take immediate initiative to make necessary changes in its policies and practices and inform all the relevant parties.

### **4.2 Ethical Business Practice**

4.2.1 In practicing ethical conscience and discipline in its operation, EERC will comply with legal requirements to fulfill its responsibility to all its stakeholders.

4.2.2 To build up a motivated and dependable workforce, EERC pursues to provide additional facilities beyond the minimum requirement of laws that offer human work conditions and environment for its employees.

### **4.3 Equal Employment Opportunity**

EERC is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to all employees and applicants for employment without giving regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, place of origin, ethnic origin, ancestry, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, financial ability, or any social forms of classifications.

4.3.1 It will ensure equal opportunity to every person except in cases where such characteristics are a bona fide occupational qualification.

4.3.2 Employment equality will be ensured regarding all terms and conditions of employment, including hiring, placement, benefits, facilities, promotion, transfer, leaves, training, and separation from employment

### **4.4 Prohibition of Child & Adolescent Labor**

4.4.1 EERC will not employ any child or adolescent to work in any occupation under any circumstances. A child in this regard is defined as any person who has not attained the age of 14 years. An adolescent in this regard is defined as any person who has attained the age of 14 years but has not attained the age of 18 years.

4.4.2 To implement this policy effectively, EERC will acquire proof of age of candidates in the manner prescribed above before employing them and preserve a copy of it.

#### 4.5 Staff Remuneration

EERC salary rates are commensurate with staff academic qualifications, experience, skills, and roles. The table below presents the recommended salary rate as approved by the EERC Governing Body.

N	Salary Classification	Expected qualifications	Salary Rate
1	At least 5 years of post-University degree experience relevant to the role applied. Employees with up to 10 years post-University degree of relevant experience may be considered for the Master's degree salary scale.	Degree	300 – 500 USD
2	At least 5 years of post-master's degree experience relevant to the role applied. Employees with up to 10 years post-master's degree of relevant experience may be considered for the Doctoral degree salary scale.	Masters' Degree	500 – 750 USD
3	At least 5 years of post-doctoral degree experience relevant to the role applied. Employees with up to 10 years post-doctoral degree of relevant experience may be considered for the post-doctoral holder salary scale.	Doctoral Degree	750 – 1000 USD
4	The employee should be able to demonstrate an ability to independently lead and conduct high-quality research	Postdoctoral Holder	1,000 – 1,500 USD

All payments are made in the local currency at the prevailing average official rate of the country in which the employee is engaged. Payment is exclusive of benefits and other allowances. **Expatriate staff, however, will be paid in USD.**

The hiring team led by the Human Resource Officer shall conduct a critical review of staff's educational qualifications, skills, and capacities to ensure that an appropriate remuneration package is assigned to a new or existing employee when due.

#### 4.6 Benefits

In addition to staff's respective monthly salary, EERC provides benefits to staff based on terms of engagement.

- 4.6.1 Regular staff with a fixed-term contract of a minimum of 5 years are entitled to the EERC pension scheme.
- 4.6.2 Regular staff of less than 5 years' contract is subject to severance pay of an extra monthly salary per contract year.
- 4.6.3 Regular staff shall be entitled to a basic health insurance package throughout the period of their engagement.
- 4.6.4 Staff deployed to work outside the EERC head office will be entitled to a lump sum allowance of 250 USD or its equivalent per annum for accommodation, transport, and calls. This payment is however subject to funding agreement with donors or ongoing project.
- 4.6.5 Staff shall be entitled to an annual bonus of between 10 and 15 percent of their monthly salary or as approved by the Executive Director.
- 4.6.6 Staff engaged under a fixed term contract shall be entitled to step increase in annual base salary provided he/she meets the requirement outlined under Section 9.1.3 of this policy.

#### **4.7 Prohibition of Forced Labor**

Forced Labor is defined as any work or service which is extracted from any person under the threat of penalty for its non-performance and for which the employee does not offer himself voluntarily. Forced or involuntary labor includes physical coercion, punishment, threats, undue influence, debt bondage, etc.

- 4.7.1 EERC will not use forced or involuntary labor of any kind. To ensure that this policy is properly implemented, EERC will conduct the following actions.
- 4.7.2 It will not force or influence any potential employee to join the company. It will also allow any employee to dissociate himself/herself from employment at any time as per own will, according to the prescribed separation policies.
- 4.7.3 It will acquire prior consent from its employees before utilizing them to work any overtime. If any employee denies working overtime, EERC will under no circumstances force him/her to do so.

#### **4.8 Prohibition of Harassment and Abuse**

EERC is committed to fostering a safe, pleasant, and supportive work environment where all individuals are treated with respect, professionalism, and courtesy. It prohibits any kind of harassment or abuse to any of its employees by any fellow employee or by any policies, rules, procedures, or practices of its own.

EERC recognizes that sexual or any other harassment or abuse is a serious offense. It ensures that such activities will not be tolerated and appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken against the perpetrator.

#### **4.8.1 Harassment or Abuse to Any Person Includes**

1. Corporal punishment or physical discipline Strip search.
2. Verbal treat.
3. Withdrawal of basic privileges.
4. Misbehavior such as yelling or insulting a fellow employee.

