



# *EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK*

## NORTH CENTRAL OHIO EDUCATIONAL SERVICE CENTER

928 WEST MARKET STREET, SUITE A

TIFFIN, OHIO 44883

PHONE: (419) 447-2927

FAX: (419) 447-2825

[www.ncoesc.org](http://www.ncoesc.org)

***NCOESC Staff Member:***

This handbook was created to provide our NCOESC employees with information concerning their employment. The provisions in this handbook are not to be considered conditions of your employment contract. The NCOESC Governing Board specifically reserves the right to modify or abolish any provision in this handbook at any time and without any notice to its employees. This handbook is intended for informational purposes only and is not to be construed as imposing any obligation, contractual or otherwise, upon the NCOESC Governing Board with respect to any subject it contains. Electronic access to the NCOESC Employee Handbook can be found at [www.ncoesc.org](http://www.ncoesc.org).

All policies contained in this document may not be inclusive of the entire NCOESC Policy Manual officially adopted by the NCOESC Board of Governors. Employees should refer to the official Policy Manual for further explanations. The Policy Manual is available at [www.ncoesc.org](http://www.ncoesc.org).

The North Central Ohio Educational Service Center is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

It is the policy of the Board that no staff member or candidate for employment of the ESC, shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or military status, be discriminated against, excluded from participation in any program or activity for which the Board is responsible or for which it receives financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. Please take the time to review the policies and procedures contained in this handbook. If you have questions, feel free to ask your supervisor or contact the Director of Human Resources.

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## Message from the Superintendent

Welcome to our NCOESC family! It is because of all of our employees that NCOESC is one of the best ESC's in the state of Ohio! We have created this employee handbook to help you navigate information or answer questions that you may have as an employee. Use this as a helpful resource, however, do not hesitate to call if you need any guidance or have any questions.

Again, we are excited that you have chosen to be a part of our NCOESC family.

Sincerely,

Brenda Luhring

## Vision, Mission and Core Values

**Vision** – "The vision of the NCOESC is to be a recognized leader committed to meeting the needs of our educational partners"

**Mission** – "...To meet the needs of our educational partners through excellent service."

**Core Values** –

- **Educational leadership** exhibited through honesty, trust and integrity
- **Cost-effective delivery** through quality customer service and meeting the needs of the children
- **Professional growth and development** through flexibility and innovative practices by thinking out of the box

## Who is NCOESC?

North Central Ohio Educational Service Center (NCOESC) is committed to offering quality programs and services to help school districts meet their unique needs. We have an experienced staff of over 350 with in-depth knowledge on a wide variety of topics. Our staff has the expertise and training to design programs, services, and professional development to address the needs of our school districts.

Agency personnel have developed a network of resources at the local, state, and even the national level to support initiatives needed by the agency and the districts we serve. Employees regularly attend training to stay current with the latest research-based best practices, state and federal regulations, and updated standards.

NCOESC serves more than 29,000 students in Crawford, Marion, Richland, Sandusky, Seneca, Wyandot, and Union counties and supports 14 community schools throughout the State of Ohio.

NCOESC is the fiscal agent for several programs, which include but are not limited to the Family and Children First Council and State Support Team Region 7.

## North Central Ohio ESC Offices and Contact Information

### ***Tiffin Campus***

928 West Market Street, Suite A, Tiffin, Ohio 44883  
Phone: (419) 447-2927; Fax: (419) 447-2825

Superintendent:	Brenda Luhring
Treasurer:	Jennifer Hedrick
Executive Director of Student Services:	Heather Justen
Executive Director of Curriculum & Learning:	Dr. Kristi Graves
Director of Educational & Related Services:	Morgan Kuhn
Business Director:	Debbie Huffman
Director of Prof. Development and Partnerships:	Kathy Mohr
Director of Buildings and Grounds:	Tim Chaney
Director of NCORcog:	John Davoli
Director of Human Resources:	Kim Fisher
Director of Technology:	Brian Rupp

### ***Marion Campus***

100 Executive Drive, Marion, Ohio 43302  
Phone: (740) 387-6625; Fax: (740) 383-4804

Assistant Superintendent:	Bruce Gast
Director of Community Schools:	Dawn Waddell

### ***Mansfield Campus (SST7)***

1495 West Longview Avenue, Suite 200  
Mansfield, Ohio 44906  
Phone: (419) 747-4808; Fax: (419) 747-3806  
Toll Free: (800) 424-7372

Executive Director:	Dr. George Csanyi
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## Employment

Employment is contingent upon an acceptable background check, verification of degree appropriate to the position (transcripts must be submitted), and proper certification/licensure (current certificates must be submitted).

### Criminal Background Checks

All employees must complete both the BCI (Ohio) and FBI (Federal) background checks upon employment. The cost for the BCI and FBI checks is the employee's responsibility.

Employees who have completed both of these background checks in the last 365 days before beginning employment with the NCOESC may not be required to repeat the background checks if a paper copy can be obtained and submitted to the Director of HR before the start date. However, if a paper copy is not available, checks will need to be completed again and sent to both the Ohio Department of Education (electronically) and the NCOESC.

