

St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



ST. LAWRENCE-LEWIS BOCES EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

This handbook is produced and distributed for the purpose of providing general guidance regarding rules, regulations, procedures and policy information to the employees of the St. Lawrence-Lewis Counties Board of Cooperative Educational Services. Specific, detailed information may be obtained by contacting the Human Resources Office at 40 West Main Street, Canton, NY, 13617, (phone 315-386-4504; fax 315-386-5289; email HR@sllboces.org) regarding full and complete texts of official policies, laws, rules, regulations, and procedures. This employee handbook does not constitute a contract or a guarantee of continued employment, nor does it in any way supersede any existing legal or contractual rights or obligations. This document and any of the language herein may be amended, modified, or withdrawn at any time at the sole discretion of the BOCES; however, the BOCES will strive to inform employees of significant changes as they occur.

VISION STATEMENT

The St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES is committed to building futures and creating meaningful and successful lives through collaboration and partnerships. Quality, cost-effective programs and services are characterized by leadership, innovation, creativity and flexibility.

MISSION STATEMENT

The St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES mission is to

- Prepare students to become contributing members of their communities;
- Initiate programs in response to emerging needs;
- Encourage the sharing of resources and expertise;
- Provide opportunities for professional growth;
- Include constituents in the decision-making process;
- Provide professional and technical assistance.

THE BOCES CULTURE

The St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES accomplishes its mission by adhering to a set of shared organizational values, prized above all others:

- increasingly **High Expectations** for our programs and our staff;
- a synergistic **Team Orientation** because the whole is always greater than the sum of its parts;
- a focus on **Results** so that no student is left behind;
- an emphasis on **Professional Growth** so that no employee is left behind;
- **Collaboration** that relies on the energy and vision of our educational and community partners; and,
- an **Innovative** approach to everything that we do to ensure that no established practice ever becomes more important than our mission.

BOCES District Superintendent/Executive Officer: Thomas R. Burns

BOCES Board of Education, 2017-2018:

Roger M. Bennett, President
 Dana Smith, Vice President
 Nancy Cappellino
 Michael Davis
 James Lattimer
 Marjorie McCullough
 Shelli Prespare-Weston
 James Young
 John Zeh

The St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES is an equal opportunity employer. It is the policy of the BOCES not to discriminate on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, creed, national origin, disability, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, military or veteran status, in the educational programs or activities which it operates. Furthermore, the BOCES is required to comply with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1991, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the New York State Human Rights Act of 1951, as amended. Information regarding compliance procedures will be provided to any employee upon request.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Vision Statement	1
Mission Statement	1
BOCES Culture	2
Code of Ethics	4
Code of Conduct	4
Anti-Harassment	5
Grievance Procedure	6
Personnel Files	7
Exposure Control Program	7
Jury Leave	8
Family and Medical Leave Act	8
Blood Donation	9
Bone Marrow Donation	9
Screenings for Breast Cancer and Prostate Cancer	9
Break Time for Nursing Mothers	10
Emergency Service Volunteer Leave	10
Military Leave	11
Victims of Domestic Abuse	11
Workers' Compensation	12
COBRA	13
Attendance	13
Flexible Spending Plan	14
Use of BOCES-Owned Property	14
Disposal of BOCES Property	15
Use of Copyrighted Materials	15
Use of Technology Resources	16
Internet Access Enrollment	16
Ordering Goods and Services	17
Employer Non-Elective Contribution	17
Emergency Days	17
Mileage	18
Conferences and Meetings	18
Change of Personal Status	19
Verification of Receipt of Handbook	20

CODE OF ETHICS

Every BOCES employee is subject to Article 18 of the New York State General Municipal Law and must adhere to specified standards of conduct, including the following:

- No employee shall render services to another employer or private interest when such employment or service creates a conflict of interest with, or impairs the proper discharge of, official BOCES duties.
- No employee shall disclose confidential information acquired in the course of employment, except as authorized by BOCES or required by law.
- No employee shall hold any investment when such holding creates a conflict of interest with official BOCES duties.
- No employee shall accept any gift having a value of \$75 or more if it could reasonably be expected that the gift might influence the employee in the performance of his/her BOCES duties.

Ref: Board Policy 5110

CODE OF CONDUCT

In accordance with New York State Education Law, the BOCES has adopted a code of conduct that governs the conduct, dress, and language of its employees while they are on BOCES property and/or engaged in BOCES functions. It should be noted that there are additional, specific prohibitions, both in law and in policy, against impermissible possession of weapons, drugs or tobacco and that violations of these prohibitions may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from employment.