#### **4.8.2 Requests of Sexual Favor in Exchange of Actual or Promised Job Benefits.**

1. Coerced sexual acts.
2. Unwelcome sexual advances.
3. Sexual gestures.
4. Language considered inappropriate by the person it is aimed at.
5. Comments on clothing or physical appearance.
6. Unwelcome leering.
7. Whistling.
8. Teasing etc.

4.8.3 If any employee is exposed to any such harassment or abuse he/she has the right to complain to the EERC authority through the prescribed grievance procedure and seek redress.

4.8.4 If EERC gets any complaint from any of its employees in this regard, it will conduct a proper investigation. It ensures that all allegations will be considered seriously, investigated objectively, and responded appropriately, irrespective of the accused person.

4.8.5 If any accused employee is found to be guilty of such conduct, EERC will take appropriate disciplinary actions immediately in compliance with the law.

#### **4.9 Prohibition of Nepotism**

EERC intends to avoid situations that create a conflict of interest or favoritism.

4.9.1 It will not employ anyone in a position where he/she might have a reporting or supervising relationship with an immediate family member, close relative, or someone with a dating relationship.

4.9.2 If employees of EERC who have reporting or supervising relationships among themselves engage in a dating relationship or become immediate family members or close relatives, such employees are obligated to formally inform the management and HR and Administration Department about the relationship.

4.9.3 EERC reserves the right to move any employee having a familiar or dating relationship with any other employee with a direct reporting relationship to any suitable position to eliminate the conflict of interest.

#### **4.10 Prohibition to Employ Any Person Charged with Felony**

EERC will not employ any person who is or has been charged or convicted for any criminal offense, even if he/she has served the sentence. However, this will not apply in case of convictions for minor charges which does not pose a risk to the organization.

Employees will be required to sign a Declaration Form while joining, which requires a declaration regarding whether he/she is or has been charged or convicted for any criminal offense.

### **CHAPTER 5: CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT**

#### **5.1 Working Hours**

The regular office hours for EERC are 8:00 am to 4:00 pm from Mondays to Fridays. The operational hours for every employee will be eight (8) hours to fulfill the 40 hours' requirements per week.

#### **5.2 Employee ID Cards**

EERC will provide each of its employees with ID cards embedded with a unique employee ID number, at its own cost at the time of their employment. The responsibility of issuing ID Cards lies on the EERC authority.

5.2.1 Every employee must wear an ID card during his/her stay on the premises.

5.2.2 If an employee loses his/her ID card, he/she must immediately inform the EERC authority.

5.2.3 If an employee damages his/her ID card, he/she must immediately inform the authorities and apply for a new ID card via e-mail. He/she will also have to submit the damaged card to the Human Resources Unit.

### **CHAPTER 6: ATTENDANCE POLICY**

The primary record attendance is to be filled by EERC employees. It should be used to record all information regarding attendance which includes Arrival time, Departure time, early leave, overtime, etc.

6.0.1 An employee will be considered late for work on a day if he/she fails to reach own workplace and record his attendance within 30 minutes from the start of the regular office time.

6.0.2 If an employee arrives late at work beyond 30 minutes for 3 days in a month, it will be treated as one day's absence and will be deducted from his/her annual leave.

## **CHAPTER 7: HOLIDAY POLICY**

### **7.1 Festival holidays**

EERC will follow the Government Holiday Calendar for festival holidays.

### **7.2 National holidays**

EERC shall observe the national holidays (NOT optional holidays) as declared by the Government.

## **CHAPTER 8: LEAVE POLICY**

The employees of EERC will be entitled to the following leaves -

1. Sick Leave
2. Annual Leave
3. Maternity Leave (if any)
4. Paternity leave (if any)

### **8.1 Leave Approval Authority:**

Any leave of an employee will have to be approved by the proper authority. The authority to approve leave of any employee lies on the respective Department Heads. The authority to approve leave of Department Heads will lie upon the Executive Director. The authority to approve the leave of the Executive Director will lie upon the Chairman. The respective Supervisor will recommend the leave and Executive Director will approve the leave.

An employee who remains absent for any period over the period of leave originally sanctioned or subsequently extended will be liable to disciplinary action unless he/she can satisfactorily explain his/her overstay to the authority.

### **8.2 Sick Leave**

1. Every employee will be entitled to sick leave for a maximum of five (5) days in a calendar year with full pay.
2. Unutilized sick leave cannot be carried forward to the succeeding years and accumulated.
3. If an employee requires more than 5 days of sick leave to recover and join work, the additional days of leave required by him/her will be deducted from the respective employee's annual leave (if any left). If sickness continues beyond entitled sick leave and annual leave. The management may allow leave without pay.

### **8.3 Annual leave**

8.3.0 Every employee (except probationer) will be entitled to annual leave according to the following manner, with full pay.