All licensed employees must undergo FBI checks every five (5) years after being hired. It is the employee's responsibility to have these completed.

The BCI and FBI checks may be done at the NCOESC by appointment by contacting the NCOESC Receptionist. The results of both checks will be submitted electronically through WebCheck to the Ohio Department of Education for those applying for new or renewed licenses or permits.

### Personnel Records

Certain information concerning Educational Service Center employees is confidential, to be reviewed only under conditions which guarantee protection of both management's right to access information and the employee's right to unnecessary invasion of privacy. Most information in the personnel files, however, is not confidential and is available for inspection in accordance with State law.

### Initial Employment

Upon employment, each employee is to submit for the:

#### Personnel File

1. A completed employment application form
2. A copy of a current, valid license, if applicable
3. Transcripts, if applicable



### Payroll File

1. Tax-related forms
2. Retirement registration
3. completed annuity forms
4. payroll deduction authorization
5. accumulated sick leave, if applicable
6. I-9 forms

### Confidential File

1. Record of a recent physical examination, if applicable
2. History of any medical treatment
3. Criminal history record check

Professional staff members shall also be responsible upon employment, for providing a complete transcript of their education and records of all prior teaching experience.

All information concerning employees' health status, including mental or physical examinations and treatments are to be kept in a confidential file. Access is limited to the employee, the employee's supervisor, the Superintendent and other central office administrators who have a supervisory relationship to the employee, and others authorized by law.

### Contents of Personnel Files During Employment

During the period of employment, the following data shall be maintained in personnel files:

1. current correct name, address, and telephone number
2. current data on education completed, including transcripts of all academic work
3. an accurate record of work experience
4. proof of fulfillment of requirements for change in salary classification
5. current data pertaining to licenses required by the State
6. record of assignments
7. proof of discharge from military service
8. rate of compensation
9. completed evaluations
10. disciplinary incidents
11. special awards or distinctions
12. letters and other correspondence received concerning a staff member, providing the correspondence is relevant to his/her employment

### Licensure

It is required that personnel meet the requirements for having or obtaining an Ohio Department of Education permit, certificate or license as an expectation for employment. Such as, but not limited to:

- Teachers
- Educational Aides/Paraprofessionals
- OT/PT
- COTA/PTA
- SLP
- School Psychologist
- Nurses
- Audiologists/Hearing Specialist
- Counselors
- Orientation & Mobility/Vision Specialist

It is the employee's responsibility to obtain, update, and file their valid licenses, certificates, or permits with the Human Resources office.

The Ohio Department of Education will only accept online applications for the initial or renewal of licenses, certificates, and permits through the Ohio Department of Education's Connected Ohio Records for Educators (CORE) system.

Access to the Ohio Department of Education's Connected Ohio Records for Educators (CORE) system is available through the Department's OH|ID portal.

Users must create an OH|ID account and a Department of Education Profile to access the CORE system and submit applications for licensure.

Begin by navigating to <https://ohid.ohio.gov/>.

Employees applying for a new or renewed license, certificate, or permit issued by the Ohio Department of Education may be required to complete BCI and FBI background checks, as explained in Criminal Background Checks.

### **Local Professional Development Committee - LPDC**

The NCOESC LPDC is the signatory for licensure renewal and will work with all NCOESC staff for license renewal. The LPDC cannot approve any NEW licensure, only renewals. Educators will be expected to renew their licensure by developing an Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP) that must be reviewed, approved, and verified by the LPDC.

Your LPDC is here to help you. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact any [Committee Members](#). NCOESC employees may click [NCOESC LPDC](#) to visit the LPDC website. LPDC information is located on the NCOESC website under the "For Our Employees" tab.

If you are applying for a new license, you must create an OH|ID account at <https://ohid.ohio.gov/>; and it must be done through one's college or university.

## Resident Educator Program - RE

The Ohio Resident Educator Program provides beginning teachers with four (4) years of formal support, including instructional mentoring. This support is designed to foster the beginning teacher's sense of autonomy and efficacy through self-assessment, mentor observation and feedback, analysis and use of student data, and goal setting. Successful completion of the four-year residency program is required to advance to a five-year professional license. NCOESC provides a Resident Educator Program as a service to districts and charter/community schools and our beginning teachers. Regular program meetings and formal mentor support provide beginning teachers with the framework to enhance teaching and learning within their classrooms, supporting student achievement and success. Additionally, the NCOESC provides training and networking opportunities for mentors to gain a deeper understanding of the principles of mentoring and coaching, as well as hands-on practice in conducting observations of these beginning teachers.

