



**Northern  
Communications**

**Northern Communication Services Inc.**

And all associated companies and departments

**Employee Handbook**

Revised March 2019

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## Section 1: Introduction

This Handbook is designed to acquaint Employees with Northern Communication Services Inc. and provide information about working conditions, benefits, policies and procedures affecting employment.

Northern Communication Services Inc. (hereinafter to be referred to as “Northern Communications” or “Northern Group”) consists of four (4) divisions: Northern Communications, True Steel Security, Connected Care Division (CareLink Advantage and Helpline) and Northern911. The information in this Handbook applies to all Employees within these divisions or otherwise employed by Northern Group.

Please note there may be differences in policy and procedure between full-time, part-time, commissioned and/or contracted workers. **Should any policy or procedure conflict with a collective agreement covering an Employee, that Employee shall follow the provisions of their collective agreement.**

Following the policies described in this Handbook is considered a condition of continued employment. However, nothing in this Handbook alters an Employee’s status. The contents of this Handbook shall not constitute nor be construed as a promise of employment or as a contract between the Northern Group and any of its Employees. The Handbook is a summary of our policies, which are presented here only as a matter of information, and can be altered by Northern Communications at any time.

This Handbook should be read in its entirety so that Employees familiarize themselves with Northern Communications’ facilities, policies and procedures, thus avoiding the inadvertent contravention of them. For a more in-depth explanation of the duties of the department that you work in, please refer to the Policies and Procedures Manual for your department or ask Management.

You are responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with the provisions of this Handbook. Our objective is to provide you with a work environment that is constructive to both personal and professional growth.

This Employee Handbook will be an evolving document. We urge you to bring things forward that we have missed, that you have questions about or that you feel should be included. We know as time passes the document will change.

In Canada, the power to make laws is divided between the Federal and Provincial governments. In the area of employment law, the Federal government has jurisdiction over specific industries, works and undertakings, including Telecommunications.

As Northern Communications operates within the Telecommunication sector, the company is subject to Federal labour laws and regulations, with the Canada Labour Code defining the rights and responsibilities of Northern Communications and its Employees.

## Changes in Policy

This Handbook supersedes all previous Employee Handbooks and any related notes or memos that may have been issued previously.

Northern Group's business and organization are subject to change, and Management reserves the right to interpret, change, suspend, cancel, or dispute, in whole or in part and at any time, any benefits, policies and/or procedures. Changes may be made to any part/content of the Employee Handbook, with or without notice. No individual Manager has the authority to change Northern Communications' policies at any time, and all Policy, Procedure and Benefits changes are subject to Management and/or Executive review.

The Employee Handbook will be updated as soon as possible whenever there is a significant change to any benefits, policies and/or procedures detailed therein – Employees are encouraged to regularly review the digital copy located on the company Shared Drive at **S:/Employee Information**.

Employees who are uncertain about any company policy, procedure or benefit are encouraged to speak with their immediate Manager.

## What You Can Expect From the Northern Communications Group of Companies

We appreciate your commitment to Northern Communications. As a valued member of our team, you can expect us to show the same commitment towards you. We do this by striving to offer competitive compensation, respect and recognition for good performance and a productive work environment.

## What Northern Communications Expects From You

As an Employee of Northern Communications, your first responsibility is to know your duties and how to do them properly, correctly, safely and pleasantly. Secondly, you are expected to cooperate with your co-workers, maintain a good team attitude and be professional and accountable. How you interact with co-workers and our Clients, and how you accept direction affects our success. Consequently, whatever your position, you have the important assignment to perform every task to the very best of your ability. The result will be better performance for us overall and personal satisfaction for you.

## Our Customers

- Customers are the most important people at the office, in person or by phone, mail or email, or any other way.
- Customers are not dependent on US...we are dependent on them.
- Customers are not an interruption of our work; they are the purpose of it.
- We are not doing them a favour by serving them; they are doing us a favour by giving us the opportunity to do so.
- Customers are not someone to argue or match wits with.
- Keeping this in mind makes a successful company and successful Employees.
- Customers pay our bills and our wages. They are the ones who employ us.

## **Our Service**

Our business is Service. As an example, when other organizations close down due to severe weather conditions, storms, power outages etc., The Northern Group is expected to carry on business.

Our Customers and Clients depend on us.

Service is our business, and exceptional service is what ensures Northern Communication Services' continued success.

## **Northern Group Values**

The Northern Group's business philosophy is based on five core values:

### **Service**

- Make Customer service a priority.
- Always be committed to Customer service and quality.
- Maintain professional conduct and attitude at all times.

### **Integrity**

- Do what is right, honest and fair.
- Do the right thing; do not take the easy way out.
- Take accountability for our actions, without passing blame to others.

### **Respect**

- Treat all Customers, suppliers, Employees and co-workers with dignity and consideration.
- Value the contributions of others.
- Take the time to understand the perspective of others.
- Foster an environment of diversity that respects and appreciates individual differences.

### **Support our Communities**

- Support the Northern Group's effort in strengthening the communities in which we live and work.
- Support the volunteerism efforts of fellow Employees.
- Recognize the need to give back to the community. One way in which Northern Communications gives back is by donating a percentage of proceeds to the community, through charities and other social initiatives. Employees are encouraged to participate in charitable/volunteer efforts, and to suggest new initiatives for the Company.

### **Commitment**

- Always be ready and willing to do what is necessary to ensure the success of the business and fellow Employees, while complying with the requirements of the law.
- Follow through on all commitments made, whether to Customers, fellow Employees or Management.





## About the Northern Group

Northern Communications started in 1954 as an answering service. As the years went by, Northern Communications branched out into the alarm monitoring, telephone, radio and cellular business. As it expanded, Northern Communications acquired several smaller answering service, paging and alarm companies.

After several years, the shareholders of Northern Communications decided to restructure the company to concentrate solely on four (4) areas:

### 1. Northern Communications

- Answering service, messaging and paging
- **Website:** <http://northerncom.com/>

### 2. True Steel Security

- Alarm, Camera and Card access sales and service
- **Website:** <http://www.truesteel.com>

### 3. Connected Care

- Medical assistance for independent living
- Includes Helpline Personal Emergency Response Service (PERS)
- **Website:** <http://www.carelinkadvantage.ca/>
- **Website:** <http://www.Helplinemedicalalarm.ca>

### 4. Northern 911

- Life Safety Services of 911 call routing, alarm monitoring, Fire Department dispatch and more
- **Website:** <http://www.northern911.com/>

## 1. Northern Communications

The Northern Group has its roots in providing answering service. Northern Communications still offers call answering, and has expanded the service to include so much more! As a Message Centre, Northern Communications answers calls for companies large and small.

For some clients, Northern Communications provides only after-hours service; for others we provide service 24/7. Some clients have their own Reception staff, with Northern Communications providing an overflow service to handle incoming calls when they are too busy; others rely on Northern Communications as their sole Reception support.

Northern Communications' Messaging staff take messages, book appointments and dispatch response personnel (Plumbers, Electricians, or anyone else who is needed). The Messaging division can also handle absence calls from clients' Employees, and even fill shifts by connecting to the client's company directory and reaching the next qualified person on call. Many businesses could not survive without Northern Group's services.

The Messaging division also provides paging services. Although use of these devices has been declining in recent years, Northern Communications still rents out new pagers every month. Pagers are a reliable, dependable form of communications and many companies still use them – particularly those that employ remote and/or solitary workers. In Northern Ontario, Northern Group offers the best pager coverage of all providers.

## 2. True Steel Security

Northern Communications started in the security business over 40 years ago, and Security Services became such an important aspect of the company that a separate department, called True Steel Security, was formed to handle their operation. With mergers and acquisitions, True Steel Security is now the largest and most respected alarm company in Northern Ontario.

True Steel supplies, installs, monitors and services alarm systems for all applications and needs. This includes regular Burglary and Fire alarms, as well as medical, environmental, water flow, gas odour and more. True Steel also installs Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) systems and Card Access/Entry Control.

True Steel has attained General Electric's "Security Pro" Dealership status. This standing is based on Customer satisfaction, years in business, credibility, stability, proper licensing and reputation within the community. Out of more than 300 dealers worldwide, Northern Communication Services is the first company in the world to be awarded General Electric's "**Dealer of the Year**" twice in a row.

True Steel Security has an alliance with Our Children Our Future. The goal of this alliance is to make homes and communities safer and more secure. At the heart of the alliance is an education campaign, "Security Is A Family Matter". This campaign is dedicated to reducing child abuse and other root causes of criminal behaviour.

## 3. Connected Care Division

Northern Communications Connected Care Division comprises of two levels of service. Helpline, our basic Personal Emergency Response System (PERS) offering immediate connectivity at the push of a button to a trained dispatcher. CareLink Advantage is our premium offering, allowing seniors and others needing the care to live safely and independently at home at a fraction of the cost of a nursing home. It includes the option for a PERS medical button also.

### i) Helpline:

Northern Communications discovered that many True Steel Security clients were also using Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS). Northern Communications reviewed the demographics, held Client focus groups on how to improve service, and ultimately decided to create a new division, called CareLink, to focus directly and exclusively on these important services.

CareLink offers regular, simple personal alarms where the Client can push a button to call for Help, with the Monitoring Station responding on 2-way voice. CareLink also recently expanded in terms of both clientele and services offered, through the acquisition of the Hospital Helpline systems.

Northern Group has merged Helpline with CareLink under a single name (Helpline). However, the name 'CareLink' may still occasionally be used internally in reference to this service.

**ii) CareLink Advantage:**

As people age, issues with falls, wandering, eating and medication compliance can all become greater concerns. CareLink Advantage is a system based on proven alarm technology whereby notifications are sent in real time to Caregivers (generally family or friends) alerting them of potential issues that require their attention. Notifications can be sent to a wide range of mobile devices, including an option for video. CareLink Advantage is flexible by design, offering a wide range of equipment to address their concerns and as the Client concerns change so can the system. For even greater safety and security, we have integrated the medical button (similar to Helpline) that can be used in the event of an emergency.

CareLink's success is growing and CareLink Advantage is now paid for by the Department of Social Development in New Brunswick for approved Clients. Doctors and Caregivers also recommend CareLink Advantage for seniors who live alone or others who are at greater risk.

**4. Northern911**

Northern911 is the Life Safety side of the Northern Group, helping people in times of need by handling emergency calls. It's what we do all day, every day. Northern911 provides 911 (E911 and VoIP) Call Routing, Alarm Monitoring, Fire Dispatch and Telematics monitoring, with a record of proven service and excellent results.

Northern911 is the largest VoIP call routing organization in Canada. Whenever a VoIP user calls 911, that call gets routed to Northern911's Monitoring Station, where Emergency Response Specialists confirm the caller's address and transfer the call to the appropriate authorities anywhere in North America.

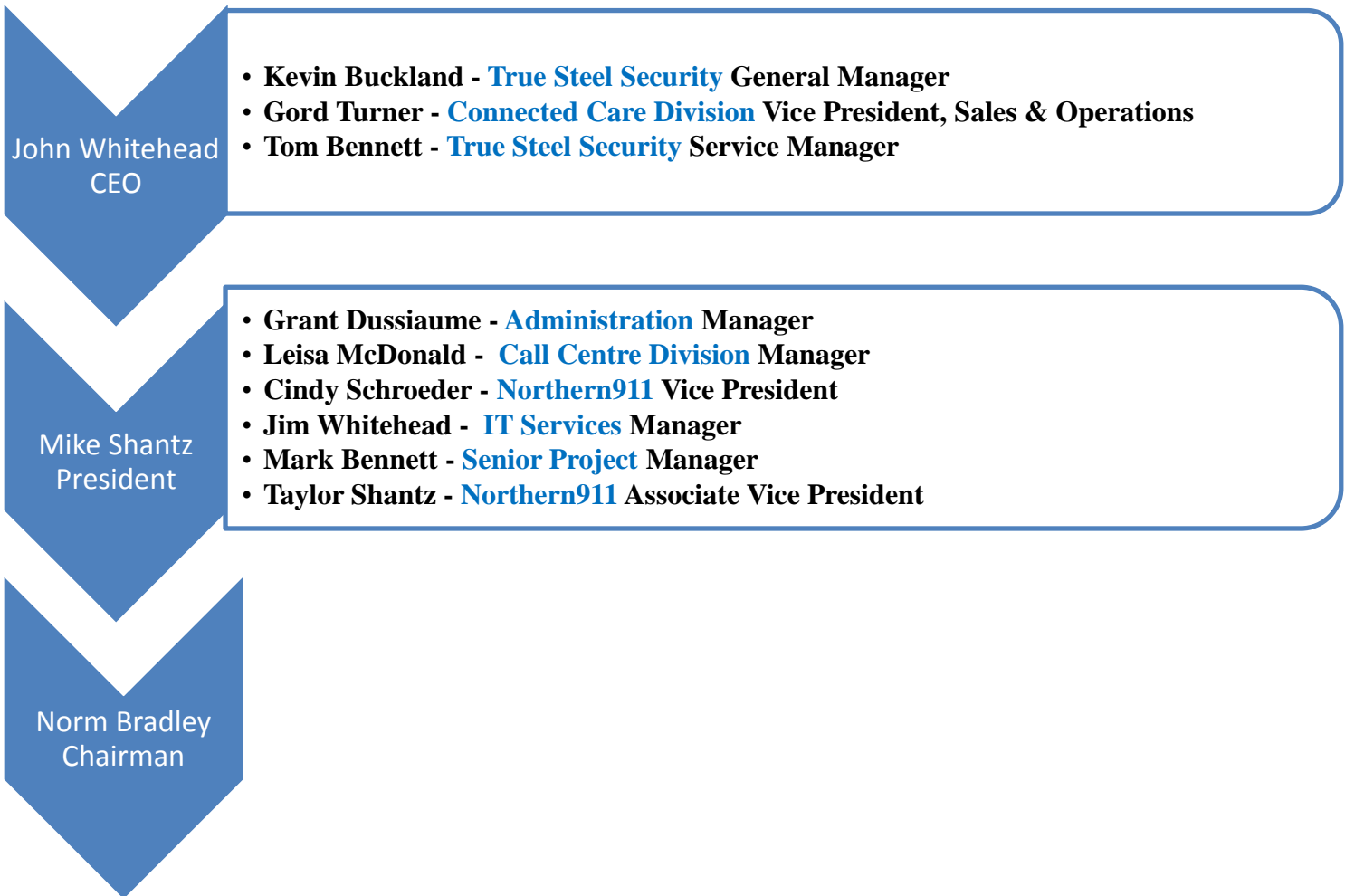
Northern911 also provides alarm monitoring for True Steel Security and several other third-party companies on a wholesale basis. As well, over fifty volunteer fire departments depend on Northern911 to provide them with Fire Dispatch services.