8.3.1 EERC employees enjoy 20 days' mandatory annual leave in a year.

- 8.3.2 An employee willing to avail of annual leave will have to apply one week before the expected date of commencement of such leave.
- 8.3.3 Any other leave (casual leave and sick leave) taken in conjunction with annual leave will be treated as annual leave.
- 8.3.4 The authority will not refuse any application for annual leave of an employee unless there is a requirement of service. If an application for annual leave is refused by the authority for official requirements, such leave shall be carried forward to his/her credit.
- 8.3.5 If an employee wishes to extend his/her annual leave while already enjoying an annual leave period, he/she will have to forward an application via email to the concerned Department Head before the expiry of the leave previously approved. Such an employee can avail of an extended leave only after receiving approval from such authority.
- 8.3.6 Employees are encouraged to take their leave within the period in which it is earned, in so far as is compatible with the requirements of the service.

#### **8.4 Maternity Leave & Benefit**

EERC supports the policy of promoting maternal health during pregnancy and after childbirth.

- 8.4.1 Maternity leave refers to thirty working (30) days of paid maternity leave provided to female employees.
- 8.4.2 Each employee entitled to maternity leave is given the flexibility by EERC to select the time frame of thirty working (30) days around her delivery time that she wants to avail as maternity leave, as per her convenience. However, such an employee has to specify in writing her desired starting date of the leave in the application for leave.
- 8.4.3 A female employee willing to avail of maternity leave will have to apply one month before the expected date of commencement of such leave.

#### **8.5 Paternity Leave**

- 8.5.1 A male employee is entitled to Eight (8) days of paid paternity leave around the date of his childbirth. Any weekly holiday or public holiday falling between the approved paternity leave will be included in calculating the leave period.
- 8.5.2 An employee willing to avail paternity leave will have to apply one week before the expected date of commencement of such leave.

## **8.6 Procedure for Applying for Leave**

The following procedure will be followed by the employees to avail of any entitled leave. This procedure also applies to applications for granting casual and sick leave already availed without prior approval.

**Step 1-:** The concerned employee will apply for leave to his/her Supervisor via email or hardcopy with a copy to the Human Resource Unit. The Supervisor shall then forward the leave application to the Executive Director with his/her recommendation.

The concerned employee will also inform the address where he/she will be staying during the leave applied for, for emergency contact by the organization.

**Step 2-:** The HR and Administration Department will inform the concerned leave approval authority regarding the leave status of the applicant via email.

**Step 3-:** The concerned leave approval authority will decide in consultation with the concerned reporting officer whether to approve/disapprove the applied leave to the concerned employee and inform the concerned employee via email with a copy to the HR and Administration Department.

The concerned leave approval authority may disapprove any leave only on the grounds of the requirement of the service of the concerned employee on the dates for which leave is applied for.

**Step 4-:** The HR and Administration Department will preserve copies of the emails in the personal file of the concerned employee and update the database of leave status.

## **8.7 Recall from Leave**

8.7.1 EERC reserves the right to call back an employee from any leave availed for any official exigency such as sudden illness of any key employee, national emergency, workload, etc.

8.7.2 EERC will not take undue advantage of this option and will make every possible effort to avoid such call back from leave.

8.7.3 In cases where an employee is called back from leave, he/she will be provided with the remaining days of originally approved leave as soon as the official exigency is resolved.

## **CHAPTER 9: PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL POLICY**

EERC shall ensure the performance appraisal of its employees in a professional manner. While making an appraisal, the management will take into cognizance of the employee's knowledge, punctuality, quality of work, integrity & ethics, pro-activeness, problem-solving skills, communication skills, writing skills, leadership, etc.



## 9.1 Performance Appraisal

The overall performance appraisal for all the employees will be conducted at the end of every service year.

- 9.1.1 The concerned reporting officer will be responsible for evaluating the performance of an employee under his/her supervision. The Department Heads and Project Heads will be evaluated by the Executive Director.
- 9.1.2 The authority will circulate the Performance Appraisal Form to the appraisers in the last month of the service year. After completion of the appraisal, the forms will be forwarded to the Executive Director for review. After completion of the review, the forms will be preserved in respective personnel files.
- 9.1.3 Each staff must work with his/her supervisor to develop annual Work Description Plan (WDP), which must be used to assess the staff performance at the middle and end of the year. Evaluation rating shall range from poor, need improvement, fair, good, and excellent. Any staff member whose overall annual performance is rated below "good" shall forfeit his/her step increase in the subsequent year.
- 9.1.4 Conditions guiding annual step increase for each of the staff category shall vary based on the conditions below:

Staff Category	Conditions for Annual Step Increase
Administrative Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Good annual performance rating by the supervisor.</li><li>2. Good customer service relations feedback as summarized by the 360-evaluation report.</li><li>3. Good ethical conduct.</li></ul>
Program Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Good annual performance rating by the supervisor.</li><li>2. At least one article publication in a paired review journal authored by the employee (not co-authored). Also, the article must be related to any of the EERC research priorities or ongoing projects.</li><li>3. Good ethical conduct</li></ul>

## CHAPTER 10: DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING POLICY

- 10.0.1 EERC is committed to enhancing the capacity and efficiency of its entire staff by way of providing adequate training under Staff Capacity Building Activities (SCBA) to all levels at regular intervals.
- 10.0.2 EERC will organize different formal or informal staff capacity-building training and development activities of varied durations, both within the country and abroad.
- 10.0.3 EERC will organize SCBA on a need basis. SCBA may be targeted to any particular employee or a group of employees. EERC management will conduct a yearly assessment of employee

capacity-building needs and make an annual Staff Capacity Building Plan. The executive director will be responsible for the approval and execution of the plan depending on the fund position.