*Ref: Board Policies 2410, 2411, 4550, 5161
Administrative Procedures 2410R, 5160R, 5161R*

ANTI-HARASSMENT

The BOCES affirms its commitment to nondiscrimination and recognizes its responsibility to provide an environment that is free of harassment and intimidation. Therefore, the BOCES prohibits and condemns all forms of harassment on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, disability, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, military or veteran status, by employees, students, volunteers, vendors, contractors, and any other third parties who are observing, participating in, or otherwise engaging in activities subject to the supervision and control of the BOCES.

The BOCES also prohibits and condemns retaliation or any harassment on the basis of an individual's opposition to discrimination or participation in a related harassment investigation or complaint proceeding.

For purposes of this policy, harassment shall mean communication (verbal, written or graphic) and/or physical conduct based on an individual's actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, political affiliation, military or veteran status that:

- Has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or is used as a basis for employment or educational decisions affecting such individual; and/or
- Creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or learning environment; and/or
- Otherwise adversely affects the employment and/or educational opportunities and benefits provided by the BOCES.

The BOCES will promptly investigate all complaints, whether verbal or written, formal or informal, of allegations of harassment based on any of the characteristics described above; and, will promptly take appropriate action to protect individuals from further harassment.

Any employee, student, volunteer, vendor, contractor, or other third party who may be engaged in an activity which is subject to the supervision and control of the BOCES who believes s/he has been a victim of, or who has knowledge of, harassment in the BOCES environment and/or at a program, activity or event under the control and supervision of the BOCES, shall immediately report such alleged harassment to a BOCES counselor or administrator.

Any written complaint (*complaint form*) shall be submitted as follows:

If the complainant is a student, the form should be submitted to the **Assistant Superintendent for Instruction;**

If the complainant is an employee, the form should be submitted to the **Director of Human Resources;**

If the complainant is a volunteer, vendor, or contractor, the form should be submitted to the District Superintendent.

In the event one of the above is the alleged offender, the report shall be directed to one of the other compliance officers.

Upon receipt of a complaint or allegation of harassment, the BOCES will conduct a prompt and thorough investigation and render a determination. If it is determined that a violation of BOCES policy has occurred, immediate corrective action will be taken. If the offending individual is a student, appropriate disciplinary measures will be applied, up to and including suspension, in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and/or policies, including the Code of Conduct. If the offending individual is an employee, appropriate disciplinary measures will be applied, up to and including termination of employment, in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, policies, and/or collective bargaining agreements. If the offending individual is a third party, appropriate sanctions will be applied as warranted and in compliance with law. The application of such disciplinary measures or sanctions by the BOCES does not preclude the filing of civil and/or criminal charges relating to the alleged misconduct.

The BOCES prohibits any retaliatory behavior directed against complainants, victims, witnesses, and/or any other individuals who participate in the investigation of a complaint of harassment. Follow-up inquiries shall be made to ensure that harassment has not resumed and that all those involved in the investigation of the harassment complaint have not suffered retaliation.

*Ref: Board Policies 2420, 5120, 5121, 5170
Administrative Procedures 2420R, 5121R, 5170R
Forms EER DHCF2420F (Complaint Form),
EER WCRA.10 (Reasonable Accommodation
Application)*

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

In accordance with Article 15-C of New York State General Municipal Law, the BOCES has adopted a grievance procedure for all employees not covered by a collective bargaining agreement. Under this procedure, an employee alleging a violation, misinterpretation, or inequitable application of existing laws, rules,

procedures, regulations, administrative orders, or work rules of the BOCES, may institute a grievance. Excluded from the definition of grievance are alleged violations involving rate of compensation, benefits, or disciplinary actions that are otherwise reviewable pursuant to law or any provision having the force and effect of law.

*Ref: Board Policy 5170
Administrative Procedure 5170R
Form EER 5170F (Grievance Form – Non-Union)*

PERSONNEL FILES

A personnel file for each BOCES employee shall be maintained in the Office of Human Resources. All personnel files are confidential and available only to the individual employee or to the BOCES administration and/or Board on a need-to-know basis.

Employees wishing to view their own files may make an appointment by contacting the **HR** Office at least one day prior to the desired appointment time. Copies of any personnel file materials may be obtained during the scheduled appointment.

*Ref: Board Policy 5220
Administrative Procedure 5220R*

EXPOSURE CONTROL PROGRAM

All employees are entitled to receive training designed to prevent and control exposure to harmful substances or pathogens in the workplace, and such training will be provided annually to all regular employees.

Any employee who wishes to receive prior notification of anticipated pesticide application must register with the BOCES Director of Facilities in Canton, 386-4504, extension 10278.