## Payroll

To the extent permitted by law and consistent with the specific provisions of any applicable negotiated agreement, the Governing Board authorizes deductions to be made from an employee's paycheck upon proper authorization on the appropriate form for the following purposes:

- A. Federal and State income tax
- B. Social Security or retirement contribution
- C. Municipal income tax
- D. School center income tax
- E. School Employees Retirement System
- F. State Teachers Retirement System
- G. Section 125 deductions (Cafeteria plans)
- H. U.S. Savings Bonds
- I. Savings in a chartered credit union
- J. Contributions to charitable and not-for-profit corporations and community fund organizations
- K. Payment of group insurance premiums for a plan in which at least ten percent (10%) of the Center employees participate

- L. Payment for benefits of part-time employees who elect to participate in benefits provided to full-time staff
- M. 457 Deferred Compensation Plans
- N. Supplemental Insurance

## Payroll Procedure and Direct Deposit

All employees will have direct deposit of their paychecks as stipulated by Governing Board Policy. It is the responsibility of the NCOESC employee to inform the Payroll Specialist or Director of HR of any changes to personal banking information. An updated Direct Deposit Authorization form will be required to make these changes. The updated form can be found on [myscvview.com](http://myscvview.com) under My Forms – New Form.

Paydays are on the 5th and 20th of each month. If either date should fall on the weekend or a holiday, the business day before will be the payday.

Please complete a Staff Change of Information form (which can be found on SCView, [www.myscvview.com](http://www.myscvview.com)) if you marry, move, or have other reasons to change any personal information. In addition, if withholding (Federal, State, City, or School District taxes) changes are needed, please complete the appropriate form on SCView.

Timesheets, for those required to submit them, must be submitted in SCView no later than three (3) business days after each pay. Contact your supervisor to determine if you need to submit timesheets. Timesheet due dates with corresponding pay dates can be found on the NCOESC website under "For Our Employees."

## Mileage Reimbursement

NCOESC will provide for the reimbursement of approved traveling expenses incurred in the course of performing services on behalf of the board.

NCOESC follows the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) guidelines for travel and mileage will be paid at the current IRS rate. Travel reimbursement to any employee for mileage between your home and your main or regular place of work is not permitted. Mileage reports are to be completed in SCView and will be approved by the employee's supervisor.

## Overtime

The Superintendent or their designee shall determine the necessity and availability of overtime work. Overtime may be authorized only by a supervisor and will be used primarily to

address circumstances of an emergency or temporary nature. Non-exempt employees who work overtime without prior approval from the Superintendent or a supervisor may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Non-exempt employees are hourly employees or salaried employees who do not qualify for a professional, administrative, executive, computer, or any other exemption under the FLSA.

Exempt employees are individuals who are exempt from the FLSA minimum wage and overtime provisions.

## Attendance and Leaves

All NCOESC employees are expected to arrive on time and ready to work every scheduled workday. Employees must enter their absences into SCView and AESOP (Frontline Absence Management), if applicable. In addition, employees must notify their immediate supervisor and/or building administrator of their absence as soon as possible.

All leave may be taken in  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $\frac{3}{4}$ , and full-day increments.

## Calendar

Employees assigned to an NCOESC program, department or district should follow the calendar of that program, department or district. Those employees who have a specific work schedule different than a program or district must submit their calendar, after supervisor approval, to payroll before August 1.

## Inclement Weather

All NCOESC offices will be open even when area school districts close for most inclement weather or emergency days. Designated NCOESC staff should report to the different NCOESC offices on those occasions when districts are closed. When in doubt, check with your department director and/or supervisor.

Employees assigned to NCOESC programs located in school districts follow the procedures of that program. Program employees are not required to report to the NCOESC when the program location is closed due to weather or another emergency.

If the NCOESC office(s) do close due to inclement weather, the Superintendent or administrator will send out both a text and an email.

## Sick Leave

The Governing Board recognizes its statutory duty to pay employees of this Center in full for days on which they are absent from work for reasons of personal disability or pregnancy, and illness, injury or death in the employee's immediate family.

All employees of the Center eligible for sick leave shall receive fifteen (15) such sick leave days annually at the rate on one and one-quarter (1¼) a month. Unused sick leave shall be cumulative up to 200 days. Regular part-time employees shall be entitled to sick leave in proportion to the time actually worked.

The Board shall accept by transfer the accumulated sick leave up to 200 days which any new employee has acquired in another position of public service in Ohio, provided that the last termination of such service shall have been within the last ten (10) years.

New employees shall be credited with five (5) days sick leave in advance which shall be part of the fifteen (15) days that can be accumulated for the year with the approval of the Superintendent.

Substitutes or persons who are employed by the Board on an as-needed, seasonal, or intermittent basis, are not eligible for paid sick leave.

Employees must be in attendance on scheduled work days or be in authorized leave status.

In order to properly implement Governing Board policy, these guidelines should be followed when utilizing Sick Leave.

A. Sick leave may be used for:

1. absence of the employee due to personal illness, injury, pregnancy, or exposure to a contagious disease which could be communicated to other staff members or to students;
2. absence of the employee due to illness or injury of someone in the employee's immediate family. In this section, the employee's immediate family is defined as a member of the immediate family of the employee residing in the home of said employee and the employee's parents, brother, sister, son or daughter, stepchild, and a family member for whom the employee has primary care, if not residing with the employee.
3. absence due to death in the immediate family of an employee. In this section, the immediate family of an employee is defined as the father, mother, brother, sister, son, daughter, husband, wife, grandmother, grandfather, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, or any other relative of the

employee as approved by the Superintendent;

- B. The exact number of days granted shall be determined by the family relationship and the circumstances surrounding the death, but more than three (3) days requires the Superintendent's approval.
- C. The filing, by an employer, of any willfully false statement concerning the cause or duration of an absence shall be considered by the Board as grounds for suspension or dismissal.
- D. A sick leave day, once commenced, may be reinstated as a working day only with the approval of the Superintendent or designee.
- E. Whatever the claims of disability, no day of absence shall be considered to be a sick leave day on which the staff member has engaged in or prepared for other gainful employment, has participated in a concerted work stoppage, or has engaged in any activity which would raise doubts regarding the validity of the sick leave request.