10.0.4 The first and foremost principle of staff capacity building is to focus on the benefit of the organization. Any SCBA that does not serve the purpose of the organization will not be encouraged or approved.

10.0.5 Staff willing to advance his/her skills or education must secure approval from his/her supervisor and the management before enrolling in such training/programs. Staff must have spent at least two years with EERC before being considered for study programs. Staff intending to enroll in a full study program will be placed on a prorated salary provided the management is pleased with his/her number of days of absence. Contrarily, such a staff member may be advised to resign.

### **10.1 Orientation Program**

EERC will organize a 3 or 4-day orientation program for every newly joined employee. The objective of such orientation will be to make the new employee acquainted with the following:

1. Organization vision, mission, goals, functions, activities, and culture.
2. Policies and procedures.
3. Respective job responsibilities.
4. Reporting officer and colleagues.

## **CHAPTER 11: SEPARATION POLICY**

An employee may be separated from the employment of the EERC through one of the following methods

1. Termination by organization
2. Resignation by employee
3. Discharge
4. Dismissal
5. Retrenchment
6. Retirement
7. Death

### **11.1 Final Settlement Procedure of a Separated Employ**

#### **Step1:**

The separated employee will submit his/her ID card, keys, office stationeries, and other properties provided by EERC to the Human Resources Unit.

He/she will also submit his/her official documents, passwords, etc. to the concerned Department Head.

**Step 2:**

If the concerned employee has no obligation left, the concerned Department Head will send a clearance certificate to the Human Resources Unit via email.

**Step 3:**

After getting clearance from the concerned Department Head, the Human Resources and Administration Department will issue a Final Settlement Memo to the Executive Director.

**Step 4:**

The Executive Director will review the memo, approve it, and forward it to the Accounts Department.

**Step 5:**

The Account Department will make the final payment to the concerned employee within 15 working days of separation.

**Step 6:**

The Human Resource and Administration Department will issue a Certificate of Service at EERC along with a clearance certificate during the final payment to the separated employee.

**CHAPTER 12: DISCIPLINARY CODES.**

EERC puts extreme significance on the discipline of its employees.

12.0.1 If an employee is convicted of any criminal offense, he/she may be dismissed immediately without any prior notice or pay in lieu thereof.

12.0.2 To maintain discipline and control in the organization, EERC will take necessary disciplinary actions against any employee who is found to be guilty of any misconduct.

12.0.3 EERC has divided the type of misconduct of employees into two categories according to their characteristics and severity. Separate procedures of disciplinary actions will be taken for these two categories of misconduct.

12.0.4 In case of issuance of notice, letter, charge sheet, order, or any other related documents of any kind against an employee, such documents will be handed over to the employee personally where possible. If an employee refuses to accept any of such documents, a copy of it will be sent to the address of the employee by registered post. Doing so would be considered as communication of such document to the employee.

12.0.4 In awarding any punishment, the previous record of the concerned employee, the gravity of the misconduct

and his/her achievement and contribution during employment will be considered.

12.0.5 In case of a proceeding involving suspension, the proceeding must be completed within such period so that the period of suspension will not exceed the time given.

### **12.1 Level 1 Misconduct**

1. Absence without authorized leave,
2. Late attendance (late attendance for more than 3 days in a month).
3. Negligence or neglect of work.

### **12.2 Disciplinary Action against Level 1 Misconducts**

**Step:- 1** If an employee conducts the mentioned acts for the first time, the concerned Reporting Officer will give verbal warning to the employee.

**Step:- 2** If the employee conducts the mentioned acts twice, the Reporting Officer will inform the HR and Administration Department. The Human Resource and Administration Department will issue a warning letter to the concerned employee.

A copy of the warning letter will be sent to the concerned Department Head and Executive Director, and another copy will be preserved in the personal file of the employee.

#### **Step:- 3**

1. If the employee conducts these acts more than twice, it will be considered habitual. In such cases, the Reporting Officer will inform the Human Resources Unit.
2. The Human Resource and Administration Department will issue a warning letter on such occurrences.
3. A board will be arranged which will consist of the concerned Department Head, Executive Director, and a representative of the Board of Directors.
4. The Board will fix a date for hearing after 7 days. If the board is not satisfied with the explanation provided by the employee it will decide on any of the following punitive measures as deemed appropriate to be imposed along with the warning letter -
5. Reduction to a lower post, grade, or scale of pay for a period not exceeding one year
6. Withholding of increment for a period not exceeding one year.
7. Suspension for a period of seven days In case of imposition of any penalty, a letter evidencing imposition of such penalty will be issued by EERC to the concerned employee.

#### **Step4**

The Human Resource and Administration Department will preserve such warning letters and Letters of Penalty in the personal file of the respective employee.

### **12.3 Level 2 Misconduct**

Willful insubordination or disobedience, whether alone or as a part of a group, to any lawful or reasonable order of the Superior

1. Theft, misappropriation, fraud, or dishonesty in connection with the EERC's business or property
2. Taking or giving bribes in connection with his/her or any other employment under EERC employee'
3. Habitual breach of any law rule or regulation applicable to the organization
4. Disorderliness, riot, arson, or ransacking of the establishment
5. Falsifying, tampering with, damaging, or causing loss of records.
6. Absence without leave for more than 10 days (discrete or continuous manner, but employee intends to continue employment with EERC)
7. Breach of any rule of employment, conduct, or discipline as stated anywhere in this Primer.