**Awards**

Northern Communications and its various divisions have received numerous awards and recognition for providing excellent and reliable services, as well as for community involvement.

In addition to winning the national Canadian Call Centre Award of Excellence on many occasions, Northern Communication Services has been presented the Tom Ryan Award for Ethics, Integrity, and Quality above all. This special award is given to recognize industry leaders in the Answering Service and Contact Management industry whose companies best reflect the principles of quality service delivery, ethical business practices, commitment to a progressive working environment, and contribution to the business and industry.

## Organizational Chart



## Section 2: Working with Northern Communication Services

The descriptions contained in this Section describe the policies and procedures that will be of interest to those already working with, or starting an employment relationship with, Northern Communications.

### Attendance

Every Employee plays a vital role in keeping our business productive and competitive. Northern Communications expects Employees to be prompt and regular in their attendance. Management recognizes that occasionally there are good reasons for tardiness in reporting to work, or for absence from work.

Employees are responsible for being at work on days scheduled, arriving on time and not leaving early without authorization from their immediate Manager.

If an Employee arrives late or leaves early, their usual duties and responsibilities must be performed by their co-workers. This in turn, increases everyone's workload and makes the job more difficult for the entire group.

Employees are responsible for notifying their Manager, immediately, of any absence, the reason(s) for the absence, and their expected return date. The Employee should notify their Manager as much in advance of the absence as possible.

Employees may be subject to counselling and/or formal discipline if they are absent or late without authorization for three (3) occurrences in a six (6) month period. Absence from work for three (3) consecutive workdays, without notification to the immediate Manager, is considered to be a voluntary resignation of the Employee from employment with Northern Communications.

### Change of Status

With the aim of keeping our records up to date, we ask that every Employee update their Payworks profile and inform the Human Resources/Payroll Office of any changes such as:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Tax information
- Social Insurance Number
- Marital status
- Family status
- Beneficiary

## Employment Categories

### 1.) Permanent full-time

**Permanent full-time** refers to persons hired for an indefinite period, that are required to work more than 24 hours per week and who have completed the standard 90 working day probationary period.

### 2.) Permanent part-time

**Permanent part-time** refers to persons hired for an indefinite period, that are regularly scheduled to work 24 hours or less per week and who have completed the standard 90 working day probationary period.

### 3.) Temporary full-time

**Temporary full-time** refers to persons hired for a designated term (contract) or task who are required to work between 25 and 40 hours per week. The temporary Employee may be released from the position at any time at the discretion of the Employer and/or employment in the position will cease upon the completion of the designated term (contract) or task.

### 4.) Temporary part-time

**Temporary part-time** refers to persons hired for a designated term or task who are required to work 24 hours or less per week. The temporary Employee may be released from the position at any time at the discretion of the Employer and/or employment in the position will cease upon the completion of the designated term (contract) or task.

### 5.) Probation Employee

**Probation / Probationary** refers to an Employee who has not yet completed their probationary period. The standard probationary period consists of ninety (90) days of work.

### 6.) Other

At Management's discretion, Northern Communications may employ other contract positions, including but not limited to casual labour or sub-contract work.

## Hours of Work

Regular Full-time working hours normally consist of eight (8) hours per shift for a total of approximately forty (40) hours per week. An unpaid eating period (either 30 minutes or 1 hour) must be taken approximately in the middle of the shift (as scheduled by the Employee's Manager).

Employees who work for five (5) consecutive hours or more are entitled to a 30 minute, unpaid eating period, which must be taken within those five (5) hours. This eating period may be divided and taken as two separate fifteen (15) minute breaks. Eating periods cannot be taken at the beginning or end of the shift.

Employees are entitled to a fifteen (15) minute rest period with pay for every four (4) hour period worked. Said rest periods should be taken such that they do not interfere with Customer requirements, and scheduling of rest periods is subject to workload. These rest periods cannot be combined, nor taken at the beginning or end of a shift.

Employees are encouraged not to leave Northern Communications' property on their lunch and breaks. They may choose to leave Northern Communications' property during lunch and breaks but will do so at their own risk, as the Northern Group is not liable for any injuries or accidents which may occur while an Employee leaves Northern Communications' property on such breaks.

### **Building Etiquette**

Break areas and lunchrooms are provided for Employees' use and convenience. All Employees who use these facilities are expected to leave them in good condition for their co-workers, ensuring tables, counters, dishes, etc., are clean when leaving. Food, etc. kept in the refrigerator and not eaten within a reasonable period should be disposed of before it becomes offensive to other users.

Some Employees may have food allergies. If there is an Employee with food allergies, signs indicating the specific food(s) will be posted in lunchrooms and break areas. To ensure a safe and healthy working environment for all staff, Employees are requested to please not bring these foods into the workplace.

As with lunchrooms and break areas, washrooms are used by all Employees, and should be left clean and tidy after use. Any Employee who notices a problem with washroom facilities or supplies is asked to inform a Manager so repair/restock can be arranged.

From Fall to Spring, Employees are expected to remove their outdoor footwear when entering the building. Shoe shelves, and a shoebrush to clean outdoor shoes, have been installed at the entrance. Employees are requested to use the provided shelves to store their indoor and outdoor footwear when not in use.

Employees that use the main entrance are asked to clean their outdoor footwear (using the shoe brush located in the atrium) before removing it and entering the office area. There are many rubber shoe trays throughout the building which may be used to leave outdoor footwear as well.

Northern Communications' offices are scent-free environments. To ensure a safe and healthy working environment for all staff, Employees are requested to please refrain from using perfume or cologne, to use unscented personal care products/toiletries, and to avoid using other scented products (such as air freshener or fabric spray) within the work site.

### **Office Appearance – Workstations**

In order to provide a safe, pleasant and sanitary place to work, Northern Communications requires the cooperation of all Employees.

Food and beverages are not permitted within the Monitoring Station, except for a drink in a covered, sealable mug.

Employees who work at "shared" workstations should not keep any personal items at their work position or on the dividers. If an Employee is the sole user of their assigned workstation, a small amount of professional-looking personal items will be permitted.

Display of personal items which violate any Northern Communications Policies and Procedures, including but not limited to those detailed in this Handbook, is prohibited. Employees may be required to remove/obscure any personal items in their workspace, for any reason, at Management discretion.

Coats, sweaters, etc. are to be hung on the coat rack, not left the back of chairs, unused desks, or similar.

Any damage or misuse of equipment or property (e.g. writing on desks, walls, keyboards; pictures or equipment) will not be tolerated.

## **Nepotism**

Northern Communications permits employment of relatives where they will not have any direct reporting relationship.

For these purposes, a “relative” is defined as a spouse (including a common-law and same-sex spouse), child, parent, in-law, sister, or brother. It is the responsibility of the Employee or potential Employee to disclose the existence of any such relationship, in writing, to their Manager or the hiring Manager.

If two Employees marry while employed by Northern Communications, Management reserves the right to transfer one of the Employees to a different position where deemed necessary.

## **Orientation**

All new Employees shall receive an orientation session which will encompass an overview of general policies, procedures and operations. This will also provide Employees, new to either a position or the Northern Group, an opportunity to learn the performance expectations Management has about the position in question.

## **Overtime**

For any hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours in a one (1) week period, and for any hours worked in excess of eight (8) hours in one (1) day, the Employee will be entitled to Overtime Pay paid at the rate of one and one-half (1½) times the Employee's base hourly rate. There are occasions where Overtime will be required.

Please note, that for Overtime calculations, the day that the Employee's shift **starts** is considered the day worked. For example, if an Employee works the graveyard shift followed immediately by the afternoon shift, the hours worked on afternoon shift **ARE NOT** Overtime because the start times are on different days.

The Employee's immediate Manager must authorize all Overtime for it to qualify for Overtime Pay. Employees may not elect to work “Overtime” without written permission from their direct Manager.

Approved Overtime Pay is normally paid in the first pay period following the period in which the Overtime was worked.

Commuting between home and the workplace is **NOT** considered working, travel or waiting time, and is not compensated by Northern Communication Services.

In emergency situations, system failures etc., we must respond twenty-four (24) hours per day, seven (7) days per week. Under these circumstances, Employees may be required to work overtime without prior notice being given.

As per the Canada Labour Code, anyone working in a Managerial role is not entitled to Overtime.





It is possible that some Staff may come in early, stay late, or attend at unscheduled times, to organize themselves or receive mentorship from others when they are not scheduled even though this is not a practice that is required by the Northern Group. This is permitted but is **NOT** compensated as working time.

Employees are assigned clear start times as part of their work schedule, and Management strives to ensure all Employees have the tools to manage their shift time effectively. The strong culture of dedication and work ethic that exists among Northern Communications' staff is greatly appreciated – however, if an Employee ever feels pressure to work unscheduled hours, it is hoped they will bring this to the attention of Management.

### **Performance Appraisals**

Performance Appraisals are used to provide feedback to Employees by informing them on their actual performance compared to the established performance standards.

Performance Appraisals will be used by Management to determine future training needs and potentially for determining merit-based salary increases.

Performance Appraisals will be conducted on an occasional basis using a consistent and fair appraisal method. Management will endeavour to ensure Performance Appraisals are fair for all Employees, that accurate and effective feedback is provided to all Employees, and that any training needs are addressed. Management may evaluate potential merit Pay Increases following a Performance Appraisal.

### **Probationary Period**

Probationary Periods are useful for allowing Management to evaluate the work habits and abilities of newly hired Employees. The Probationary Period also serves as an orientation period for new hires to learn and understand what is expected of them in the employment relationship and how to perform at an acceptable level. Either Northern Communications or the Employee may end the employment relationship at any time during the Probationary Period without notice or pay in lieu of notice (except where a notice or pay in lieu of notice is required by legislation).

All new and rehired Employees shall serve a Probationary Period. A new Employee will be considered on probation until they have completed ninety (90) working days within any twelve (12) calendar months unless otherwise noted in the Offer of Employment letter. A shift must be a minimum of four (4) hours to qualify as one day of work.

Extended absences during the Probationary Period may extend the period by the length of the absence. Under special circumstances, a probationary period may be extended.

Employees will be notified upon the completion of the Probationary Period.

### **Recruitment and Selection**

Many employment opportunities at Northern Communications are posted for a minimum of five (5) days. They may be posted on the Northern Communications website and the websites of affiliated organizations. Occasionally, they are posted on employment websites or with an employment agency. Applications are encouraged from current Employees but will be screened in the same manner as applications received from outside applicants.

Applicants are invited to submit their application, along with a current résumé, demonstrating that they meet the minimum criteria for the position being sought. At the closing date, all applications are screened, and only candidates selected for interview are contacted. If the interview is positive, references will be contacted. Depending on the feedback provided, a position may be offered to the applicant.

Accommodations are available on request for candidates with disabilities taking part in all aspects of the selection process.

## Salary and Pay Periods

Northern Communications believes in fairly and equitably rewarding each Employee for the sustained competent performance of a job. Employees are paid by direct deposit on a bi-weekly (approximately once every second Friday) basis to each Employee's bank of choice.

All payroll time sheets and changes are to be submitted to the Human Resources/Payroll Office by 10:00 a.m. the Monday prior to the end of the pay week.

The prime determinants of pay levels and/or pay increases are the individual's sustained past performance, the individual's present wage related to the Job Rate for the job (Range Index) and the time the individual has been performing the job. Length of service or tenure in a position does not stand alone, justify granting pay increases.

Merit increase reviews will be conducted on occasion in an effort to recognize and reward job performance.

## Payworks

Payworks is Northern Communications' third-party payroll provider. Payworks' service includes a self-service feature that allows Employees to view their paystubs, update contact information and also to request time off (i.e. vacation) and track sick time.

Upon hire, Employees will receive a Welcome email with a user name and a temporary password. Employees are requested to please login to the site <https://payroll.payworks.ca/Loginscreen.asp?err=loggedoff>. This link provides instructions on how to change the password and view pay information.