## Personal Days

The Governing Board recognizes that a professional staff member may need to be absent for a short time for personal reasons.

The Superintendent reserves the right to specify within the limits of law, the manner of proof of personal necessity, the type of situations in which such leave will be permitted, and the total number of days which may be used in any school year for personal leave.

Up to three (3) full days of personal leave with pay may be used, if approved by the Superintendent and/or his/her designee, each contract year by full-time employees. Personal leave is not cumulative.

Personal leave days may be used for personal obligations that are necessary and compelling which involve family events, community events, business transactions, or legal transactions, subject to the following conditions:

- A. Requests shall be in writing and include reason(s) for the request.
- B. Requests shall be presented to the Superintendent at least three (3) school days in advance, except in the event of an emergency.
- C. Normally, day(s) shall not be used preceding or following student or legal holidays.

- D. Day(s) shall not be used when a regularly scheduled school meeting or previously announced meeting has been called.
- E. Day(s) shall not be used for vacation or recreation.
- F. The number of persons granted personal leave for any one (1) day will be limited to the demands of the Center as determined by the Superintendent.
- G. Requests may be taken in not less than .25 day increments and days shall not be taken consecutively without the Superintendent's approval.
- H. The Superintendent retains the right to approve leave for other reasons upon the consideration of extenuating circumstances.

### Jury Duty

Employees shall report to the supervisor, Superintendent or designee when they are called for jury duty.

Employees who choose to serve will not be penalized in any way for doing so. They will receive full pay if they endorse the check received from the court or pay the amount shown on their record slip, within fifteen (15) days of return from jury duty or when payment has been received from the court.

While on jury duty, employees are required to report daily their schedule for the following day, and must report to work when excused for one (1) day or more or suffer loss of pay.

The time spent on jury duty will not be charged against personal leave and will count as time on the job.

Employees must submit to the Treasurer a record from the courts of the number of days served.

### Professional Leave

The Governing Board encourages opportunities for professional staff members to develop increased competence, beyond that which they may attain through the performance of their assigned duties through attendance at professional meetings.

For purposes of this policy, a professional meeting shall be defined as any meeting that is related to the activities, duties, or responsibilities of professional staff members as determined by the Superintendent and/or his/her designee or a meeting through which direct value can be derived for the person in attendance for later use in the performance of Center duties.



Attendance at educational meetings shall be controlled by the Superintendent in accordance with Governing Board policy.

Educational meetings are intended to include professional conventions, conferences, workshops, etc., which are conducted for the purpose of disseminating information, making inquiries into the nature of an educational problem, etc.

- A. Staff members should request leave to attend an educational meeting in advance. The approved request form shall be submitted to fiscal at least two weeks prior to registration deadline.
- B. Attendance shall be limited to those staff members who have responsibilities directly related to the topics dealt with at a meeting and have participated in similar activities conducted with the Center or the local area.
- C. Other staff members requesting attendance whose responsibilities are not directly related must show cause why attendance is necessary and what benefit the Center may receive from their attendance.
- D. Staff members attending a meeting will make a summary report to the Superintendent or directors, and indicate the ways in which what was learned will be applied within the Center.
- E. Reimbursement for travel, rooms, meals, and other meeting expenses shall be made, within budgetary constraints, on the basis of itemized expense accounts. Under no circumstances will staff members be reimbursed for the purchase of alcoholic beverages.
- F. Related expenses shall be reimbursed in accordance with Policy 3440 and AG 3440A, AG 3440B, and AG 3440C. These policies can be found on [www.ncoesc.org](http://www.ncoesc.org) under "For Our Employees" under the "Bylaws and Policies" tab.

## Holidays

The NCOESC is closed on the following holidays. These are paid holidays for eligible employees only if they occur during the individual's contracted work schedule.

<b>New Year's Day</b>	<b>Independence Day</b>
<b>Martin Luther King Day</b>	<b>Labor Day</b>
<b>Presidents' Day</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Day</b>
<b>Memorial Day</b>	<b>Christmas Day</b>
<b>Juneteenth</b>	

If a holiday falls on Saturday, the holiday will be observed the preceding Friday; if a holiday falls on Sunday, observance will be on the following Monday.

Certified employees are not eligible for paid holidays.

Classified employees are eligible for paid holidays if the holiday falls within their contracted work schedule and they accrue earnings the work day before and after the holiday.

### Vacation

The Governing Board believes that it is beneficial to the Center that personnel employed to work twelve (12) months per year be given periodic relief from the responsibilities of their job without loss of compensation.