#### **12.4 Disciplinary Actions Against Level 2 Misconducts**

##### **Step 1:**

An employee may be immediately suspended if he/she is involved in any of the misconduct categorized under level 2. A Suspension Letter will be issued against such employee by registered post or by hand delivery or through e-mail. Besides communicating in the conventional method, the order of suspension will be posted on the notice board.

##### **Step 2:**

A panel will be made consisting of the Executive Director, the concerned Department Head, and a representative of the Board of Directors.

1. The panel will make an investigation team whose responsibility would be to investigate the incident in-depth and will provide a fair report based on the facts.
2. The panel will fix a date of hearing on which the investigation team will submit their report and the accused employee will be given a chance to be heard. The hearing date will be fixed giving scope of minimum seven days for investigation and the accused employee to prepare himself/herself.

However, the maximum time limit allowed for investigation will be the time given by the board of directors.

##### **Step 3;**

On the day of the hearing, the accused employee will be enquired based on the investigation report.

1. The accused employee will be given a full chance to present his/her case in own defense. In this process, the accused employee may be guided by a fellow employee of EERC nominated by him/her.
2. If the evidence presented in the hearing is not conclusive, then the judging panel may decide to fix another hearing date in the same process described above.

**Step 4:**

After the hearing, the judge panel will decide whether the accused employee is guilty of the charges or not based on the case presented.

1. If the accused employee is found to be guilty, he/she may be dismissed immediately. The Human Resource and Administration Department will take the necessary steps to carry out the final settlement of the dismissed employee.
2. If the accused employee is found not to be guilty, then the board will withdraw the suspension order and ask him to rejoin his/her duty.

**Step 5:-** A notice of the verdict of the inquiry will be provided to the concerned employee. A notice of verdict will also be posted on the notice board

**Step 6:-** The Human Resource and Administration Department will preserve all the documents related to the proceedings in the personal file of the concerned employee.

**Step7:-**

If the accused employee is found to be not guilty, then he/she will be deemed to have been on duty for the period of suspension and the Human Resource and Administration Department will reimburse the salary adjusted with the subsistence allowance of the concerned employee while payment of next month's salary.

**CHAPTER 13: GRIEVANCE HANDLING PROCEDURE****Step 1:-**

The concerned employee will inform the Executive Director regarding his/her grievances via email with a copy to the Human Resources Unit.

In case of grievance against the Executive Director, the concerned employee will inform the Board of Directors regarding his/her grievances via email with a copy to the Human Resource and Administration Department.

**Step 2:-**

The Executive Director or Board of Directors will start proceedings within 3 days of receiving such complaint to investigate the grievances, consult with the respective Department Head, and take necessary actions.

**Step 3:-**

The Human Resource and Administration Department will record the actions taken and preserve it in the personal file of the concerned employee.

## **CHAPTER 14: HEALTH, SAFETY & SECURITY**

### **14.1.0 Definition of Security**

In the NGO context security is achieved when all staff are safe and perceive themselves as being safe, relative to an assessment of the risks to staff and the organization in a particular location.

NGO security is achieved when organizational assets are safe and when the organization's name and reputation are maintained with a high degree of integrity.

### **14.1 Safety & Security**

14.1.1 EERC's safety and security policy covers the Health and Physical Safety & Security, management, and volunteers. It ensures the safe and secure engagement of the person concerned and the premises & serviceable assets of EERC. This policy will ensure the safe and secured stay and positioning of a person deployed by EERC Health, safety, and security policy

14.1.2 EERC is committed to maintaining a work environment that protects and promotes the health and hygiene of its employees. It also gives high significance and priority to the safety and security of its employees.

14.1.3 The Human Resource and Administration Department will be responsible for maintaining a healthy and safe work environment for the employees by developing, implementing, and administering a Health, Safety, and Security Policy.

14.1.4 The Human Resource and Administration Department will organize periodic awareness and training sessions on the Health, Safety, and Security Policy of the organization, fire safety procedures, drills during an incident of fire, handling of office equipment, hazards of prolonged use of office equipment and other aspects as it deems fit.

14.1.5 If an employee notices anything that poses any danger to the health, safety and security of the employees of EERC, he/she is responsible to inform it to the Human Resource and Administration Department immediately.

14.1.6 Adequate number of first aid boxes will be provided at the premises. The first aid boxes will be readily accessible by the employees during all working hours.

14.1.7 Adequate numbers of fire safety equipment will be provided at the premises. The fire safety equipment will be readily accessible to the employees during all working hours. Fire exits at the premises will be identified and maintained with such exits being appropriately marked.

14.1.8 A visitor will only be permitted to enter the premises after getting approval from the staff with whom he/she wants to meet. The concerned staff will be aware of hospitality and avoid any inconvenience

14.1.9 A specific employee will be identified by the Executive Director and such employee will be vested with the responsibility of opening and closing the office premises and will be

provided with the keys. A set of spare keys will also be maintained at a different safe place identified by the Executive Director. The persons vested with the responsibility of handling the office keys should maintain utmost caution to ensure the safekeeping of the keys.