## Instructions for Submitting a Time Off Request Through Payworks

- 1.) Log into Payworks.
- 2.) Go to the Time Management menu.
- 3.) From this menu choose Time Off Requests.
- 4.) Choose the date and time of the Time Off Request using the Start Time and End Time fields. To choose the date, click on the calendar beside the date.
- 5.) Choose a reason for the time off request using the drop-down menu. If desired, comments can also be added in the Comments – Employee box.
- 6.) After selecting the date, time and reason for the Time Off request, designate an Approver – this should be your immediate Manager. Choose the appropriate Manager's name from the drop-down menu, then uncheck the remainder of the boxes below (if checked).
- 7.) **After** verifying that all information entered is accurate, click the Save button. This will submit the request.

- 8.) Once the appropriate Manager has processed your request, the requester will receive a message on their next Payworks sign-in. This message will contain the Manager's reply to your request. Employees with questions regarding a Manager's response to a time off request should contact that Manager directly.

Please note that Payworks login accounts are disabled upon termination or resignation of employment. It is the Employee's responsibilities to properly store any previous T4s or pay statements in an accessible format as they will no longer have access to Payworks.

Employees who require more information are requested to please see the Payworks Employee FAQs, located on the company Shared Drive at **S:\Employee Information\Payworks**.

### **Non-Competition**

After leaving the Northern Group, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, Employees are **prohibited** from engaging in any business activities which could be considered in direct competition with the Northern Group. Current and former Employees are also **prohibited** from engaging in the solicitation of any of the Northern Group's Customers while still employed by the Northern Group, and for a period of three (3) years after the end of the employment relationship.

Employees will be required to sign a written Non-Disclosure Agreement acknowledging this condition of Employment. The Non-Competition agreement, or any aspect thereof, may only be waived with prior written consent from Northern Group Management.

## Section 3: Personnel Practices and Policies

The descriptions in this section relate to the personal conduct expected of Employees of The Northern Group of Companies. Northern Communications will not condone personal misconduct, and any individual in contravention of any of the following policies may be subject to disciplinary action, which in some cases, may be up to and including discharge for cause without notice or pay in lieu thereof.

### Accessibility (AODA) Customer Service Standard

Northern Communications maintains an ongoing and long-term commitment to their Accessibility Service Plan. Northern Communications is committed to ensuring that all Employees who provide services or goods to the public, Customers or others will be made aware of the policies in place at Northern Communications to provide accessible services to those with disabilities and will receive training on this process. For more information, refer to the AODA Customer Service Standard Policy.

The complete text of Northern Communication Services' Customer Service Policy can be viewed online at <http://www.northerncom.com/privacy2.php>.

### Accessible Emergency Information

Northern Communications is committed to providing Customers with publicly available emergency information in an accessible way upon request. We will also provide Employees with disabilities individualized emergency response information when necessary.

### Building Security

The security of Northern Communications' buildings, assets and personnel is extremely important. Multiple security cameras are installed both inside and outside the buildings, recording both and audio.

Monitored security systems and/or controlled entrances and/or surveillance cameras are in place to protect all Northern Communications buildings, including the leased facilities.

The first Employee to enter any Northern Communications building must disarm the alarm system. The last person to leave must make sure the building is secure with the doors locked and re-arm the alarm system.

Being in the security business and providing 911 services, Northern Communications must secure all buildings. All Employees are provided with Photo ID badges. These should be worn, so they are visible at all times. Any Employee who sees someone who they don't recognize, who is not displaying a security badge, should feel free to question who they are and why they are in the building.

If an Employee's key/card access does not work, that Employee must to identify themselves with Reception, obtain a temporary security badge (printed on a sticker they can display), and inform their Manager. Employees must **not** let anyone into the building who does not have a security badge and/or can't be identified and verified.

Employees who lose their access card/badge/key must inform their Supervisor immediately.

If the access card is lost, replacement cards are provided at a cost of ten dollars(\$10) to the Employee. Replacement lanyard and badge covers are also available at a cost of four dollars (\$4). Money for replacement Access Cards and/or Lanyards is to be paid by the Employee to their Manager.

All Visitors are required to sign in at Reception and provide government-issued Photo ID in order to be issued a visitor's pass. All Visitors must be accompanied by an Employee for the full duration of their visit.

As a condition of entry and exit, Employees and Visitors may be asked to present any bags or parcels for inspection. Northern Communications retains the right to detain an Employee and request the Police to attend, should this action be necessary to protect Northern Communications' Employees and property. Police will only conduct personal searches should they deem it necessary.

### **Northern Group Property**

Unauthorized personal use of Northern Group's property (e.g. postage meter, copy machine, fax machine, video equipment) is not permitted and will be viewed as theft. "Borrowing" supplies for home use is stealing.

Any person, who removes any items that are Northern Communications' property from the building without specific authorization from a Manager, will give the Northern Group cause to dismiss the Employee without notice.

Theft of **ANY** type from the Northern Group, fellow Employees, Clients or the general public may result in immediate termination.

All Northern Group property assigned to an Employee for the purposes of their employment is to be returned within 48 hours of the employment relationship ending.

### **Confidentiality**

Northern Communications has been able to build up its Clientele over the years because people trust the Company and its Staff. Northern Communications has gained the trust of its Customers for many reasons, but perhaps the most important of all is confidentiality. It is absolutely essential that information about Northern Communications' Customers remains private and protected.

Sometimes, Northern Communications serves competing businesses within the same industry; this is **only** possible through the careful maintenance of customer privacy and data confidentiality.

All Customer and Client information, as well as all Business/Operational information not cleared by Management for release to the public, is the property of Northern Communications. This information cannot be released in any form without the permission of a Manager. Breach of this rule may lead to immediate dismissal.

After termination for whatever reason, no Employee may use in any manner any confidential information. Such information includes, but is limited to, any list of Clients/Customers obtained during their employment. Unauthorized release of any confidential information may

result in legal action.

Northern Communications regards all information related to Customers/Clients, or Employees, and any proprietary information or trade secrets as strictly confidential. Northern Communications will make every effort necessary to respect the right to privacy of its Customers and Employees and to protect its proprietary information.

All Employees of Northern Communications are required to sign and abide by the standard **Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Form**. Signing this form obligates the Employee to maintain the confidentiality of all proprietary or otherwise sensitive information they are privy to in the course of their employment. The terms of this Agreement apply even after the employment relationship between Northern Communications and the Employee has ended.

Should an Employee wish to view their **own** personal information file in Northern Communications' records, they may do so by submitting a request to the Human Resources/Payroll Office. No information may be removed from the Employee's file by the Employee. If the Employee feels that information contained in their personnel file is inaccurate, that Employee may submit a written request to the Human Resources/Payroll Office to alter or remove the information, as appropriate.

The complete text of Northern Communication Services' Privacy Policy can be viewed online at <http://www.northerncom.com/privacy2.php>.

## Conflicts of Interest

Integrity and commitment are among Northern Communications' core values. A conflict of interest arises when an Employee is faced with a choice of acting in some manner where the interests of Northern Communications conflict with the interests of the Employee or any other person to whom the Employee owes a duty.

Employees of Northern Communications must not engage in, or give the appearance of engaging in, any activity involving a conflict (evident or reasonably foreseeable) between their personal interests and those of Northern Communications. There must be no divided allegiances between Employees, Officers and Directors and the Northern Group of Companies.

Any potential outside employment or outside business involvement by the Employee must be made known to their Manager before it commences. If, after review, Northern Communications Management agrees to allow the Employee to continue, written approval will be provided to the Employee with a copy placed in the personnel file.

The following are examples of situations to avoid:

- Working for another company in a full-time, part-time, temporary, casual or advisory capacity.
- Serving as a director, officer or consultant of any company that does business with, or is a competitor of, Northern Communications.
- Disclosure of Northern Communications information, data or records of a confidential nature to unauthorized people or using such information for personal gain.
- Ownership of, interest in, or participating directly or indirectly in a company or concern that does business with, or who is a competitor of, Northern Communications.

- Using Northern Communications equipment, supplies and/or services for personal gain.
- Conducting any business for personal gain from Northern Communications office facilities or using Northern Communications facilities to conduct personal business interests.
- Any engagement, during working hours, in activities which are not directly related to and required in the performance of job duties, and/or which deprive Northern Communications of the time and services for which the Employee is paid. This restriction applies whether activities are conducted on behalf of individuals, associations or other companies, and whether or not the Employee receives external remuneration. Exceptions may be made on a specific and irregular basis, with the express written approval of the Employee's direct Manager.

### **Giving and Accepting Business Gifts**

The policy of Northern Communications is to ensure that Employees are aware of their responsibilities concerning the giving and receiving of gifts, favours or entertainment from current or potential Customers.

The term "business gifts", as used in this document, includes entertainment as well as gift items. The giving of business gifts is a customary way to strengthen business relationships and, with some restrictions, is a lawful business practice.

It is Northern Communications' policy that Employees may give and receive appropriate, lawful business gifts in connection with their employment provided that such gifts are nominal in value and not given or received with the intent or prospect of influencing the recipient's business decision-making. For purposes of this policy, nominal value is defined as no more than fifty dollars (\$50) per item.

Under no circumstances may an Employee accept or offer gifts of cash or cash equivalents, such as gift certificates.

It is imperative that the acceptance of any gift, favour, or entertainment could withstand public scrutiny with no damage to Northern Group's reputation.

If an Employee plans to give or accept a business gift of more than a nominal value, that Employee must obtain written approval from their Supervisor before doing so.

### **Criminal Reference Check**

As a company with operations in Emergency Response, Alarm Monitoring, Life Safety, and Answering/Messaging, Northern Communications necessarily handles confidential and/or otherwise sensitive information. For this reason, a satisfactory criminal reference check is a Bona Fide Occupational Requirement for all positions within the Company.

A satisfactory criminal record check is a condition of employment with the Northern Group of Companies, and each Employee is required to submit an updated record check every five (5) years after their initial hire date.

Employees are also required to complete an annual criminal declaration form which identifies that the Employee has maintained a clear criminal record within the last year. Employees will be reimbursed for their satisfactory criminal reference check every five (5) years. As part of the hiring process, applicants are required to pay for and provide a satisfactory criminal reference.



Applicants will **not** be reimbursed for this initial criminal reference check.

## Dress Code

To ensure the maintenance of a professional business atmosphere, Northern Communications' has a dress code in place for its work sites, requiring all Employees to dress in a certain and consistent manner.

Office Employees are expected to present themselves neatly and professionally and dress in a fashion referred to as "business casual."

For these purposes, business casual will include collared shirts (dress or golf), khakis, slacks, skirts, dresses, dress shoes and sweaters.

The following are examples of items **not** considered business casual, and not permitted to be worn in the workplace:

- Sweat or track pants
- Jogging pants
- Jeans (exceptions may be made for certain types of work and/or occasions)
- Pants that expose the midriff, underwear, or leggings
- Gym shorts
- Bicycle shorts or other athletic shorts
- Low-cut tops
- Halter tops
- Spaghetti strap tops
- Shirts that expose the midriff or underwear
- Mini-skirts
- Any form of clothing that is mesh, sheer, see-through or otherwise revealing
- Any form of clothing that is generally offensive, controversial, disruptive or otherwise distracting
- Any form of clothing that is overtly commercial, or that displays political, personal or offensive messages.
- Hats
- Pyjamas
- Plastic flip-flops or sandals
- Slippers
- Beach footwear

Employees with questions about acceptable business casual attire are encouraged to contact their Supervisor. Employees who, in the opinion of their Supervisor, are dressed inappropriately may be sent home until they are able to return to work in acceptable attire. Time away from work to remedy a dress code violation will be **unpaid**.

Technical Employees are expected to wear the Northern Group's shirt and are permitted to wear jeans and shorts during work hours, provided these items are in good condition and present a professional appearance.

Technicians are expected to wear all protective equipment required on applicable work sites. Northern Communications will provide all necessary personal protective equipment including, but not limited to, hard hats and safety glasses, **excluding** boots (please see below).

Technicians must supply their own CSA-approved steel-toed boots – however, the Northern Group will provide an allowance for boots once a technician has three (3) years of seniority.

### **Driving Company- or Privately-Owned Vehicles for Work Purposes**

Employees who operate Northern Group vehicles are required to perform a monthly vehicle check and complete the corresponding **Vehicle Inspection Checklist** form.

The Vehicle Inspection Checklist form must be completed and submitted to the applicable department Manager at the end each month. If any Checklist items are not satisfactory, the Employee is required to notify their immediate Supervisor within one business day. If the affected item jeopardizes the health and safety of the driver or passengers, the Employee must refrain from using the vehicle and **immediately** notify their Supervisor.

As a condition of employment, Employees whose work requires operation of a motor vehicle must complete the Confirmation of Valid Driver's License form, present and maintain a valid driver's license and a driving record acceptable to the Northern Group's insurer. Any changes in an Employee's driving record (these can include and are not limited to speed tickets, moving violations, criminal charges, etc.) must be reported to both their Manager and the Administration Department Manager immediately.

Speeding is dangerous and can negatively impact the Northern Group's reputation. As such, speeding is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Employees must not exceed the posted speed limit while driving on Northern Communications' business. Employees speeding while driving on Northern Communications business and/or operating a Northern Group vehicle for any reason will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal for cause.