	<b>Classified</b>	<b>Certified</b>	<b>Administrative</b>
<b>Upon Employment</b>	2	20	20
<b>1 year</b>	10	20	20
<b>2 years</b>	11	20	20
<b>3 years</b>	12	20	20
<b>4 years</b>	13	20	20
<b>5 years</b>	14	20	20
<b>6 years</b>	15	20	20
<b>7 years</b>	16	20	20
<b>8 years</b>	17	20	20
<b>9 years</b>	18	20	20
<b>10 years</b>	19	20	20
<b>11 years</b>	20	20	20

Only full year (twelve (12) month) employees shall be eligible for vacation leave.

Requests for the use of vacation allowance must be approved, five (5) working days in advance, by the immediate supervisor of the staff member requesting such leave. The immediate supervisor shall approve vacation requests only if the absence will not interfere with the normal work schedule of the center.

Vacation leave must be used in increments of not less than one-fourth (.25) days.

## FMLA and Military Family Leave

The NCOESC provides Family and Medical Leave in accordance with federal guidelines. NCOESC employees are "eligible" if they have worked for the Board for at least twelve (12) months **and** for at least 1,250 hours over twelve (12) months prior to the leave request. If the employee has met those two requirements, a preliminary designation of FMLA coverage will be made.

Circumstances that qualify under FMLA include the birth of the employee's child, an adoption, foster care placement, care of a spouse, child or parents due to a serious health condition, or the employee's own health condition.

Any qualifying exigency (as defined in applicable Federal regulations) arising out of the fact that the staff member's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a military member on covered active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty) in the Armed Forces ("Qualifying Exigency Leave"). Covered active duty is defined in Administrative Guideline 4430.01.

In addition, an eligible staff member who is a spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin of a covered service member with a serious injury or illness may take up to a total of twenty-six (26) work weeks of job-protected, unpaid leave, or substitute appropriate paid leave if the staff member has earned or accrued it, during a "single twelve (12) month period" to provide physical and/or psychological care for the covered service member ("Military Caregiver Leave") as described more fully in Administrative Guideline 4430.01.

Coverage under FMLA does not guarantee that any or all of the employees leave will be paid. This is based upon the amount of leave that has been earned and taken to date. The employee will be required to use all leave (personal, sick, vacation) for FMLA before going on unpaid FMLA leave. In addition, any leave that the employee takes must be approved by the employee's supervisor. The NCOESC will pay its' portion of the employee health care benefits throughout the FMLA approved absences as though the employee were still working. The employee will be reinstated to the same or an equivalent job with the same pay, benefits, terms and conditions of employment upon return from leave.

For the full explanation of FMLA, please see the NCOESC Policy #1630.01, 3430.01 or 4430.01.

## Military Leave

Once per calendar year, an eligible staff member may take leave for up to ten (10) days or eighty (80) hours, whichever is less, if all of the following conditions are satisfied:

- A. The Governing Board has employed the staff member for at least twelve (12) consecutive months and for at least 1,250 hours in the twelve (12) months immediately preceding commencement of the leave.

- B. The staff member is the parent, spouse, or a person who has or had legal custody of a person who is a member of the uniformed services and who is called into active duty in the uniformed services for a period longer than thirty (30) days, or is injured, wounded, or hospitalized while serving on active duty in the uniformed services.
- C. The staff member gives notice to the Board that s/he intends to take leave pursuant to this policy at least fourteen (14) days prior to taking the leave if the leave is being taken because of a call to active duty or at least two (2) days prior to taking the leave if the leave is being taken because of an injury, wound, or hospitalization. If the staff member receives notice from a representative of the uniformed services that the injury, wound, or hospitalization is of a critical or life-threatening nature, the staff member may take the leave under this policy without providing prior notice to the Board.
- D. In non-medical situations, the dates on which the staff member takes leave pursuant to this policy occur no more than two (2) weeks prior to or one (1) week after the deployment date of the employee's spouse, child, ward, or former ward.
- E. The staff member does not have any other leave available for his/her use except sick leave or disability leave.

A staff member seeking to take leave pursuant to this policy must provide certification from the appropriate military authority to verify that the staff member satisfies the criteria described in paragraphs B, C, and D above.

While the leave provided by this policy is unpaid, the Board will continue to provide benefits to the staff member during the period of time the staff member is on this leave. For purposes of this policy, "benefits" is defined as employment benefits, other than salary or wages, that the Board regularly provides or makes available to employees, including, but not limited to, medical insurance, disability insurance, life insurance, pension plans, and retirement plans. The staff member is responsible for the same proportion of the cost of the benefits as s/he regularly pays during periods of time when s/he is not on leave.

Upon the completion of the leave taken pursuant to this policy, the Board will restore the staff member to the position s/he held prior to taking that leave or a position with equivalent seniority, benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment.

The Board will not interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise or attempted exercise of a right established under this policy. Further, the Board will not discharge, fine, suspend, expel, discipline, or discriminate against a staff member with respect to any term or condition of employment because of the staff member's actual or potential exercise, or support for another employee's exercise, of any right established under this policy. Nothing herein shall prevent the Board from taking an employment action that is independent of the exercise of a right under this policy. Finally, the Board will not deprive an employee who takes leave pursuant to this policy of any benefit that accrued before the date that leave commences.