14.1.10 The Human Resource and Administration Department will be responsible for ensuring that access to various areas of the office premises (except for common facilities) is restricted to only authorized personnel who require such access for their duties. Appropriate access control and other security measures will be installed to prevent unauthorized access to any restricted place.

14.1.11 The IT Department will be responsible for maintaining data backup at a safe off-site location for recovery in the event of a catastrophe. The backup may be kept in electronic or hard copy form as appropriate. However, the IT Department will be responsible for instilling security systems ensuring the safe-keeping and confidentiality of such back-up.

14.1.12 If an employee is required to stay at the office beyond normal working hours for official exigency, he/she will inform the HR and Administration Department ahead. The HR and Administration Department will arrange for an attendant and other required assistance for such events.

14.1.13 Smoking is prohibited in the office premises of EERC except for the respective enclosed office room of an employee with proper ventilation provision. An employee willing to smoke otherwise can do so outside the premises of EERC. If an employee is found to be involved in violation of this policy, disciplinary actions will be taken against him/her.

14.1.14 Drug abuse in or out of the company and the consumption of alcohol before or during the work that might hamper work performance will be treated as violation of company ethics. If an employee is found to be involved in such abuse, disciplinary actions will be taken against him/her.

## **14.2. Safety of EERC's General Committee, Executive Committee, Staff, Volunteers, Interns, Consultants and Beneficiaries**

14.2.1 Ensure that all the EERC staff, volunteers, and other categories of personnel deployed for development programs are provided with safety instruments/gear.

14.2.2 Vehicles used for program implementation should be subjected to the highest scrutiny for safety compliance and to avoid vehicle accidents. Vehicles should be of a recent model year, be licensed, properly maintained, and regularly inspected, and be well equipped with safety instruments like fire ushers, first aid boxes, etc.

14.2.3 While traveling in vehicle or air using a seat belt is mandatory and abides by the security instructions. While traveling in a water boat life jacket must be used. While riding on a motorbike using a helmet is a must.



- 14.2.4 EERC staff/concerned person must not make official travel at night without an emergency. They will not plan any travel in the stormy weather
- 14.2.5 Maintain cooperation with the members of law enforcing authorities, people representatives, and other concerned parties while on duty in field operations.
- 14.2.6 Provide appropriate safety instruments, logistics, and transport for its staff during turmoil situations like civil unrest, Hartal, blockage, etc.

## **CHAPTER 15: DUTIES AND OBLIGATIONS OF EMPLOYEES**

### **15.1 Ethics & Compliance**

Every employee of EERC is obligated to perform their job responsibility sincerely and efficiently in compliance with all the applicable laws, rules, and regulations as well as strong ethical and moral values.

- 15.1.1 It is the duty of every employee to
- 15.1.2 Comply with all the relevant laws, rules, and regulations of the country
- 15.1.3 Conform to and abide by the policies, rules, regulations, and procedures of EERC
- 15.1.4 Observe, comply with and obey all lawful orders and directions related to job responsibility given by the reporting officer and other superiors who has the authority to give such orders and directions
- 15.1.5 Serve the organization honestly and faithfully
- 15.1.6 Refrain from engaging in any kind of corruption, bribery or unethical practices

### **15.2 Confidentiality**

Every employee must conserve all information pertinent to the workplace. An employee cannot disclose to any external or internal person any information known to him/her because of employment with EERC, except if authorized to do so in the course of his/her duties.

Any violation of this policy will be considered as Level 2 Misconduct under the Disciplinary Code and disciplinary action will be taken against such employee accordingly.

## **CHAPTER 16: ATTIRE & GROOMING**

All employees need to project a professional image Attendance and punctuality

Regular attendance and punctuality are vital for the smooth and uninterrupted operation of an organization. Every employee is required to conform to the attendance policy of EERC. Any violation of this policy such as tardiness, unauthorized absence, or failure to report as required will be considered Level 1 or Level 2 Misconduct (as the case may be) under the disciplinary code and disciplinary actions will be taken against such employee accordingly.

### **16.1 While at Work by Being Appropriately Attired.**

- 16.1.1 EERC employees are expected to be neat, clean, and well-groomed while on the job. Clothing must be consistent with the standards of an official environment and must be appropriate to the type of work being performed.
- 16.1.2 EERC is confident that employees will use their best judgment regarding attire and appearance. However, management reserves the right to determine appropriateness.
- 16.1.3 Any employee who is improperly dressed will be counseled or in severe cases may be sent home to change clothes. Continued disregard of this policy may lead to disciplinary actions which may result in termination.

### **16.2 Usage of Office Property**

- 16.2.1 Every employee must use any property that belongs to EERC with due care. An employee should not use any property provided by EERC for personal use unless such property is provided for personal use.
- 16.2.2 An employee cannot take any office property out of the premise unless he/she is authorized to do so.
- 16.2.3 An employee cannot copy any copyright protected software from any of the office computers.
- 16.2.4 An employee cannot copy or delete any software in the office computer.
- 16.2.5 If an employee comes to know about any official or personal property to be missing he/she must report it to the respective Department Head as well as the HR and Administration Department.
- 16.2.6 An employee cannot use office vehicles for personal use. An employee may be allowed to avail office vehicle upon the approval of the Executive Director. However, such an employee will be responsible for reimbursing the fuel cost and other relevant costs as determined by the HR and Administration Department. Moreover, in such cases, utmost care should be taken by the concerned employee to ensure no damage to the vehicle happens.