Employees who operate Northern Communications' vehicles during their assigned work or operate their own vehicles in performing their jobs are financially and legally responsible for any traffic or parking violations incurred while performing their jobs. Employees driving their own vehicle for business purposes are required to maintain adequate insurance at all times at their own expense.

Northern Communications has installed GPS Tracking systems in our vehicles. Data from these systems will be scrutinized as per the Northern Group GPS and Tracking policy, as described on Page 28 of this Handbook.

Due to various parking issues at Northern Communications' premises/work sites, Employees are permitted to park their assigned Northern Group vehicle(s) at their own homes. Employees are responsible for these vehicles while parked offsite, and are required to care for the vehicle during non-work hours.

Northern Group-owned vehicles should **never** be used for transportation to and from social events (i.e. parties, bars, dances, etc.). The Company's insurance policy covers use of the vehicle while an Employee is on Company business, and when driving to and from job locations. Employees misusing Northern Group vehicles will be subject to disciplinary action up to and

Northern Communications Employee Handbook  
including dismissal for cause.

## **Drugs and Alcohol in the Workplace**

No Employee will be allowed to work in an impaired state. This includes impairment by alcohol, by cannabis, by other drugs (whether prescribed or not), by lack of sleep, or for any other reason.

Should a Manager believe that the Employee is impaired, the Employee may be asked to take an unpaid leave of absence until such time as the impairment has passed.

No Employee shall possess, consume, sell or transport alcohol or drugs while in the course of his or her duties, including during lunch and/or rest periods, while on Northern Communications' premises/work sites, or in Northern Communications' vehicles. Employees will not be permitted to work if they attend work in an impaired state.

The use of alcohol is not permitted on any Northern Communications premise/work site, with the exception of specially organized events with written authorization from the General Manager. At any Northern Group sanctioned event, drinking and driving will not be tolerated. Northern Communications will arrange transportation for those consuming alcoholic beverages at such events.

All Employees are required to notify their Managers if they are under a medical program of treatment which requires the consumption of drugs (including medical marijuana) that may cause impairment. Managers shall make an initial assessment of whether the impairment is likely to jeopardize the safety of the Employee, co-workers or members of the public.

Northern Communications may require an Employee who is using prescription medication, including medical marijuana, to provide proof that such use is necessary and recommended by a qualified medical practitioner for the treatment of a medical condition or disability.

Employees who suspect that they have an alcohol or drug dependency are encouraged to seek advice and to follow appropriate treatment. An Employee who suffers from drug or alcohol dependency may be entitled to accommodation under the Canada Labour Code and/or Access for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

Employees who violate the provisions of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal for cause.

## **Electronic Devices (Personal- and Company-Owned)**

### **Personal Electronic Devices**

"Electronic Device", as used in this document, refers to any device makes or receives telephone calls, leaves messages, sends text messages, surfs the internet, downloads and allows the reading of and responding to e-mails, and/or can function as a GPS device. All related Policies and Procedures apply to all such devices, whether Northern Group-supplied or personally owned.

Personal cell phones and other electronic devices are not to be used during work hours. Since these devices can be a distraction in the workplace, Employees must leave any Personal Electronic Devices (PED) in their lockers (or other areas designated for device storage, such as breakrooms) during work hours. Employees are only permitted to use these devices during their lunch or rest break; however, it must be placed back in storage at the end of the lunch or rest break.

It is critical that there are no **cell phones, cameras or electronic devices** in the Messaging and Emergency Services operations area at any time. Employees in these departments have access to confidential information which must be protected in order to mitigate any risk of a breach of confidentiality. As well, it presents a very unprofessional image if Employees use personal mobile devices while providing service to Clients.

There are strict privacy legislation requirements in Canada and the US that govern the use of recording devices (or devices that could potentially have recording capabilities) in the designated areas. All Employees and Executives of the Northern Group are obligated, by Northern Communications' policy and by law, to abide by these requirements.

### **Northern Group-Owned Electronic Devices**

Northern Communications recognizes that Employees may use Northern Group-owned electronic communication devices (including cell phones) for personal use. It is required, however, that personal use is limited to non-company time only.

Employees should have no expectation of privacy while using Northern Group-owned or Northern Group- leased electronic communication devices. Information passing through or stored on Northern Group equipment can and will be monitored. Northern Communications also reserves the right to monitor and review stored data such as internet use, e-mail and instant messaging communications sent or received by users as necessary.

The use of **ANY** electronic device is prohibited while operating a vehicle, unless using a hands-free device. Distracted driving is prohibited by law, and any Employee engaging in distracted driving while on Northern Communications' business and/or while operating a Company-owned vehicle will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal for cause.

Northern Communications' cell phones (including all related hardware, software and accessories) are Northern Communications' property and are to be returned to the Employee's Supervisor when the Employee commences an extended period of leave or terminates employment.

Employees are expected to use their Northern Group-owned devices in an ethical, professional and responsible manner at all times.

Inappropriate use of Northern Group-owned electronic devices includes, but is not necessarily limited to:

- Accessing inappropriate information or sites
- Excessive personal use
- Damage or loss due to negligence
- Unauthorized use, including use by other individuals
- Exceeding plan minutes and data

Employees who fail to comply with these regulations will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal for cause.

Please see Northern Communications' **Personal Electronic Device Usage Policy** for more detailed information.

## Emergency Contact Information

Every Employee is required to have current Emergency Contact information, consisting of the name, phone number, and relationship (to the Employee) of at least one contact person. Employees are requested to please ensure this information is always current, in case the Company needs to contact someone in an Emergency situation.

Employees must provide Emergency Contact details to their Manager and to the Employee Development Department, and must ensure this information is updated in the Payworks system.

## Employee Expenses

Where an Employee incurs an approved business-related expense in the course of their duties, that Employee will be reimbursed (provided the Employee received the approval of their Manager to incur the expense).

In general, these expenses will include a mileage reimbursement when the Employee is required to use their own vehicle for business purposes, parking costs, taxi fares, hotel accommodation, and meals while away on business and any other pre-approved costs associated with business travel.

Employees who use a personal vehicle for business purposes will be reimbursed in accordance with the guidelines set out in the federal Income Tax Act. Effective January 1, 2014, the reimbursement rate is 40 cents per kilometer. Normally it is more economical to rent a vehicle – Employees are to determine the most economical approach beforehand. Some Employees may choose (with Management approval) to use a personal vehicle and be reimbursed at the same rate as a rental. **All** rates are subject to change.

For reimbursement of business-related expenses (with the exception of per diem meal expenses, as detailed below) the Employee must submit a completed Expense Report form with receipts to their Manager. The original copy of all related receipts should be attached to the form.

Standard meal allowances will be prorated for partial days of travel. There may be instances that the Employee will not receive the full daily meal allowance. Possible examples include:

- Hotel reservations that include a complimentary breakfast. In this event, the Employee would be provided with a meal allowance of thirty-six dollars (\$36.00) per day for their lunch and dinner.
- Some training sessions and industry seminars may provide breakfast and lunch, in which case Northern Communications will only provide a meal allowance of twenty dollars (\$20.00) for their dinner per day.
- On the day an Employee leaves for business travel, the first meal they will be compensated for will be their dinner as they are responsible for their breakfast and lunch as is the case on any other day. Some exceptions may apply. Likewise, if the Employee were returning to the office from their trip in the early afternoon, they would only be provided with a meal allowance for their breakfast (if the hotel did not provide complimentary breakfast) and lunch.

The maximum per meal allowance, including all taxes and gratuities, is as follows:

- Breakfast \$12.00
- Lunch \$16.00
- Dinner \$20.00

### **GPS Monitoring and Monitoring of Northern Group Property**

Northern Communications is committed to ensuring the health and safety of Employees, managing productivity, protecting Northern Group assets and improving Customer Service. To this end, Northern Communications maintains GPS systems in all Company-owned vehicles and actively monitors company telecommunications equipment (i.e. cell phones, pagers, and computers).

Employees must be aware that tracking technology is being used and that all telephone lines, computers and buildings (CCTV) are monitored and/or recorded. This information may be used in evaluating job performance, and if necessary, disciplinary action may result.

In some areas of Northern Communications' premises/work sites, video surveillance is used. The use of video surveillance is for the security of property and management of Staff. Any video recorded will be kept for a period of time and then deleted, unless its retention is necessary for a criminal investigation or otherwise required by law. No video will be taken in washrooms.

### **Human Rights**

At Northern Communications, every person has a right to freedom from discrimination and harassment as per the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. Northern Communications prohibits discrimination and harassment based on any of the following grounds:

- Race
- National or ethnic origin
- Colour
- Religion
- Age
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marital status
- Family status
- Gender identity
- Physical or mental disability (including dependence on alcohol or drugs)
- Pardoned criminal conviction

Northern Communications is committed to making every reasonable effort to ensure that no individual is subjected to prohibited forms of discrimination in the workplace or provision of services.





## Employment Equity

Northern Communications is committed to Employment Equity and in particular to providing equal employment opportunities consistent with the provisions of the *Canadian Human Rights Act*.

Northern Communications is committed to achieving and maintaining a fair and representative workforce and will initiate and uphold employment equity measures to ensure the full participation and advancement of employment of groups which have traditionally been under-represented.

Employment equity measures will include the identification and removal of any discriminatory barriers to the selection, hiring, promotion and training of members of the underrepresented groups. Special measures and reasonable accommodations will be implemented, as necessary, to enable members of these groups to compete with others on an equal basis.

## Insubordination

Refusing to follow job-related instructions, disregarding directions given by Managers or other Management personnel, disrespectful behaviour and/or speech, dishonesty or threats of any kind will NOT be tolerated. If any Employee has an issue with their direct Manager, or any member of Management Staff, it must be reported to their Manager (or to the Employee Development Department Manager, as appropriate).

## Parking

All Northern Communications buildings have some adjacent Employee parking available. Employees are asked **not** to park on the street in front of Northern Communications buildings, as this area is used for Customer parking.

There are only a limited number of parking spaces available, and they can be used by any Employees on a “first come, first park” basis.

Any vehicles being parked on Northern Communications’ property (side, ramp, or back) must have their license plate registered with Reception. Any Employee wishing to park must obtain a parking tag from the Reception Department and keep it prominently displayed on the vehicle’s dashboard. A parking tag will be provided free-of-charge to any Employee requesting one, but possession of a tag does not guarantee availability of parking.

Employees who choose to park behind Alder Hall (near Northern Communications’ primary location in Sudbury, ON) are advised that the **only** place they are permitted to park is in front of the green storage container. Starting at the left front side of the container, there are five parking spots reserved for Northern Communications. Vehicles parked anywhere else in the area behind Alder Hall may be ticketed and/or immobilized (“booted”).

Northern Communications is not responsible for any loss or damage however caused to anyone’s vehicle on our property.

## **Personal Conduct and Behaviour**

The conduct and behaviour of Northern Communications' Employees reflects upon people's perception of the Company. Because of this, Northern Communications requires its Employees to exhibit appropriate conduct and professional behaviour when conducting Northern Communications' business.

Inappropriate and unacceptable conduct and behaviour could result in disciplinary action for the Employee, up to and including termination for cause, depending on the severity of the infraction.

### **Appropriate Conduct and Behaviour includes but is not limited to:**

- Adherence to published policies, practices and procedures.
- Competent performance of all job duties assigned.
- Prompt and regular attendance at work.
- Courtesy to and respect for Co-workers, Customers, Suppliers or any other person who deals with Northern Communications in the conduct of its business.
- Wearing proper business attire and footwear during working hours, appropriate to the job performed.
- Performing appropriate personal hygiene.
- Respecting that Northern Communications operate a "Scent-Free" working environment, and as perfume, colognes or other scents may adversely affect others, they are not permitted onsite.

### **Inappropriate or Unacceptable Conduct and Behaviour includes but is not limited to:**

- Loitering or loafing
- Leaving work early or leaving the Department without Manager permission
- Using obscene, abusive language
- Spreading malicious gossip or rumours
- Workplace violence and harassment, threatening, intimidating, or coercing any person at any time
- Horseplay or throwing objects
- Reporting to work in an impaired state. This may be impaired by alcohol, by cannabis, by drugs whether prescribed or not, by lack of sleep, or for any other reason
- Creating or contributing to unsanitary conditions
- Gambling, lotteries, or any other game of chance while on the Northern Group premises
- Insubordination
- Inappropriate personal use of telephones or computer facilities
- Possession of guns, weapons or explosives on Northern Group property
- Possession, consumption or use of alcoholic beverages or illegal substances while on Northern Group premises
- Willful violation of safety rules and procedures
- Willful neglect and/or mishandling of equipment and machinery

- Unsafe driving of Northern Group vehicles including but not limited to:
  - Talking on a cell phone (without the use of a hands-free device)
  - Texting while operating a vehicle
- Theft and/or falsification of Northern Group records
- Indecency
- Fighting
- Poor or careless work
- Sleeping while on duty
- Accepting gifts, favours or gratuities from firms, organizations, agents, Employees, or other individuals who may or do conduct business with Northern Communications with a dollar value in excess of fifty dollars (\$50.00).

The workplace, as defined in this document, includes all locations where business or social activities of the Northern Group are conducted.

### **Progressive Discipline**

Northern Communications believes in encouraging consistent self-discipline and corrective action. This philosophy applies to instances of undesirable or unacceptable Employee conduct, inappropriate behaviour, and/or violations of Company policies, procedures and standards – whenever possible, Employees will be given an opportunity to acknowledge and correct their own behavior. Where Employee discipline is required, it is the policy of Northern Communications Management to administer discipline fairly.