# Employee Benefits

## Health Benefits

New employees, if eligible, must enroll in benefits within 30 days of their first workday. If enrollment is not completed within those 30 days, benefits are not attainable until the next open enrollment period in August for a September 1 effective date, unless there is a qualifying event.

A qualifying event is birth, adoption, marriage, divorce, death, or a spouse's loss or gain of other coverage.

Employees have 30 days from the qualifying event date to enroll in benefits. After 30 days, no changes can be made until the open enrollment period. Employees must contact the Director of HR to make changes after a qualifying event.

All benefits are effective on the first day of work or the first of the month following.

Eligibility varies per location and position. The HR Department will discuss the options available during onboarding.

BenXpress is the Benefits Management System used for enrollment. The employee will receive an email with a link to complete the enrollment or make appropriate changes. User name and password information will be in the text of the email.

During the open enrollment period, ALL eligible employees will need to complete the enrollment whether or not changes are needed. Information will be sent out in July announcing open enrollment. Instructions will be included in the document provided.

BenXpress is a good source for information regarding the health benefits offered. This information can be found under the Resources tab after logging on.

### Insurance Carriers:

- Medical – Medical Mutual of Ohio
- Rx – CVS/Caremark
- TeleHealth – First Stop Health
- Dental – TrustMark
- Vision – VSP Direct (no card)
- Life and AD&D Insurance – Reliance Standard

Dependent child(ren) may remain on the coverage until the end of the month of their 26<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## Voluntary Supplemental Benefits

Voluntary employee, spouse and child(ren) life insurance through Reliance Standard. Guarantee issued for a new employee. Current employees who wish to enroll or increase volumes will be asked to complete an Evidence of Insurability and forward it to Reliance Standard. Reliance Standard will approve before the coverage is issued or changed. Premiums are the responsibility of the employee and will be payroll deducted.

Medical Transport Solutions Coverage is also available through payroll deduction. MASA protects you and your family from additional costs when receiving emergency transportation services. Not all ambulance expenses could be covered 100% under your health insurance. Even after insurance payments for emergency transportation, you could receive a bill up to \$5,000 for ground ambulance and as high as \$70,000 for air ambulance. MASA will provide medical emergency transportation solutions AND cover your out-of-pocket medical transport cost when your insurance falls short.

Supplemental insurances through AFLAC:

Group Accident Insurance – If you have an accident, major medical insurance will help with many medical expenses, but there may be out-of-pocket expenses left to pay. AFLAC will pay benefits directly to the employee for help with medical costs and ongoing living expenses.

Group Critical Illness Insurance – This plan is designed to provide the employee added financial resources to help with medical costs or ongoing living expenses should they have a critical illness such as: cancer, heart attack, or stroke.

Group Disability Insurance – If you become disabled, this insurance will provide benefits to help with everyday living expenses, like your rent or mortgage, utility bills, groceries, and more.

## Flexible Spending Plan

All full-time employees are eligible for the Flexible Spending Plan (FSA), whether enrolled in insurance. FSA elections are withheld from each pay pre-tax and funds are available for Medical Care Reimbursement or Dependent Care Reimbursement. The Plan period is based on the calendar year from January to December, with open enrollment in November.

## Annuities

Approved 403(b) accounts:

Ameriprise – 800-862-7919

Oppenheimer – 800-835-7035

Approved 457(b) Deferred Comp companies:

Ohio Deferred Comp – Stan Mories, 419-560-0644  
VOYA (OASBO) – Glen Alford, 419-376-1961, includes a Roth 457(b) option.

Employees can use the above contact information or contact their financial advisor, who may deal with the above companies.

## Retirement and Severance Pay

Retirement Systems:

Classified Employees - School Employees Retirement System (SERS) 1-614-222-5853 or 1-800-878- 5953 (Classified Employees contribute 10% and the Board 14%.)

Certified Employees - State Teachers Retirement System (STRS) 614-233-8713 or 1-888-227-7877 (Certified Employees contribute 14% and the Board 14%.)

Employees of the Governing Board with ten (10) or more years of service with the Board, the State, any political subdivision, or any combination thereof may elect, at the time of retirement from active service with the Board and upon presentation of evidence of service retirement from the appropriate retirement system, to receive severance pay for their accrued but unused sick leave in the amount of twenty-five percent (25%) of 200 days to a maximum of fifty (50) days. The last three (3) consecutive years of employment must be with NCOESC.

The employee, in order to receive severance pay in the amount determined above, shall provide written notification to the Board of his/her intention to retire ninety (90) days prior to his/her anticipated retirement date.

Severance payment shall be made only once to an employee.

Payment may be made on the employee's behalf to a qualified tax-sheltered 403(b), from the Board approved list and to the extent permitted by law.

## Accidents and Safety

### Work-Related Injuries, Accidents, or Exposure

All reasonable efforts are made to ensure a safe learning and working environment for the employees of NCOESC. All employees are covered by the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) while performing work-related duties and responsibilities.