### **16.3 Electronic Communication & Internet Usage**

The employees should use the internet, company-provided cell phones, and e-mail in an appropriate, ethical, and professional manner.

- 16.3.1 Internet, equipment (cell phone, laptop, computer, etc.), and services provided by EERC should not be used for transmitting, retrieving, or storing any communications of a defamatory, discriminatory, harassing, or pornographic nature.

- 16.3.2 Use of the internet and equipment (cell phones, laptops, computers, etc.) provided by EERC for illegal activities including piracy, cracking, extortion, blackmail, copyright infringement, and unauthorized access is prohibited.
- 16.3.3 Employees must refrain from using any disparaging, abusive, profane, or offensive language in official communications.
- 16.3.3 Employees must refrain from creating, viewing, or displaying materials that might adversely or negatively reflect upon EERC or be contrary to the best interests of EERC.
- 16.3.4 Employees must not use the system in a way that disrupts its use by others. Employees must not send or receive large files that could be saved/transferred via thumb drives. Employees are prohibited from sending or receiving files that are not related to work.
- 16.3.5 Employees should not open suspicious e-mails, pop-ups, or downloads. If faced with any such incident, employees should immediately contact the IT Department.
- 16.3.6 Internal and external e-mails using office e-mail accounts are considered business records and may be subject to discovery in the event of litigation. Employees should be aware of this possibility when sending e-mails within and outside the company.
- 16.3.7 All technology supplied by the EERC-related work records belongs to the company and not to the employee. EERC reserves the right to monitor the use of EERC-supplied technology by any employee. Inappropriate or illegal use or communications may be subject to disciplinary actions which may lead to termination of employment.

#### **16.4 Acceptable Use of Social Media**

- 16.4.1 Employees are prohibited from posting any financial, confidential, sensitive, or proprietary information about EERC or any of its partners, employees, or applicants on any social media.
- 16.4.2 Employees cannot post obscenities, slurs, or personal attacks on any social media that can damage the reputation of EERC or any of its partners, employees, or applicants.
- 16.4.3 When posting on any social media site discussing job-related matters employees must use the disclaimer that the opinions expressed on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent the views of EERC.
- 16.4.4 All communications with donor must be via email with copy to all appropriate staff and management of EERC. Staff are prohibited from using WhatsApp or other personal means of communications to communicate with donors.

#### **16.5 Financial Obligation of Employees**

If an employee causes EERC to be involved in any unnecessary liability using malice or culpable negligence or by failure to observe any law, rules, regulations, or administrative procedure of the organization, he/she will be responsible for making good of such losses.

## **16.6 Prohibited Activities**

Employees are prohibited from engaging in any of the following activities.

- 16.6.1 Associate with any political demonstration or activity or with such other demonstrations and activities that are disruptive to work performance. Employees may exercise the right to vote as a matter of their democratic right
- 16.6.2 Take privilege or immunity of any facility accruing from employment with EERC, to avoid any private obligation or to violate any law or rules and regulations
- 16.6.3 Be absent from duty or leave the station without obtaining prior permission from the reporting officer or without giving prior intimation to the organization
- 16.6.4 Engage in any outside employment, whether remunerative or honorary, without prior approval of the management
- 16.6.5 Pursue or attempt to pursue any political or other outside influence on any fellow employee or management in support of any claim in connection with his/her employment, promotion, increment, transfer, or for any other personal gain
- 16.6.6 Communicate with or make an appearance in any media such as press, radio, or television regarding any affairs related to the organization without prior approval
- 16.6.7 Engage in any activity that is incompatible with the proper discharge of own duties toward the company or which contradicts their obligation of integrity, independence, or impartiality

## **16.7 Involvement in Outside Activities**

- 16.7.1 If an employee wishes to engage in any outside activity (other than activities prescribed above) of a continuous or recurring nature and which does not pose any threat to the interest of EERC or reasonable discharge of own duty, he/she must get approval from the management. If such activity is discrete, the employee does not need to get approval from the management.
- 16.7.2 Providing approval to such activities completely depends on management discretion. However, if such activity is not approved the management will inform the employee of such decision as well as the reasons for such decision.

## APPENDIX I: CODE OF CONDUCT

### INTRODUCTION

Environmental and Economic Resource Centre (EERC) is a non-profit, scientific research organization focusing on sustainable practices and development in agriculture, environment, and natural resources in Africa. EERC is based in Nigeria with regional offices across the West, East, North, and Central Africa. We work in partnership with governments, civil society organizations, and the private sector to develop scalable agricultural and environmental management practices with real impact on poverty reduction, food security, ecosystem health, conservation, and livelihood development. EERC is committed to maintaining maximum standards of ethical conducts among all EERC employees and expects that all staff members act professionally, considering the core values of respect, integrity, modesty, commitment, and excellence while performing their organizational roles and responsibilities. This code of conduct is based on the very vision, mission, and value of EERC. It provides a framework of EERC expectations of employees in several important situations, as well as narrates general descriptions of all the major points mentioned in the document. This primer is a living document, meaning subject to change over time. Its practical value and importance lie in the ability and communication of every person involved with EERC members of the Board, employees, committees, and volunteers in applying these codes in their work.