Disciplinary action may call for any of five corrective steps: informal counselling, verbal warning, written warning, suspension with or without pay, or termination of employment. The severity of the concern and the number of past occurrences will dictate the corrective steps necessary.

Depending on the situation, any of the steps (excepting termination) may be repeated or skipped, depending on the severity of the matter.

In certain severe cases, Management may elect to terminate an Employee “for cause”. Termination “for cause” disqualifies the terminated Employee from receiving advance notice and/or severance pay, and from applying for Employment Insurance benefits.

Should a termination be required, the affected Employee’s Manager will first consult with another Manager and/or a third-party HR Company, to confirm the process is being handled appropriately.

### **Reference Checks**

For the purpose of Employee reference checks for potential Employers, Northern Communications will confirm the following information:

- The individual was an Employee of Northern Communications.
- The duration of their employment with Northern Communications.
- The Employee’s current or most recent salary.

All requests for reference checks should be directed to the Payroll Office. Only the Payroll Office can provide references for Northern Communications.

## Scents

Northern Communications is aware that some persons may have allergies or sensitivities to perfumes, lotions, colognes and / or chemical smells. As a result, we do not allow the use of these products. Employees are required to avoid wearing perfume/cologne/etc. in the workplace, and to use unscented personal care products (i.e. shampoo, deodorant) whenever possible.

## Smoking

Northern Communications is a smoke-free workplace. Any Employee wishing to smoke shall do so outside the building not closer than nine (9) meters from an entrance. Please be considerate and dispose of your used cigarettes appropriately. Employees are only permitted to smoke during break periods. Smoking is also not permitted in any vehicle owned or leased by Northern Communications. The definition of smoking will include smoking regular cigarettes, electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) / vaporizers, cigars, other tobacco products, and/or medical marijuana.

## Social and Professional Networking Sites

The use of social or professional networking sites is not permitted during working hours or on Northern Communications' property. Prohibited web sites/services include, but are not limited to:

- Facebook
- Myspace
- Pinterest
- Twitter
- YouTube
- LinkedIn
- Blogs
- Chat rooms
- Instant messaging

Employees are responsible for the information they post on the Internet. Employees are expected to familiarize themselves with this, and other related policies, to ensure that no inadvertent breach of policy occurs. All Employees must ensure that the Northern Group, its Customers, stakeholders, vendors, or Employees' reputation and goodwill are not damaged by what they post on these (or any) networks.

Employees shall not post pictures from the workplace or using equipment from work on social or professional networking sites.

Northern Communications company logos and other copyrighted material may **not** be posted on the Internet (or otherwise appropriated for personal use) without the express written approval of the General Manager.

Northern Communications Management and/or IT Staff may, at any time and at their sole discretion, block company computer systems from accessing social networking (or any other Internet sites).

The Privacy Policies of Northern Communications, as well as the Confidentiality Agreement signed by all Employees as a condition of employment, extend beyond the work activities of Employees. In keeping with this, Employees are prohibited from disclosing any information on social or professional networking sites that would put them in contravention of those policies or agreements.

Any Employee that is aware of a contravention of this policy is expected to report the situation to their Manager as soon as possible.

Any breach of this policy will be investigated by Senior Management. Senior Management may, at their sole discretion, use an investigator that is external to the organization for this purpose. Employees found in breach of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination for cause.

### **Telephone and Computer Use**

Northern Communications' telephones, internet services, e-mail, computer networks and other electronic devices are intended for the use of serving our Customers and in conducting the Northern Group's business.

While Northern Communications recognizes the need for some limited personal use of telephones and computer networks from time to time on breaks and lunch periods, Management would like to discourage personal use as much as possible. Any personal telephone calls should be kept brief to avoid congestion on the telephone line.

To respect the rights of all Employees and avoid miscommunication in the office, Employees must inform family members and friends to limit personal telephone calls during working hours. These should be limited to emergency situations.

In some departments, our Customers are charged "per minute" or "per call" for time spent on their telephone lines. Making or receiving personal telephone calls on a Customer's account is strictly forbidden and constitutes theft. Making personal long distance calls on **any** Northern Group lines or taking personal calls on our inbound toll-free lines also constitutes theft and will be regarded accordingly.

Being found guilty of theft may result in immediate dismissal without notice, hence "cause". Dismissal "for cause" means the terminated Employee will not qualify for advance notice of termination, severance pay and/or Employment Insurance benefits.

Northern Communications computer systems (including email and internet access) belong to the organization and are intended for business use only. Emails generated on the system are the property of the Northern Group. Email is a primary method of communication to many of Northern Communications' Customers and professionalism must be maintained in all communication methods. Employees are requested to please use features such as 'spell check' and to review all communication for professional composition and tone before sending.

Employees using Northern Communications' systems should not have any expectation of privacy. Northern Communications Management may, at any time and at their sole discretion, monitor information system usage and take disciplinary action as necessary. Employees found to be in violation of Northern Communications policies, procedures and/or standards may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination for cause.

Prohibited activities include but are not limited to:

- Using the Internet for illegal activities or to transmit spam.
- Visiting websites that are considered inappropriate, pornographic or “obscene.” If you connect unintentionally to a site that contains sexually explicit or offensive material, you must disconnect from the site immediately and advise your Manager.
- Transmitting chain or threatening letters.

Computer security is a serious concern for any organization. As an Emergency Services provider entrusted with personal information and other sensitive material, Northern Communications has a particular responsibility to ensure the security and integrity of the systems, resources and information in its care.

Under **no** circumstances is **any** Employee permitted to download **any** programs, applications, screensavers, etc. onto an office computer without obtaining permission from the IT Department Manager.

As a security precaution, the Information Technology Department disables the use of any mass storage devices (i.e. USB flash drives, portable hard drives, etc.) for all computers on the network. Employees are prohibited from attempting to use such devices with any company computers.

For both quality control and liability reasons, Management reserves the right to listen to any telephone calls and review any incoming or outgoing e-mails or correspondence of any type. Many of Northern Communications’ telephone lines are recorded, and computers on the company network are monitored for web and email traffic.

## Network Passwords

Password security is a vital part of keeping Northern Communications’ network and other systems running efficiently and effectively. Maintaining the integrity of the network is of critical importance to Emergency Response, Life Safety and other services provided by the Company.

It is essential to note that anything done **under** an Employee’s username/from within an Employee’s logon appears to have been done **by that Employee**. Employees are responsible for actions carried out under their username/logon, and all passwords should be protected accordingly.

In order to achieve and maintain a high level of password security, it is necessary to implement a system of timed password changes. Northern Communications employs a mechanism to force password changes every 90 days. End-users will receive notification of required password updates, starting 14 days prior to the password expiring. Notifications will be displayed each time the Employee logs into to the network, up until the password is changed or expires. If an Employee’s password expires without being updated, that Employee will be required to change their password on the next logon attempt.

## Password Complexity Requirements:

Employees' network passwords must meet the following requirements:

- 1.) Passwords may not contain, in whole or in part, the user's name or account ID.
- 2.) Passwords must contain characters from at least three of the following four categories:
  - Uppercase characters
  - Lowercase characters
  - Numbers
  - Special Characters (i.e. ~ ! @ # \$ % ^ & \* ( ) \_ + = - ` ; : / ?)
- 3.) All passwords used must be "Strong Passwords", which necessarily have the following characteristics:
  - 7 or more non-repeating characters, including a combination of uppercase letters, lowercase letters, numbers and special characters.
  - Password avoids words that can be found in a dictionary (in any language, including slang/jargon).
  - Password avoids dates or other numbers (e.g. birthdays, anniversaries, age) that can be associated with the user.
  - Password avoids proper names (e.g. spouse, children, pets).
  - Password avoids anything else could be easily associated with the user (e.g. favourite sports teams, hobbies, clubs; organizations or groups with which the Employee may be involved; media references such as those to books, television, movies, music, internet and/or games).
- 4.) Passwords must be memorized, with no physical record of them kept. Employees are prohibited from keeping a copy of their password anywhere in their workstation, including taped to the monitor, under the keyboard, inside the desk, written on a desk pad or in an agenda, etc. The **only** place a password should exist is in the owner's memory.

## Network Account Lock-out Policy

Network accounts will automatically lock after five (5) unsuccessful password attempts. Locked accounts are inaccessible for thirty (30) minutes - users will be unable to log in even with the correct password until this timer has expired. Users who are unable to log on to their account (i.e. because they have forgotten the password) are required to contact the IT Department.

## Changing Network Passwords

Employees may change their password on **any** Windows XP or Windows 7 workstation connected to the Company network – it does not have to be the user's assigned system.

- 1.) Log onto any Windows XP or Windows 7 workstation
- 2.) Press CTL + ALT + DEL
- 3.) Click on the Change Password button
- 4.) Enter old password
- 5.) Enter new password and confirm
- 6.) Press OK

Employees requiring further information or clarification are encouraged to please contact the IT department via email at [ncsit@northerncom.com](mailto:ncsit@northerncom.com).

## Termination and Resignation of Employment

Should the Northern Group decide to terminate an Employee, including the need for a temporary or permanent layoff, the Company will comply with all provisions contained in applicable employment legislation, unless otherwise stated in an employment contract or a collective agreement.

For Employees who decide to leave their job with Northern Communications, Management would appreciate written notice of at least two weeks or longer or (as stipulated in the Company's standard employment contract) and the Employee's reason for leaving.

Departing Employees may be asked to participate in an exit interview with an outside third party, in order for Management to better understand the Employee's reasons for leaving and to assist the Company in improving working conditions for other Employees.

An Employee shall be deemed to be terminated, with the loss of all Seniority within the company, should one or more of the following occur:

- 1.) The Employee voluntarily leaves the employ of the Employer.
- 2.) The Employee is laid off for a period of more than twenty-four (24) months.
- 3.) The Employee absent from scheduled work for a period of three (3) or more consecutive days without notifying Northern Communications of such absence and providing a reason satisfactory to the Northern Group.
- 4.) The Employee fails to return to work within seven (7) calendar days after being recalled from a lay-off (via notice sent by registered mail).
- 5.) The Employee is absent due to illness, disability or both, with such absence continuing for more than two (2) years.
- 6.) The Employee is dismissed for valid reasons, including but not limited to:
  - Inadequate work performance
  - Theft/stealing
  - Disciplinary issues
  - Other reasons not listed above



## Visitors

Generally, personal Visitors are discouraged at Northern Communications. Our Clients deserve our full attention, and friends and relatives can distract everyone from their work.

**NO VISITORS ARE ALLOWED ON THE PREMISES WITHOUT PERMISSION, AND ALL VISITORS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN EMPLOYEE FOR THE FULL DURATION OF THEIR VISIT**; this is to ensure the safety of Northern Communications' Employees and to preserve the confidential nature of the Company's business.

Approved Visitors to the building must sign in at the reception desk and will be provided with a visitor badge. Please walk your visitor to back to the reception area at the end of your visit. They will be asked to sign out and return the badge.

Employees of Northern Communications are not permitted to come in to "visit" before or after their scheduled shifts. Employees who are **not** working or scheduled to be at work are **not** permitted on Northern Communications premises/work sites.

Northern Communications, as an organization, is very proud of its workplaces and environment. Should an Employee wish to show someone the Northern Communications office, that Employee is requested to please contact the Manager on duty to arrange a brief visit. Management's main concern will be that there will be no distraction or disturbance to others who are working, and any Employees who wish to bring a visitor onsite must abide by this request. Employees are responsible for their own visitors, and are expected to stay with them the entire time they are on Northern Communications property.

## Workplace Violence Prevention

Northern Communications is committed to the prevention of workplace violence. Management will take whatever steps are reasonable to protect Employees from workplace violence, including domestic violence from all sources.

Violent behaviour is unacceptable from anyone and will not be tolerated at any Northern Communications premise/work site, or in any of the Company's operations. Everyone that enters a Northern Communications workplace is expected to uphold this policy and work together to prevent workplace violence. Please refer to Northern Communication Services' **Workplace Violence Prevention Policy** for more information.

## Workplace Harassment

Northern Communications is committed to providing a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Workplace harassment will not be tolerated from any person in the workplace. All persons that enter our workplace are expected to uphold our policy on workplace harassment.

**"Workplace Harassment"** is defined as any behaviour that the offender knows, or should reasonably know, is offensive and/or unwelcome.

**"Workplace Sexual Harassment"** is defined as any conduct, comment, gesture or contact of sexual nature likely to cause offence or humiliation or that might, on reasonable grounds, be perceived as placing a condition of a sexual nature on employment or on any opportunity for training or promotion.

Any Employee who feels that they have been the victim of harassment in the workplace is advised to first use direct communication with the person engaging in the unwelcome conduct, advising them directly their behaviour is not welcome.

Employees who feel they have been the victim of harassment should make their direct Manager aware of what has transpired. Whenever possible, Employees are asked to keep a written record of the date, time, details and witnesses of the unwelcome conduct. They should also record notes relating to any conversations they have had with the alleged harasser requesting that the behaviour stop.

If an Employee is experiencing harassment in the workplace and is not comfortable approaching the person engaging in the unwelcome behaviour, that Employee is encouraged to report the matter to their Manager. That Manager will then act as a mediator between the parties.