The BWC provides insurance coverage to employees for work-related injuries sustained in the course of and arising out of employment and diseases contracted in the course of employment. It also provides benefits to employees' dependents in those cases of death suffered in the course of and arising out of employment. If an employee sustains a workplace injury or contracts an occupational disease, they may be eligible for compensation and benefits under Workers' Compensation for loss sustained on account of the injury or illness. Workers' Compensation provides medical care and disability compensation based on the employee's salary.

Information on what to do if injured can be found on the NCOESC website, [www.ncoesc.org](http://www.ncoesc.org), under the "For Our Employees" tab, in "Fiscal Forms." The document is BWC Steps If Injured.

### Steps to Take When a Workplace Injury Occurs

IN CASE OF SERIOUS OR LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCIES CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY

Injured employees need to notify their supervisor immediately.

Complete the first section of the BWC First Report of Injury (FROI) form as completely as possible. The FROI form can be found on the NCOESC website, [www.ncoesc.org](http://www.ncoesc.org), under the "For Our Employees" tab, in "Fiscal Forms." The form lists NCOESC as the employer and the BWC Policy Number. If the injury is serious and there isn't time to get the form, the medical provider will provide this form.

Seek appropriate medical treatment if needed. **You must tell the medical care provider this is a work-related injury and you are an employee of North Central Ohio Educational Service Center.** If you are working in a district, please **DO NOT** indicate you are an employee of that district. The correct information must be provided, or your claim will be held up.

The first visit to any medical provider, whether an emergency or non-emergency, may be eligible for coverage for a work-related injury considered compensable by the BWC.

After the first visit, if you obtain medical care for a work-related injury from a medical provider other than those noted below, BWC insurance may not cover the costs, and you may have to pay for the services

1. Emergency Room
2. Urgent Care facility
3. BWC Certified Physician (To get the name of a BWC Certified Physician, call 1-800-OHIOBWC.)

If you are unsure who is a BWC Certified Physician, it is recommended you go to an Emergency Room or Urgent Care facility.



If you seek medical care, please forward all discharge paperwork to the Director of HR.

Employee injuries happening on school property during work hours must be reported promptly to the Director of HR. In addition, please check with the district's administrative offices where the accident occurred to determine if a report must be made.

Appropriate medical attention must be sought in a timely fashion. When medical care is urgent, seek treatment first. If the injury does not require immediate treatment, please complete the school day and seek treatment after.

The preceding procedures apply to all accidents. It is very important for you to follow the instructions to ensure your medical claims and return to work are processed smoothly. If you have any questions about reporting an accident, medical care, or next steps, please do not hesitate to contact the Director of HR at 419-447-2927 if you have any questions.

## Workplace Conduct and Expectations

### Employee Dress and Grooming

The Governing Board believes that all employees set an example in dress and grooming for students to follow. Employees who understand this precept and adhere to it enlarge the importance of his/her task and present an image of dignity and professionalism.

The Board retains the authority to specify the dress and grooming guidelines for staff that will prevent such matters from having an adverse impact on the educational process or the professionalism of the NCOESC Agency.

### Staff Evaluation

Evaluation of staff is the responsibility of the superintendent and/or the appointment designee, and shall be conducted in accordance with Governing Board Policy and within provisions of the Ohio Revised Code. The purpose of the evaluation is intended to be a process of continuous and systematic evaluation of staff, to provide for the improvement of the overall NCOESC program of services and the continuous improvement and professional development of staff. For the full explanation of Evaluations, please see the NCOESC Board Policy 4220, 3220 and 1530.

### Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators

The *Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators* provides the framework for professional conduct for all Ohio educators. This includes any person who holds a license through the Ohio Department of Education.

The *Licensure Code* provides a guide for conduct and possible disciplinary recommendations. Click this link to find the [Licensure Code for Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators](#).

All educators employed by the NCOESC are expected to behave in a professional manner that reflects the status and substance of a public agency professional with the responsibility of providing high-quality education to every individual.

NCOESC complies with the aforementioned Licensure Code of Professional Conduct for Ohio Educators and the Ohio Revised Code and applies the same professional expectations to employees regarding job performance and communications to its employees. Unless otherwise stated in this Handbook, employees are expected to conform to the same requirements, policies, and procedures as employees of those districts or agencies in which they perform their duties, including but not limited to, requirements regarding absence reporting, dress code, student disciplinary procedures, distribution of literature, and use of internet and technology.

Employees are expected to discharge their duties in a professional, responsible, honest and legally compliant manner at all times. Employees who fail to comply with the law, regulations, directives and policies, administrative guidelines, rules of professional conduct, and/or this Handbook, or otherwise fail to appropriately discharge the duties of their position may be subject to discipline, including but not limited to, suspension and/or termination from employment.

### **Student Abuse and Neglect**

The Governing Board is concerned with the physical and mental well-being of the students served by this Educational Service Center and will cooperate in the identification and reporting of cases of child abuse or neglect in accordance with law.

Every Board official and employee who, in connection with his/her position, knows or suspects child abuse or neglect must immediately report that knowledge or suspicion to a public children's services or local law enforcement agency. Such reporting is required in every case that reasonably indicates that a child under the age of eighteen (18) or a physically or mentally disabled child under the age of twenty-one (21) has been abused (physically or mentally) or neglected or faces the threat of being abused or neglected.