*Ref: Board Policy 4541, 4560
Administrative Procedures 4541R, 4560R*

JURY DUTY

Jury duty shall constitute a legal reason for absence without loss of accrued leave time or pay.

Ref: Board Policy 5250

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

In accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, the BOCES is required to provide up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for certain family and medical reasons. Employees are eligible if they have been employed for at least one year and for twelve hundred and fifty (1,250) hours over the previous twelve-month period. For purposes of this Act, a twelve-month period is defined by the BOCES as July 1st through June 30th.

This leave will be granted for any of the following reasons: to care for the employee's child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care; to care for the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; for a serious health condition that renders the employee unable to perform the employee's job; or, because of any qualifying exigency* arising out of the fact that the spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee is on active duty, or has been notified of an impending call to active duty status, in support of a contingency operation.

*The U.S. Secretary of Labor will define the term 'qualifying exigency'; pending such determination, the BOCES will make every effort to provide this type of leave to eligible employees.

Further, an eligible employee who is the spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin (defined as the nearest blood relative of that individual) of a covered service member who is recovering from a serious illness or injury sustained in the line of duty while on active duty is entitled to up to twenty-six (26) weeks of leave in a single twelve-month period to care for the service member. This military caregiver leave is available during a single twelve-month period during which an eligible employee is entitled to a combined total of twenty-six (26) weeks of all types of FMLA leave.

For the duration of FMLA-qualifying leave, healthcare coverage will be maintained by the BOCES to the same extent as that provided prior to the commencement of the leave.

*Ref: Board Policy 5340
Administrative Procedure 5340R
Form EER 5340F (Request for FMLA Leave)
Guideline EER 5340G (FMLA Fact Sheet)*

BLOOD DONATION

Employees shall be granted three (3) hours of leave on an annual basis (July 1st through June 30th) for the purpose of donating blood. This leave shall be paid leave and shall not be charged against any other leave to which the employee is entitled.

Ref: Board Policy 5550

BONE MARROW DONATION

Employees shall be granted up to twenty-four (24) hours of leave, in increments as determined by the attending physician, for the purpose of undergoing a medical procedure to donate bone marrow. This leave shall be paid leave and shall not be charged against any other leave to which the employee is entitled.

Ref: Board Policy 5550

SCREENINGS FOR BREAST CANCER AND PROSTATE CANCER

Employees shall be granted up to four (4) hours of leave on an annual basis (July 1st through June 30th) to undertake a screening for breast cancer; employees shall be granted up to four (4) hours of leave on an annual basis (July 1st through June 30th) to undertake a screening for prostate cancer (i.e., male employees are entitled to a total of eight (8) hours for both screenings). This leave shall be paid leave and shall not be charged against any other leave to which the employee is entitled.

Ref: Board Policy 5550

BREAK TIME FOR NURSING MOTHERS

Nursing mothers shall be granted reasonable break time each day, either regularly scheduled paid breaks or additional unpaid breaks, to allow the expression of breast milk for up to three (3) years following childbirth. The BOCES shall make reasonable efforts to provide a room or other location in close proximity to the work area where the mother can express milk in privacy.

Ref: Board Policy 5550

EMERGENCY SERVICE VOLUNTEER LEAVE

Upon presentation of a written request from the American Red Cross and with the approval of the District Superintendent, employees certified by the American Red Cross as disaster volunteers shall be granted leave from work with pay for up to twenty (20) days in any calendar year to participate in specialized disaster relief operations. This leave shall be provided without loss of seniority, compensation, sick leave, vacation leave or other overtime compensation to which the volunteer is otherwise entitled.

Ref: Board Policy 5550

MILITARY LEAVE

Military leave shall be granted upon notice from the employee, and such leave will not constitute an interruption of service for purposes of seniority, leave accrual, or salary increment. In addition, an employee granted military leave shall receive full salary for a continuous period not to exceed thirty (30) days or twenty-two (22) working days, whichever is greater. Health insurance coverage shall also be continued for up to thirty (30) days on the same basis as provided during active employment, and may be extended for up to a total of eighteen (18) months on a self-pay (COBRA) basis.

Upon completion of military duty, an employee will be reinstated to BOCES service as soon as possible.

Also, up to ten (10) days of unpaid leave will be provided to an employee whose spouse is on leave from the armed forces while deployed during a period of military conflict.

Further, leave may be available to care for a spouse, child, parent, or next of kin who has been injured while on active military duty (*see Family and Medical Leave Act, above*).