Should the unwanted behaviour continue to occur, and/or if it is not situationally appropriate to approach the person engaging in the unwelcome conduct, a formal complaint must be submitted. The complaint should be prepared in writing and directed to the Manager of the person engaging in the alleged harassment. The document should contain a brief account of the offensive incident including when and where it occurred, the people involved, and the name(s) of any witnesses to the event. The Employee must then ensure that they cooperate with those parties responsible for investigating the complaint.

Upon receiving a formal complaint of harassment, Northern Communications Management will investigate the complaint in a timely and professional manner. If the Employee's supervisor or a General Manager is the alleged harasser, an external party will be designated to deal with the complaint.

Management will treat all complaints as confidential and work to protect all complainants and those participating in an investigation from retaliation or reprisal. Information concerning a complaint will not be released to anyone not involved in the investigation.

For more detailed information and the steps to take to report harassment, please refer to the **Northern Communication Services Workplace Harassment Policy**.

## **Workplace Investigations**

When an Employee is being investigated, for allegations of misconduct and/or as part of an ongoing criminal proceeding, Northern Communications may place the Employee on an unpaid administrative leave for the duration proceedings.

In all cases, Northern Communications will make every reasonable attempt to keep the Employee at work; however, if having that Employee at work may potentially compromise the safety of any other Employee or negatively impact any legitimate business interest, the Employee will be placed on leave.

## Section 4: Employee Benefits

Northern Communications believes in providing fair and equitable benefit plans and programs based on industry standards. This section briefly describes some of the benefits that Northern Communications provides to our valued Employees.

### Benefits Related to Part-Time Employment

Generally, Part-Time Employees are subject to the same terms and conditions of employment as Full-Time Employees.

Although many benefits apply to both Full and Part-Time Employees, some benefits apply to permanent full-time Employees only.

### Employee Group Insurance Plan

Some permanent full-time Employees are entitled to join the Group Insurance plan after the successful completion of the probationary period. Northern Communications currently pays the premiums for Staff but does not assume responsibility for payment of the benefit.

The plan includes a significant number of benefits, and Employees are encouraged to read the separate **Benefit Plan Booklet**, provided by the benefit carrier, for the complete details of the program.

Employees having completed their probation period will be provided with an enrolment form to join the benefit plan. This form must be completed within thirty (30) days or the applicant will be considered as a "late applicant." The Employee will be required to complete an additional "late applicant" form which will be sent to Industrial Life for assessment. If Industrial Alliance does not approve the late applicant form, the Employee will not be eligible for Short Term Disability (STD), Long Term Disability (LTD) and Life benefits. Failure to complete the additional form will also void all entitlement of STD, LTD and Life benefits.

Northern Communications is required, in accordance with the benefit contract, to administer the "Spousal Coordination" provision in the health and dental plan. The Spousal Coordination requires any working spouses, eligible for subsidized health and dental insurance through their Employer, to enroll in that Employer's medical plan.

Note that if an Employee and their spouse are both employed in permanent full-time positions at Northern Communications and eligible for benefits with family coverage, the Employee can submit under both individuals and the plan will be coordinated to achieve a co-pay to a maximum of 100% for health and dental claims.

Note that the premium for this plan is based on usage. If the usage increases, the premium increases as well. In reality, the Northern Group pays the entire cost incurred here plus the benefit company's administrative costs and has a limited budget to do so. If all Employees are careful with the amounts they spend, this plan should continue to be available.

For example, local pharmacy dispensing fees range from a low of \$4.40 to a high of \$11.99, for the pharmacy to do the exact same job. In addition, if an Employee has a prescription that runs for a number of months, and has it filled “up front” instead of monthly, only one dispensing fee will apply. Employees are reminded these expenditures are in their control, and requested to please “comparison shop” for savings where possible.

### **Employee Assistance Program**

Employees enrolled in the group benefits plan will have access to an Employee Assistance Program - LifeWorks. LifeWorks is a benefit provided by Northern Communications at no additional cost and is completely confidential. Any Employees who need help with a work-related issue or a personal or family problem can turn to LifeWorks for support. LifeWorks offers assistance with issues of employment and everyday life, and access to a wealth of resources.

More information regarding the Employee Assistance Program is available online, located on the Shared Drive at **S:\Employee Information Folder\Employee Assistance Program**.

### **Continuation of Benefits While on Leave**

Notwithstanding the above, the continuation of benefits is only possible where permitted by the insurer and provided that the eligibility requirements of the plan are met. Where these conditions are not met, benefits will not be continued.

During legislated leaves of absences, Northern Communications will continue benefit coverage, subject to the eligibility requirements of the applicable insurance carrier. Northern Communications will continue benefits for the legislated duration of the leave.

Northern Communications will continue benefits for Employees who are currently off work and receiving WSIB benefits, for up to twenty-four (24) months from the date of the injury or illness. Employees who are on LTD, benefits will be continued for up to twelve (12) months from the date of the injury or illness.

Employees who are away from work on approved personal leaves of absence which are scheduled to exceed four (4) weeks will be temporarily removed from the Northern Communications’ benefits plan for the duration of such leave. The Employee’s benefits will stop on the last day of work and will continue once the Employee returns to work.

### **Registered Retirement Savings Plan**

All Employees may participate in a group RRSP through payroll deductions. Under this plan, Employees’ RRSP contributions will be remitted on their behalf – however, unlike the Subsidized Retirement Plan (below), Northern Communications does **not** match contributions made in this way. This service is provided as a convenience only.

Contributions must be at least twenty-five dollars (\$25.00)/per bi-weekly pay.

It is the responsibility of the Employee to ensure that all governing contributions to RRSP’s and the Pension Plan or combination of both, as set out in the Income Tax Act, are observed.

### Subsidized Retirement Plan

Permanent full-time Employees are eligible for enrollment in the subsidized RRSP plan after one year of service. It is the responsibility of the Employee to inform their Manager if they would like to participate in this program, and to ensure they are receiving the correct percentage (as per the chart below).

Northern Communications will equally match Employee's contributions to the maximum as per below.

You may contribute to the Plan by payroll deduction in an amount up to a percentage of Employee earnings as outlined in the following scale:

<u>Years of Continuous Service</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
One (1) year but less than four (4) years	2%
Over four (4) years but less than eight (8) years	3%
Eight (8) years or more	4%

### Education Assistance Program

Northern Communications wishes to encourage Employees to continually upgrade and develop their skills and knowledge through taking courses.

Northern Communications offers reimbursement of tuition fees and other expenses as follows:

- If the course is **directly** job-related - 100%
- If the course is **slightly** job-related - 50%
- If the course is **not** job-related - 25%

The maximum amount that will be provided to any Employee under the Education Assistance Program is two-hundred-and-fifty dollars (\$250) per fiscal year (September 1 to August 31).

All courses being submitted for reimbursement require advance written approval from the General Manager.

Reimbursement of funds will be provided when the Employee provides proof of successful program completion and a receipt from the payment of the course have been provided to their Manager.

Northern Communications Management may, as a condition of reimbursement, require the Employee to agree to a defined minimum length of service by entering into a Return of Service Agreement. Alternately or additionally, Management or require the Employee to train other Employees on the material learned.

## Leaves of Absence

Northern Communications is committed to assisting Employees respond to individual situations by providing Leaves of Absence. Management must approve all leaves in order to ensure that business operations will not be significantly affected. In the case of illness/injury, the appropriate forms will be issued to the Employee on receipt of the department Managers' email request.

No request for leave will be unduly denied; if a Leave of Absence has merit and can be accommodated, Northern Communications will do so. Employees who are away from work on an approved leave are expected to maintain communication with Management.

Northern Communications reserves the right to contact Employees and maintain regular communication through the duration of the leave.

When an Employee returns to work after an authorized Leave of Absence, they will be returned to their former position. If that position is unavailable or no longer exists, the Employee will be reinstated to a comparable position at a similar wage.

Employees should provide an expected return date to their Manager and notify the Manager as soon as possible if there are changes to their planned return date. For further information on any of these leaves, please consult with a Manager.

## Bereavement Leave

In the event of a death of an immediate family member, all Employees who have completed their probationary period shall be granted up to three (3) consecutive days without loss of regular pay for scheduled hours. The three (3) days must be taken immediately following the date of the death or including the day of the death, or on any other such days that may be agreed upon by the Employee and his/ her Manager, whichever is applicable.

Employees who have not completed their probationary period shall be granted up to three (3) days without pay.

For the purposes of bereavement leave, "immediate family" is defined as father, mother, spouse, child, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, guardian or step-parent. The relationships specified here are deemed to include a common-law spouse and a partner of the same sex.)

Where an Employee chooses not to attend or is unable due to distance of travel or some other reason to attend the funeral of a member of his immediate family, they shall be entitled to leave for mourning on the day of the funeral without loss of regular straight time earnings to which they would otherwise have been entitled on that day.

## Compassionate Care Leave

All Employees are eligible to receive up to twenty-eight (28) weeks of unpaid leave to provide care or support to a family member, provided a medical doctor or nurse practitioner issues a certificate stating that the family member has a serious medical condition with a significant risk of death within twenty-six (26) weeks.

“Family member” refers to an individual related to an Employee whose relationship is described under the Employment Insurance program. The relationship can include, but not limited to, a spouse or common-law partner, a child, a parent or any other person who is prescribed under the Employment Insurance Act.

### **Critical Illness Leave**

There are two types of leaves related to critical illness:

- An Employee, who is a family member of a critically ill child, is eligible to take up to thirty-seven (37) weeks of unpaid leave to provide care or support to the child. A "critically ill child" is a person under eighteen (18) years of age, on the day the leave begins, whose health has changed and whose life is at risk as a result of an illness or injury (as defined under the Employment Insurance Regulations); and
- An Employee, who is a family member of a critically ill adult, is eligible to take up to seventeen (17) weeks of unpaid leave to provide care or support to the adult. A “critically ill adult” is a person of eighteen (18) years of age or more, on the day the leave begins, whose health has changed and whose life is at risk as a result of an illness or injury (as defined under the Employment Insurance Regulations).

In order to be entitled to this leave, an Employee must have completed at least six (6) consecutive months of employment with Northern Communications. The Employee must give written notice, as soon as possible, to their Manager. The notice must advise the Manager of the reason(s) for the leave and the intended length of the leave.

### **Jury Duty and Attendance at Court**

If an Employee is required to serve as a juror or required to attend the court of law as a Crown Witness, Northern Communications shall compensate them for time lost from work for such service at their regular rate of pay up to a maximum of two (2) weeks. In consideration of this, the Employee agrees to turn over to Northern Communications any monies paid to them for such service, **excluding** mileage, accommodation and meal allowance.

### **Leave Related to a Death or Disappearance**

Employees who have worked for Northern Communications for at least six (6) consecutive months are entitled to take up to fifty (52) weeks of unpaid leave in the case of a missing child (under 18 years of age) and up to one hundred and four (104) weeks of unpaid leave if the child has died. An Employee is not entitled to the leave if the Employee is charged with the crime or it is probable, considering the circumstances, that the child was a party to the crime.

For the purposes of this leave, a “parent” is defined as:

- A parent of a child;
- The spouse or common-law partner of a parent of a child;
- A person with whom a child has been placed for the purposes of adoption;
- The guardian or foster parent of a child; or
- A person who has the care, custody or control of a child, and is considered to be like a close relative, whether or not they are related by blood or adoption.

## **Maternity Leave**

Maternity Leave is available for pregnant Employees that have worked with Northern Communications for at least six (6) consecutive months. Employees are entitled to up to seventeen (17) weeks of unpaid maternity leave.

Maternity leave may be taken any time during the period that begins thirteen (13) weeks before the expected date of delivery and ends seventeen (17) weeks after the actual delivery date.

Employees requesting Maternity Leave must provide their direct Manager with a medical certificate confirming their pregnancy.

A request for maternity leave will never be denied. Employees are responsible for providing at least two (2) weeks of advance written notice to their Manager when requesting maternity leave.

## **Parental/Adoption Leave**

Parental/Adoption Leave is available to all Employees who have completed at least six (6) months of continuous employment with Northern Communications and are the parent of a new child. Employees are entitled to receive up to sixty-three (63) weeks of unpaid leave, which may be taken any time during the seventy-eight (78) week period starting the day the child is born or comes into the custody or care of the Employee.

Employees are responsible for providing at least two (2) weeks of advance written notice to their Manager when requesting parental/adoption leave.

## **During and after Maternity and Parental/Adoption Leave**

During maternity and parental/adoption leaves, if applicable, Northern Communications will continue to pay the premiums for the group benefit plan (medical and dental coverage).

Sick leave credits are not accumulated during this leave. After this leave has been completed, an Employee will be reinstated in the same position held prior to the leave, or with a valid reason, in a comparable position. The Employee will also receive the similar wages and benefits as received before the leave. The time entitled and the procedures etc. to be followed by Northern Communications will be according to the Canada Labour Code.

## **Reservist Leave**

Employees who are military reservists are entitled to unpaid leave from their civilian employment to take part in annual training, or in certain operations in Canada or abroad that are designated by the Minister of National Defence. Reservists must have a minimum of six (6) months continuous employment with Northern Communications in order to be eligible for the leave.

Employees are entitled to up to fifteen (15) days of unpaid leave for annual training. There is no specified time limit for leave while a reservist takes part in a designated operation or is called out for service.