### CHAPTER 17: CONDUCT OF STAFF MEMBERS

17.0.1 **Work Manner:** By accepting an appointment with EERC all employees agree to work in a responsible, respectful, productive, and dignified manner. All employees must be loyal to the organization and stay active to accomplish the organizational objectives.

17.0.2 **Corrective Measures:** EERC shall use some corrective measures to motivate its staff members to improve their behavior as well as their performance.

#### 17.1 Grounds for Disciplinary Action

Without prejudice to the other provisions contained in these rules, a staff member who commits any or more of the following will be subject to disciplinary action:

17.1.1 Commits a breach of these rules/disciplines contained herein.

17.1.2 Is found to be negligent, inefficient, or corrupt at work and in performing assigned responsibilities.

17.1.3 Contravenes instructions issued to him/her in connection with official work.

17.1.4 Is guilty of any other act of misconduct or insubordination.

17.1.5 Is convicted of a criminal offense by a court.

- 17.1.6 Is engaged, or reasonably suspected of being associated with others engaged in subversive activities and whose retention in service is, therefore, considered prejudicial to national security.
- 17.1.7 Disclose any sensitive information about staff or EERC operations outside the "Need to Know" basis. Need to know in this context refers staff or individual that requires such information to carry out his/her duties.
- 17.1.8 Is habitually absent without leave request or intimation for more than 5 (five) consecutive working days.
- 17.1.9 Is habitually late attendant for a long period (at most 2 weeks).

## **17.2 Anti-Fraud & Corruption Conduct**

Employees are expected to:

- 17.2.1 Act with integrity, honesty, and propriety in all their dealings as an EERC representative and lead by example.
- 17.2.2 Carry out their duties to the best of their ability for the interest of EERC and not take advantage of any situation for personal gain, for themselves, members of their family, or friends.
- 17.2.3 Take the risk of both internal and external fraud seriously and follow systems and procedures designed to prevent or detect fraudulent activities.
- 17.2.4 Secure all passwords, information, documents, money, equipment, etc. in their control which can be stolen or used to perpetrate fraud.
- 17.2.5 As part of its culture, EERC will provide clear routes by which concerns can be raised by both employees and management regarding fraud and corruption and necessary actions against them as per rules.

## **17.3 Staff Relations Conduct**

- 17.3.1 EERC staff members will treat each other with respect, modesty, recognition, and consideration, with special emphasis on gender equality and equality of each other irrespective of sex, faith, identity, status, professional category, and any other criteria. They will communicate and consult with each other openly, honestly, modestly, and collegially and in a manner that assists each of the staff members to fulfill their duties and responsibilities faithfully, effectively and efficiently, and with commitment. If any staff member behaves roughly, rudely, and/or with disrespect, then he/she would be warned by the administration, if necessary, repeatedly. A constant behavior of such kind may set the grounds for dismissal from the organization.
- 17.3.2 EERC staff members should respect the privacy and private lives of other colleagues when dealing with/discussing personal matters/information. All staff members should be

committed to ensuring the fullest possible participation of all staff members irrespective of status and position in planning and implementation of our work. Before making any decision regarding any staff member, if it may impact upon that staff member, an adequate consultation must be done before reaching any conclusion.

#### **17.4 Visitors at Workplace**

Official visitors at the office are allowed, but personal visitors are discouraged. However, occasionally staff may receive personal visitors at the office or a workstation. A staff should make sure that his/her visitor does not disturb the work of others. He/she will be responsible for the conduct of the visitor while the latter is at EERC premises. The staff receiving the visitor (s) both official and personal is responsible for the visitor (s) conduct and to make sure that he/she does not move around in any direction/work stations other than the intended location. The staff members may sometimes need to bring their children to the office. Out of respect for other colleagues, employees are requested to keep this to minimum events. Children should be kept in the presence of their guardians at all times while he/she will be in the office premises.

#### **17.5 Compliance & Obligation**

All staff members of EERC will be responsible for following the primer and cooperating with the admin department and their colleagues in other units for the smooth operation of the office. Any intentional breach of and negligence in observing this primer will be taken very seriously by the management authority and necessary measures or actions will be taken in line with the existing relevant policy primers of EERC. All are encouraged and requested to follow the code of conduct articulated herein and avoid any unpleasant consequences by intentionally or unintentionally violating it.

## EERC POLICY ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

Name of the Employee: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Department/Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature and Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I have received, read, and fully understand all policies, guidelines, and procedures included in the EERC Human Resources Primer.

In particular:

I have read the EERC Safeguarding Policy and I fully understand its contents. I do hereby confirm that I am in complete compliance with all provisions of the policy and that I will continue to observe the spirit of the commitment in all my activities on behalf of EERC. I will comply with the guidelines set out in these policies and understand that failure to do so might result in disciplinary or legal action.