Ref: Board Policies 5550, 5340

VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

Unpaid leave will be granted to the victim of, or witness to, a crime of domestic violence in order for the employee to appear as a witness, consult with the district attorney, or exercise any other statutory rights due to such victim or witness.

To exercise this right to unpaid leave, the employee shall provide notice prior to the actual day of the leave and may be required to provide verification of the need for such leave.

Ref: Board Policy 5550

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

It is the responsibility of the affected employee to report any work-related injury or occupational disease as soon as possible following the occurrence or the employee's awareness of the occurrence. A completed and signed form should be presented to the employee's supervisor no later than three (3) days following the injury or exposure.

Whenever an employee is absent from work as a result of an on-the-job injury or work-related illness that qualifies the employee for workers' compensation benefits, full salary will be paid for up to ninety (90) working days of absence from employment, less the amount of any workers' compensation award, and no part of such ninety-day absence shall be charged to the employee's accrued leave time. In the event an absence covered by workers' compensation exceeds ninety working days, the employee may choose to receive from BOCES the salary difference between the workers' compensation payment and the employee's regular salary, an arrangement requiring the utilization of a proportionate amount of the employee's accrued sick leave.

In addition to the above salary provisions, the BOCES shall reimburse an employee for reasonable costs of replacing or repairing eyeglasses, hearing aids, or similar body appurtenances not covered by workers' compensation which are damaged, destroyed or lost as a result of an injury sustained in the course of employment.

Ref: Board Policy 5320

COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985)

Under the provisions of COBRA, employees and their dependents are eligible to continue their health insurance coverage for up to eighteen (18) months when termination of their insurance is due to a reduction in their hours worked, or upon termination of their employment.

Dependents of employees are eligible to continue their health insurance for up to thirty-six (36) months upon occurrence of one of the following events:

- death of the covered employee;
- divorce or legal separation from covered employee;
- an employee becomes eligible for Medicare and ceases to participate in the employer-sponsored plan; or
- the dependents of a covered employee reach the maximum age for dependent coverage.

Those who are eligible to continue health coverage have up to sixty (60) days to complete the Continuation of Coverage Election Form. They must pay the full cost of their premium and may be charged for any administrative costs incurred by St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES, up to a maximum allowed by law.

Ref: Board Policy 5310

ATTENDANCE

No later than the 5th day of each month, each BOCES employee must submit written verification (*Attendance Report*) of attendance for the previous month of employment to the employee's supervisor. Failure to submit the report in a timely manner may be recorded as employee absence for all scheduled work days of that month and deductions may be made from accrued vacation, business/emergency, and sick leave, in that order.

Ref: Form: EER 005 (Employee Attendance Report)

FLEXIBLE SPENDING PLAN

All BOCES employees are eligible to participate in the StLL Flex Plan, a flexible spending plan administered in accordance with Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Act. On or before August 15th of each year, an employee may provide the payroll department with written authorization (*enrollment form*) to withhold pre-tax dollars for the purpose of applying those dollars to medical or dependent care expenses. For a given plan year, which runs from September 1 through August 31, an employee may elect to have up to \$5,000 withheld for a dependent care expense account, and up to \$3,000 withheld for a medical expense account.

Questions should be addressed to the Healthcare Office, 379-3000 or 1-800-722-0782.

*Ref: Forms StLL Flex Plan Enrollment,
StLL Flex Claim Form*

USE OF BOCES-OWNED PROPERTY

The BOCES shall permit BOCES-owned equipment, vehicles or other property to be borrowed by BOCES employees only when such use is related to their BOCES responsibilities and is not for personal gain. Employees will be expected to be familiar with the operation of any equipment or vehicle they propose to borrow and prior written permission must be secured from the supervisor or program director.

*Ref: Board Policies 2231, 4520
Administrative Procedure 2231R*

DISPOSAL OF BOCES PROPERTY

BOCES equipment, vehicles, or other property that is obsolete, surplus or unusable by BOCES shall be disposed of only at the direction of the District Superintendent or his/her designee. Any BOCES employee who engages in the unauthorized use, theft or conversion of BOCES property shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment.

*Ref: Board Policies 4320, 4431
Administrative Procedure 4431R*

USE OF COPYRIGHTED MATERIALS

Employees are prohibited from copying materials not specifically allowed by federal copyright law, fair use guidelines, licenses or contractual agreements, or the permission of the copyright proprietor. An employee who willfully disregards this prohibition shall assume all legal liability and may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Ref: Board Policies 7230, 7231

USE OF TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Technology resources, including hardware, software, communication networks, electronic mail and the Internet, are provided by the BOCES for educational and administrative purposes. All such resources, including files and storage media, remain the BOCES property and are subject to the BOCES control and inspection, at the discretion of the District Superintendent or his/her designee.