Employees must provide four (4) weeks written notice of the day on which they will begin the leave (unless there is a valid reason for not doing so) and must advise Northern Communications of the duration of the leave. Upon return from leave, the Employee will be reinstated to the same position if it still exists or to a comparable position if it does not.



## Personal Leave of Absence

Should none of the other types of leave apply; an Employee may request to take an Unpaid Personal Leave of Absence. The approval of a Personal Leave of Absence will be judged on its merit with consideration to the potential impact on the Northern Group's operations. The decision to approve or deny a Personal Leave of Absence is the sole discretion of the Employee's Manager. Employees who are approved for Personal Leaves of Absence are not entitled to company Benefits while on leave.

## Sick Pay

Paid sick leave is designed to provide income security for Employees who are ill or injured. Full-time Employees with an average of forty (40) hours per week who have passed their probationary period may qualify for up to eight (8) days of paid sick leave annually. This is calculated at a rate of 3.08% of eligible hours (regular hours worked, Overtime worked, stat, bereavement, vacation) to a maximum of sixty-four (64) hours in a year.

Employees are required to talk to their Manager when calling in sick. Management of Northern Communications may, at their sole discretion, require an Employee to provide medical documentation to verify absences from work.

Sick leave credits are accrued annually beginning with the first Pay Day in January to the last Pay Day in December of the calendar year (the same period as covered by that year's T4 form).

Sick leave credits must be accrued before they are used. Accumulated credits may not be carried over from year to year. Any sick leave credits accrued and not taken in one year will be paid out during the following year at a rate of fifty percent (50%).

## Short Term Disability

Employees are required to use all accrued paid sick days prior to receiving Short Term Disability benefits (STD). For STD applications, supporting medical documentation must be received within seven (7) days or the file may be closed.

Employees who are Totally Disabled due to non-work related accident, illness or disability and are unable to perform the essential duties of their own occupation are eligible to apply for Short Term Disability coverage.

While absent on Short Term Disability, Employees must communicate with their Manager on a bi-weekly basis or on another mutually agreed time frame. Should documentation or communication be requested and not provided within seven (7) days, the Employee may be scheduled for work. Employees who fail to show up for three (3) consecutive work days will be deemed to have voluntarily resigned their employment, and as a result, their benefits will be terminated effective immediately.

For detailed information regarding the process, qualifications and responsibilities, Employees are requested to view the **Employee Group Benefits Information Booklet** and the **STD Process Flow Chart** located in the Employee Information Folder on the Shared Drive.

## Long Term Disability

Where a full-time Employee is absent on Long-Term Disability (LTD) for a period of twenty-four (24) months from the time the disability or illness commence, the Manager will connect with the Employee to determine his/her ability to return to work with accommodations.

While absent on Long Term Disability, Employees must communicate with their Manager(s) on a monthly basis or on another mutually agreed time frame.

If it is determined that return to work is unlikely or improbable and no accommodation is reasonable within the Employer's duty to accommodate, then the Employee will be deemed terminated in accordance with the Canada Labour Code, providing such termination does not violate the Human Rights Code.

## Statutory Holidays

Northern Communications recognizes nine (9) days as statutory holidays and grants Employees time off work on these days for which the Employee is paid Holiday Pay. The recognized holidays are:

**New Year's Day** (Jan 1)

**Good Friday** (varies by year)

**Victoria Day** (2<sup>nd</sup>-last Monday in May)

**Canada Day** (July 1)

**Civic Holiday** (1st Monday in Aug.)

**Labour Day** (1st Monday in Sept)

**Thanksgiving Day** (2<sup>nd</sup> Monday in Oct.)

**Christmas Day** (Dec 25)

**Boxing Day** (Dec 26)

Note that the "Civic Holiday" in August is a substitute for Remembrance Day (November 11) and as "Family Day" is an Ontario Provincial holiday, and we are a federally regulated company we do not recognize that day as a statutory holiday.

In order to be eligible for Holiday Pay, an Employee must have worked at Northern Communications for a period longer than thirty (30) days.

Employees covered by the Canada Labour Code are entitled to payment for Statutory Holidays according to the Code. For most Employees, their holiday pay will be equal to at least one twentieth (1/20th) of the wages, excluding Overtime pay, that they earned in the four (4) week period immediately before the week in which the general holiday occurs.

Employees who are required to work on a statutory holiday shall be paid, in addition to the holiday pay for that day, at a rate equal to at least one and one-half times their regular rate of wages for the time worked on that day.

When a statutory holiday falls on a non-working day, an Employee may be granted either the last working day before or after the holiday or some other chosen day off with the appropriate entitlement pay. Northern Communications Management will determine which day is given.

## Vacations

Vacations are one of the nice things to look forward to each year. Northern Communications' vacation year is based on the calendar year, January 1st to December 31st.

Northern Communications uses these guidelines to determine Employee vacation entitlement:

- 1.) Vacations with pay will be granted in accordance with the Employees' length of service.
- 2.) Employees must complete one (1) year of employment prior to taking a vacation.
- 3.) In the first "partial" year after an Employee is hired, that Employee's vacation pay will accrue at a rate of four percent (4%) of total gross earnings starting from date hired. The amount accrued is what is available in the subsequent calendar year.

Following this, an Employee's vacation will accrue with completed years of service as follows:

Employees who have completed one year's service with Northern Communications shall receive an annual vacation of two (2) weeks with pay at the rate of four percent (4%) of their gross earnings during the previous year.

Employees who have completed five (5) years but less than ten (10) years of service shall receive an annual vacation of three (3) weeks with pay at the rate of six percent (6%) of their gross annual earnings during the previous year.

All Employees who have completed ten (10) years but less than fifteen (15) years of service shall receive an annual vacation of four (4) weeks with pay at the rate of eight percent (8%) of their gross earnings during the previous year.

Employees who have completed fifteen (15) years or more of service shall receive an annual vacation of five (5) weeks with pay at the rate of ten percent (10%) of their gross earnings during the previous year.

Requests must be made in writing or by email, and submitted to the Employee's Manager.

The scheduling of vacations is done on a first-come, first served basis. Where all other factors are equal, the Manager will give preference to vacation requests in order of the Employee's length of service with Northern Communications. Vacation scheduling will be the duty of each Manager.

A vacation request will not be denied unless the Manager feels that granting it would have a negative effect on operations or if essential services would not be covered. In special circumstances, it may be required to cancel vacations and reschedule them at an alternate time if essential services would not be covered.

Except in unusual pre-approved circumstances, all vacation is to be taken in the calendar year immediately following the completion of the year of employment in which it was earned. For each five (5) scheduled work days, Employees are on vacation; one (1) week will be deducted from their vacation bank.

Statutory Holidays occurring during your vacation will not be counted as days of vacation unless you are paid both holiday and vacation pay for the holiday day.

All accrued vacation should be taken each year. However, at a minimum, Employees are required to take at least two (2) weeks' vacation.

**\*Should any policy be in conflict with a collective agreement covering an Employee.**

**that Employee shall follow the provisions of their collective agreement**

**“Perks”**

In addition to our regular remuneration package, benefits, sick days, pension etc. Northern Communications also provides the following to Employees in good standing once they have completed their probationary period:

**1.) Rogers Discount**

- Northern Communications Employees may be eligible for a special offer from Rogers. More information about this promotion is available on the Shared Drive at **S:\Employee Information\Rogers cellular Employee discount - Beyond Wireless.pdf**

**2.) Free filtered water**

- Compared to purchasing at two dollars (\$2.00) a day, this has a potential value of about five hundred dollars (\$500.00) per year per Employee.

**3.) Free parking**

- Some companies either provide no parking or charge their Employees. At fifty dollars (\$50.00) per month, this has a potential value of three hundred (\$300.00) per year per Employee.

**4.) Free pager**

- Rental Pagers start at fifteen dollars and ninety-five cents (\$15.95) per month. This has a potential value of about two hundred dollars (\$200.00) per year per Employee.
- The Employee is responsible for returning all equipment to Northern Communications in good working condition upon termination of employment or upon discontinuation of the paging service.

**5.) Free Voice mail account**

- Voice Mail accounts start at fifteen dollars and ninety-five cents (\$15.95) per month. This has a potential value of about two hundred dollars (\$200.00) per year per Employee.

**6.) Free Alarm Monitoring**

- Residential Alarm Monitoring has a retail rate of about twenty-three dollars and ninety-five cents (\$23.95) per month. This has a potential value of about two hundred and eighty-seven dollars (\$287.00) per year per Employee.

*\* Free Employee alarm services will continue in conjunction with benefits while an Employee is on leave and may be terminated in accordance to the timelines outlined for benefits continuation.*

**7.) Discounted Alarm equipment**

- Alarm equipment is provided at cost. The value of this depends on the items purchased. Employees who wish to purchase discount alarm equipment must pay the invoice, in-full, at the time of purchase.

- 8.) Annual Christmas or Staff Appreciation party
- Northern Communication Staff parties are popular Employee events. Hosting a party costs Northern Communications about seventy-five dollars (\$75.00) per person.
  - Northern Communications also hosts an annual Children’s Christmas Party for the children of Employees and provides a gift for each attending child under the age of eight (8) years old. Children older than 8 are invited to attend the party but are not eligible for a Company-provided gift and must have a gift furnished (in advance) by a parent/guardian.
- 9.) Northern Communications will pay, on a graduated scale, the cost of some educational courses.
- The value of this perk depends on the type and number of courses taken.
- 10.) Northern Communications sponsors two (2) Employee’s children’s sports teams, to the value of two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250.00) each per year.
- 11.) Northern Communications has a Staff “Fun Committee” and provides a “social fund” for various activities as selected by the Committee. (Summer Party, pizza day, etc.)
- 12.) Northern Communications buys season tickets to sports games and makes them available to Employees.
- The value of this perk depends on the number of games attended.
- 13.) Employee Referral Program
- If an Employee refers someone for employment with Northern Communications, and the applicant is hired and completes their probationary period, the referring Employee receives a day off with pay!
  - If the referred Employee remains at the Northern Communications for more than one (1) year (i.e. not off on a leave of absence more than five days, disability leave, maternity leave, etc.) the referring Employee receives a monetary bonus of two-hundred-and-fifty dollars (\$250.00). This bonus is paid through Payroll.
  - The referring Employee must notify the appropriate Manager(s) of the referral **prior** to the candidate being interviewed.
  - For the referring Employee to receive the paid days off and/or the referral payout, both Employees (referring and referred) must remain in good standing.

## Section 5: Health & Safety

Employees are requested to please submit all Health and Safety inquiries and issue reports by email to: [healthandsafety@northerncom.com](mailto:healthandsafety@northerncom.com)

### Employer Duties

Northern Communications is committed to ensuring that the health and safety of every Employee is protected while they are at work. It is the policy of Northern Communications to comply with legislative requirements to make all Company premises and job sites safe places to work.

#### Northern Communications will:

- 1.) Strive to eliminate any foreseeable hazards, which may result in personal injuries or illnesses, fires, security losses, property damage and accidents.
- 2.) Take reasonable care to ensure that Employees are made aware of every known or foreseeable health or safety hazard in the area they are working in.
- 3.) Provide training to all Employees in the recognition and correction of hazards and the proper use, handling, and storage of hazardous materials along with the proper use of any personal protective equipment, safety materials, or devices which may be used in Company facilities.
- 4.) Ensure that vehicles, mobile equipment, buildings and structures Employees use or work in meet prescribed standards.
- 5.) Investigate, record and report all accidents, occupational diseases and other known hazardous occurrences as outlined in the legislation.
- 6.) Post a copy of the Health and Safety policy, a copy of the legislation, and any other related material in an accessible place.
- 7.) Support and work with the Joint Health and Safety Committee(s), and ensure the Committee members receive training and are fully aware of their responsibilities.
- 8.) Ensure that all other Employer responsibilities are adhered to as outlined in the Federal legislation.

### Employee Responsibilities

#### All Northern Communications Employees will ensure they:

- 1.) Review and become familiar with their responsibilities and comply with all instructions in respect to health and safety, as detailed in Northern Communications' Health and Safety Policies and Procedures.
- 2.) Use any required personal protective equipment, safety materials or devices intended for their protection.
- 3.) Take reasonable and necessary precautions to ensure their health and safety along with their fellow Employees and cooperate with Northern Communications and JHSC representatives.
- 4.) Assist in identifying and eliminating hazards, minimizing accidents, working safely at all times, and following procedures necessary for the protection of all.

Loss prevention is the direct responsibility of all who are associated with Northern Communications. No job is so important, and no service is so urgent, that Employees cannot take time to perform their work **safely**.

Through cooperation and the full acceptance of the responsibility to consider health and safety in every activity, Employees and Executives can ensure that Northern Communications is and remains a safe place to work.

The Management of Northern Group is vitally interested in the health and safety of all Employees. Protection of Employees from injury or occupational disease is a major and continuing objective. **All** Employees – whether Staff or Management – must be dedicated to the continuing objective of reducing the risk of occupational illness and injury.

### **Accident and Injury Reporting**

It is essential that **all** injuries and accidents, as well as any potential hazards in the workplace, be immediately reported to a Supervisor, no matter how minor they may seem. By reporting to your Supervisor, steps can be taken to prevent future injury to people and damage to equipment and property.

The Supervisor will be responsible for completing the necessary First Aid - Accident Report and investigating the incident as required.

Completed reports must be signed by the Supervisor **and** the affected Employee(s). A copy of the completed report will be provided to the Employee for their own records.

All completed reports must be provided to the Payroll Department Manager, who is responsible for reporting the incident (where required) within the timeframe required by legislation.

### **Fire Procedures**

All Northern Communications Employees must be aware of the fire procedures and/or evacuation plans to follow in the event of a fire emergency in their office.

Each office has its own list of procedures to follow in case of a fire. All Employees are responsible for reading and knowing these procedures. Fire extinguishers are located throughout the buildings to extinguish minor fires.

The Alarm Monitoring Station/Dispatch Centre walls are designed to withstand fire for a period of two (2) hours. Because this area deals with matters of life and death, its Employees should not evacuate for minor fires in areas outside the Monitoring Station. The Monitoring Station/Dispatch Center has a separate fire response plan, which is posted within the Department.

Employees with a disability, whether such disability is permanent or temporary, who may need help during an emergency/evacuation must let their immediate Manager know, as soon as possible after their hire date (or the onset of the disability, as appropriate). The Manager will work with the Employee to develop an individualized emergency response that will meet the Employee's needs in an emergency situation.

For more information on the Health and Safety program at the Northern Group of Companies, please see the Health and Safety Policy.

## Section 6: Community Involvement

A percentage from the proceeds from the all the services and/or equipment that Northern Group provides is donated back to the community and various charities.

Together, we are making a difference in the communities we live in and do business with. Northern Group has made contributions to each of the organizations and causes listed below:

- ABCs and Rice
- Alzheimer's Society Sudbury-Manitoulin
- Alzheimer's Society of New Brunswick
- Angels of Hope Against Human Trafficking
- Be a Santa to a Senior
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters Sudbury & North Bay
- Brain Injury Association
- Canadian Cancer Society
- Canadian Deaf Sports Association
- Canadian Diabetes Association
- Canadian Red Cross
- Children's Wish Foundation
- Club Richelieu Sudbury
- Drugs and Addiction Magazine
- Elementary Safety Book for Children
- Elgin Street Mission
- Finlandia Village
- Foster Families of Bolton Caledon Rotary
- Greater Sudbury Police Services
- Health Sciences North Foundation
- Heart and Stroke Foundation
- Hurricane Relief Fund
- MADD Canada
- Maison McCulloch Hospice
- Near North Crime Stoppers
- North Bay Food Bank
- North Bay Police Association
- North Bay Special Olympics
- Northern Cancer Foundation
- Ontario Children's Treatment Centre
- Our Children, Our Future
- Parkinson Society
- Police Safety Magazine
- Pregnancy Care Centre & Infant Food Bank
- Rotary Club of Sudbury Sunrisers
- Schumacher Lions Club
- Special Olympics Ontario
- St. Joseph's Health Centre
- Sudbury Manitoulin Children's Foundation
- Sudbury Rainbow Crime Stoppers
- The Cure Foundation
- Widdifield Lions Club



## Section 7: Communication

### Privacy Policy

The privacy of individuals connected with our business, including our Customers, Contractors, Employees, and website Visitors has always been of great importance to Northern Communication Services Inc. Keeping personal information in strict confidence is a cornerstone of Northern Communication Services' business practices.

Regardless of how the range of products and services offered by The Northern Group expands, or how technology used by the Company changes, The Northern Group will always strive to protect the privacy of personal information, subject to any consent an individual has provided for its use.

Northern Communications' Privacy Policy describes the principles on which Northern Communication Services Inc. and its subsidiaries will protect the privacy of personal information.

Northern Communications' Privacy Policy is based on the Canadian Standards Association Model Code for the Protection of Personal Information. This policy is part of Northern Communications' commitment to ensuring that all personal information of individuals in its possession is protected and used in accordance with the law. Privacy laws across Canada are evolving, and therefore this policy is subject to change.

Personal Information is any information about an identifiable person, other than business contact information including an Employee's name, title, business address and business telephone number or email.

Personal Information includes such details as a person's home address, date of birth, social insurance number, medical records, employment and financial information.

With respect to Customers, this information is collected primarily in connection with services and products provided by Northern Communications. Employees may also be asked to provide such information to the Company, in connection with matters relating to their employment. In all cases, Northern Communications is committed to protecting the privacy of individuals and the integrity of their personal information.

Employees may request access to review their general Employee information records. Employee requests to view their own records will not be refused. A Manager must be present during the viewing of the Employee's records, and **no** material may be altered or removed from the file.

Concerns or complaints related to privacy issues must be made, in writing, to the Privacy Officer setting out the details of the concern or complaint. The Privacy Officer shall investigate the matter forthwith and make a determination related to the resolution of the concern(s) or complaint(s).

The complete text of Northern Communication Services' Privacy Policy can be viewed online at <http://www.northerncom.com/privacy2.php>.

## **Internal Privacy Policy**

Northern Communication Services collects information from its Clients in order to provide them with the services they require, to invoice them for services and to contact them for collection purposes. Information may also be used to make Clients aware of products and services that may be of interest to them and to send newsletters. We respect the privacy of our Clients and do not collect any unnecessary information.

Under no circumstances are Employees to share information about our Clients with anyone outside the Northern Group unless the services that they have contracted us to provide require us to do so. Should authorities request information about a Client the request is to be passed on to the President (Mike Shantz) or the CEO (John Whitehead) – the President and/or CEO may decide if the information required will be shared.

Any Employee who is found to be in breach of this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including termination for cause.

## **Executive Open-Door Policy**

Northern Communications encourages input from all Employees. Should any Employee have an idea or suggestion on how the Company can improve its processes, improve Employee relations, or improve Customer service, they are encouraged to meet with a member of the Executive Team to discuss it.

Northern Communications places great value on Employee input. Any Employee who discusses an issue with their Manager but feels the situation is not properly addressed/resolved is encouraged to escalate the issue “up the organizational chart”, advising that Manager’s Supervisor or another Executive.

## **Dispute Resolution**

Northern Communications’ problem-solving and dispute resolution process provides a vehicle by which Employees may lodge complaints or express concerns to Management about their employment relationships with Northern Communications or on other issues.

Should any Employee have any concerns or disputes with any person associated with Northern Communications, that Employee is encouraged to please take their concerns to their immediate Manager (or, failing that, any other Manager).

Northern Communications believes in resolving Employee concerns and disputes, related to their employment relationship, in a prompt and equitable manner.

Employees who express any concerns, or lodge a formal complaint under this policy, or who provide information regarding a complaint under this policy may do so without fear of retaliation or reprisal.

## **Business Communications**

The official language of business at Northern Communications is English. While we serve Clients in many other languages, all business correspondence and communications, both internal and external, are normally conducted in English.

Within this context, regular business operations - including but not limited to meetings, correspondence and conversations with Employees, Management, Clients and Suppliers – are normally conducted in English. Employees are free to communicate with each other in the language of their choice during breaks and lunch.

In order to maintain and promote a fair, inclusive and respectful workplace, Employees are encouraged to converse in English when in the presence of Colleagues, Supervisors, or Clients, particularly when the other party does not understand the language that is being spoken. Exceptions to this policy obviously apply in situations where Northern Communications is providing service to a Client in their language of choice.

## **Handbook Updates**

As with all Northern Communications Policies and Procedures, this Handbook is subject to revision/change at any time.

Employees are responsible for keeping up-to-date on any changes to the Employee Handbook, and to any other Northern Communications Policies and Procedures.

All changes/amendments to the Employee Handbook will be authorized by a Manager and include the date the change was applied.

Employees are encouraged to please approach Management should they have any questions or concerns regarding the contents of the Handbook, or any Company Policy or Procedure.

Employees who have a printed copy of the Handbook are responsible for ensuring they have the most current version. The most recent version of this document is available on the company Shared Drive at **S:\Employee Information\Employee Handbook**.

## Section 8: Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct outlines the standards governing the conduct of all Employees of Northern Communication Services Inc. (NCS). It is based on the following values:

- 1.) Excellence in service to the public.
- 2.) Fairness and respect for human rights and the dignity of all people.
- 3.) Honesty and accountability.

All Employees of Northern Communications must read, understand, acknowledge and sign the following Code of Conduct agreement **before** beginning work with the Company.

### **Northern Communication Services Inc. Code of Conduct Agreement**

#### **Standard of Professional Excellence:**

- 1.) I will strive for excellence, efficiency, accuracy and reliability in the performance of work-related activities.
- 2.) I will operate within the parameters of my job roles and responsibilities while recognizing my skills, knowledge, and areas of competence.
- 3.) I will keep abreast of developments in my fields and endeavour to improve and expand my skills and competencies.
- 4.) I will act in accordance with Canadian laws; I do not participate in or condone dishonesty, fraud, or deception.

#### **Personal Integrity:**

- 1.) I represent the professional qualifications, affiliations, education, skills, and accomplishments of the individual and/or of NCS accurately.
- 2.) I take individual responsibility and credit only for work actually performed by myself, or to which I have contributed.
- 3.) I will refrain from exploitative relationships particularly where there is an imbalance of power.
- 4.) I will not work impaired in any way, and I will abstain from the use of substances (i.e., alcohol or drugs) when at work or participating in other work-related activities, with the exception of substances taken for medical purposes if they do not impair functioning.

#### **Responsibility to Clients and Customers:**

- 1.) I believe that our Clients have the right and capacity to determine their own needs and how they will get them met, and work to support this end.
- 2.) I will help Clients/Customers in a non-judgmental and non-partisan way, without stigmatization or bias. All are served equally and with dignity, regardless of race, age, religion, gender, sexual preference, national or ethnic origin, political beliefs, marital status, or disability.
- 3.) I will employ a friendly, courteous, respectful, empathetic, and professional manner in providing service.

- 4.) I aim to communicate clearly to ensure mutual comprehension, asking relevant, clarifying questions that promote understanding of service needs.
- 5.) I will maintain confidentiality except when disclosure is compelled by law; identifying when written or electronic information is protected.

**Responsibility to Colleagues:**

- 1.) I will treat Colleagues with consideration and respect, appreciating differences in opinion and styles of working. I will not tolerate discrimination, workplace violence or harassment, unwarranted negative criticism, or any abuse.
- 2.) I will work cooperatively and supportively to advance the services and objectives of NCS.
- 3.) I acknowledge the work and contributions made by others.
- 4.) I strive for good communication and clear understanding of expectations.
- 5.) I maintain confidentiality with respect to personal information about my Colleagues.

**Responsibility to Northern Communications:**

- 1.) I will provide service consistent with Northern Communications mission statement, philosophy, and goals as determined by the board and /or Management.
- 2.) I will support and uphold Northern Communications' reputation in the community.
- 3.) I will not use my position(s) in association with Northern Communications for personal gain. I will acknowledge conflicts of interest and voluntarily withdraw from any such situations.
- 4.) I will treat the workplace and Northern Communications property in a respectful and non-wasteful manner.
- 5.) I recognize that materials prepared in the course of employment or association with Northern Communications are the property of Northern Communications.
- 6.) I will uphold confidentiality with respect to the maintenance, storage, retrieval, use, and disposition of Northern Communications information, files, and materials.
- 7.) I understand that this Employee Handbook document will be updated on an occasional basis and agree to keep the various sections in it up to date.

**By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read the entire Employee Handbook and all sections within, and agree to abide by all Northern Communications Policies and Procedures.**

X

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee (please sign AND print name)

X

\_\_\_\_\_  
Manager (please sign AND print name)

## Appendix “A” Document History

This Handbook will have individual pages updated on an occasional basis.

The electronic version of this Handbook will always be current and correct, and will have accurate page numbers in the table of contents.

For environmental reasons, Northern Communications does not reprint the entire Handbook should a page be inserted or deleted.

For Employees reviewing a paper copy of this Handbook, please check the “History” page and the last updated date of the page(s) in question. Information may have been added or changed since the paper copy was printed.

<b>Change and Page #</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Completed by</b>
Drugs and alcohol in the workplace p. 23	March 5, 2018	Updates to policy	Gabrielle, Michelle
Employment Equity p.27	April 25, 2018	Northern Communications’ commitment to Employment Equity	Gabrielle, Michelle
Education Assistance Program p.39	April 26, 2018	Increase in education assistance program	Gabrielle, Michelle
Vacation Pay p.45	July 12, 2018	Removed reference to Vacation Pay for commission salesmen	Grant Dussiaume
Drugs and Alcohol in the Workplace p.23	October 17, 2018	Updates to policy	Grant Dussiaume
Inappropriate or Unacceptable Conduct and Behaviour p.29	October 17, 2018	Updates to policy	Grant Dussiaume
Progressive Discipline p.30	October 17, 2018	Added requirement for Managers to consult with other Managers and HR.	Grant Dussiaume
Personal Integrity p.54	October 17, 2018	Added “I will not work impaired in any way and” to the final point.	Grant Dussiaume
Dress Code p.21	November 26, 2018	Added that technicians must wear PPE and listed hard hats, safety glasses, steel toe boots as being provided by the Northern Group.	Grant Dussiaume
Workplace Investigations p.36	January 9, 2019	Added the sub-section dealing with Workplace Investigations	Grant Dussiaume
Entirety	Mar. 14, 2019	Proposed style, grammar and structure revisions to entire Employee Handbook	Chris Binstock
Entirety	Mar. 27, 2019	Implemented proposed changes based on feedback from Admin Dept. Manager; reviewed document and corrected remaining spelling/grammar/format issues.	Grant Dussiaume Chris Binstock