BOCES employees shall adhere to the laws, policies and rules governing technology resources including, but not limited to, copyright laws, license agreements, and privacy rights conferred by federal and state law. The same standards of acceptable employee conduct which apply to any aspect of job performance shall apply to the use of technology resources, that is, communication shall be conducted in a professional manner and no confidential information shall be disclosed to unauthorized persons.

Any BOCES employee who engages in unacceptable use of technology resources shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment.

*Ref: Board Policy 5260
Administrative Procedure 5260R
Form EER ECU5260F (Computer Use Agreement)
Guideline EER ECU5260G (Computer Use)*

INTERNET ACCESS ENROLLMENT

BOCES employees are eligible for personal (home) dial-up internet access enrollment at a group discount rate, to be paid through automatic payroll deduction. The employee must complete a registration agreement and submit it to the BOCES Central Office Payroll Department.

Following registration, technical support may be obtained by calling toll free: 1-866-327-8832.

Ref: Form Westelcom Registration Form

ORDERING GOODS AND SERVICES

Items or services are not to be ordered without prior approval of the Purchasing Agent, and the ordering of personal items or services on BOCES purchase orders will not be permitted. Only the Purchasing Agent and the Director of Financial Affairs are authorized to enter into contracts for services, equipment or supplies.

Ref: Board Policy 4420

EMPLOYER NON-ELECTIVE CONTRIBUTION - 403(b)

Any BOCES employee who becomes eligible for an employer contribution due to length of service, i.e., payout of accrued leave time or longevity increment, will receive that contribution as a deposit to the employee's 403(b) account. Information regarding establishing an account may be obtained from the Payroll Office in Canton, 386-4504.

Ref: Board Policy 5330

EMERGENCY DAYS

Emergency conditions may at times force the closing of some schools or BOCES facilities. If the employee's place of work closes, the employee will not be expected to report to work and no leave time will be charged to the employee. If the employee's place of work remains open, any absence will be charged to the employee's accrued time, in the following order: accrued vacation time will be used, if available; if not, accrued business/emergency leave time will be used, if available; if not, accrued sick leave time will be used, if available; if not, the employee's pay will be docked for such absence.

MILEAGE

BOCES employees will be reimbursed at the IRS mileage rate in effect as of July 1st of the current fiscal year for any approved travel, when a BOCES vehicle is not assigned and a privately owned vehicle must be used.

In general, mileage shall be paid based upon the total approved travel for the day minus the employee's regular round trip travel between home and base work site. A mileage claim form must be completed and submitted to the employee's supervisor for approval.

*Ref: Board Policy 5211
Form Mileage Reimbursement Form
Guidelines Mileage Form Directions,
Sample Mileage Form*

CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

A conference is any activity or workshop that requires a registration fee and/or overnight accommodations, whereas a meeting is any activity or workshop that does not require a registration fee or overnight accommodations and is a required part of the job duties. An employee must complete a conference request form and provide it to the immediate supervisor at least ten workdays prior to the conference date.

The BOCES will provide reimbursement for meal or lodging expenses within the following guidelines: Meal charges, exclusive of tips, should be within the U.S. General Services Administrative indexed guidelines by region/country. The rates can be applied by meal or per diem; and, the most reasonable hotel rate available. The employee must submit a claim form, along with receipts, for conference expenses.

*Ref: Board Policy 5211
Form 5211F (Request for Conference Approval)
5211F.1 (Conference Expense Voucher)
5211F.2 (Meeting Reimbursement Request)
5211G (Conference/Travel Expense Guidelines)*

CHANGE OF PERSONAL STATUS

For purposes of maintaining up-to-date contact information for BOCES employees and in order to ensure the appropriate conferral of BOCES-provided benefits, it is important that the employee notify the Central Office immediately of any change in personal status: name, address, phone number and/or marital status. This information may be changed through the HR software system in use or may be submitted to the HR Office.

Ref: Form EER EIC.004 (Employee Information Change Form)

VERIFICATION OF RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK

I acknowledge that I have received access to the St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES Employee Handbook. I understand that I may seek clarification of any provision in this Handbook by contacting the Office of Employer/Employee Relations. I also understand that nothing contained in this Handbook may be construed as creating a promise of future benefits or a binding contract of employment, and that the provisions contained in this Handbook may be amended, modified, or terminated at any time.

Signature

Date

Email (HR@slboces.org), fax (315) 386-5289, or deliver to **HR** Office, 40 West Main Street, Canton, NY, 13617.