The Board official and employee making the report shall also notify the appropriate administrator according to the Center's Reporting Procedure for Student Abuse or Neglect.

## Appropriate Work Environment

NCOESC strives to maintain a work environment which is free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment. This commitment applies to all NCOESC operations, programs and activities. All students and staff share responsibility for avoiding, discouraging and reporting any form of unlawful discrimination or harassment.

Any individual who believes he or she has been discriminated against or harassed in violation of the Title IX policy should contact NCOESC's Title IX Coordinators:

Matt Wolph, Director, 928 West Market Street, Tiffin, Ohio 44883, [mwolph@ncoesc.org](mailto:mwolph@ncoesc.org) or 419-448-5786, ext. 321

Cynthia Moore, Special Education Supervisor, 928 West Market Street, Tiffin, Ohio 44883, [cmoore@ncoesc.org](mailto:cmoore@ncoesc.org) or 419-447-2927, ext. 110.

## Ethics

An effective educational program requires staff of the highest integrity, ideals and human understanding. To maintain and promote these essentials, all staff are expected to maintain high standards of thought and behavior in their working relationships and in the performance of their professional duties. All employees of the NCOESC are expected to abide by the provisions of the Ohio Ethics Law. A link to access the Ohio Ethics Law is provided at the time of hire, along with the signed acknowledgment of receipt. If the need to review the law arises it can be accessed here [www.ethics.ohio.gov](http://www.ethics.ohio.gov).

## Fraud Reporting

The Governing Board of Education expects all its employees to be honest and ethical in their conduct and to refrain from engaging in activities which may be fraudulent, illegal, or otherwise unethical. The Educational Service Center will not tolerate such activities, and will investigate claims of suspected fraud or fraudulent activity and implement appropriate disciplinary measures, when necessary.

This policy applies to any fraud, or suspected fraud, involving employees, consultants, vendors, contractors, outside agencies and employees of such agencies, and any other parties having a business relationship with the Center.

Fraud and fraudulent activity are strictly prohibited.

Each employee or agent of the Center shall be responsible for reporting any observed or suspected fraud or fraudulent activity to his/her immediate supervisor. If the employee's immediate supervisor is not available, responsive, or is the employee whose behavior is in

question, the employee may report such information to the Superintendent. If the reported conduct relates to the Superintendent, the report may then be filed directly with the Board President.

All administrators shall attempt to investigate and verify any conduct that appears to constitute fraud within the areas of their responsibility.

All reporting and investigation shall be done in accordance with the Center's Whistleblower's AG 1411 (see also AG 3211 and AG 4211).

In addition to or instead of filing a written report with the supervisor or other Center authority, the employee may file a report using the Auditor of State's system for reporting fraud in accordance with Ohio law.

To access the Ohio State Auditor's Fraud Reporting System and anonymously report potential fraud, follow these steps:

1. Go to [www.ohioauditor.gov](http://www.ohioauditor.gov).
2. In the left column, under SERVICES, click on Fraud Center.
3. At the top of the right column, where it gives instructions on how to report Fraud, choose one of the following three options:
  - A) Click on REPORT FRAUD online;
  - B) To send a written complaint by US MAIL, address the complaint to:

Ohio Auditor of State's Office  
Special Investigation Unit (SIU)  
88 East Broad Street  
P.O. Box 1140  
Columbus, OH 43215;

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- C) Call the SIU Fraud Hotline at 1-866-FRAUD OH (1-866-372-8364).

## Drug and Alcohol-Free Workplace

The Governing Board believes that quality education is not possible in an environment affected by drugs. It will seek, therefore, to establish and maintain an educational setting which is not tainted by the use or evidence of use of any controlled substance.

The Board shall not permit the manufacture, possession, use, distribution, or dispensing of any controlled substance, alcohol, and any drug paraphernalia as the terms is defined by law, by any member of the staff at any time while on NCOESC or district property. Any staff member who violates this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with NCOESC guidelines.

The purpose of the Board's Drug-Free Workplace Program is to institute and maintain a program for achieving the objective of a drug- free work force and to provide a workplace that

is free from the illegal and improper manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, sale, and use of alcohol and controlled substances.

All employees are expected to abide by Board policies related to alcohol and drug use in the workplace (see also, Board Policy 3170 and AG 3170A). Any violation of the Board's policies will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### Smoke-Free Workplace

For purposes of this policy, "use of tobacco" shall mean all uses of tobacco, including cigars, cigarettes, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, vape, and any other matter or substances that contain tobacco, in addition to papers used to roll cigarettes and other lighted smoking devices for burning tobacco or any other plant.

In order to protect staff who choose not to use tobacco from an environment noxious to them, the Board prohibits the use of tobacco within any enclosed facility owned or leased or contracted for by the Board, and in the areas directly or indirectly under the control of the Board immediately adjacent to locations of ingress or egress to such facilities. This prohibition extends to any board-owned and/or operated vehicles used to transport students and to all other Board-owned and/or operated vehicles.

### Non-Discrimination and Equal Employment Opportunity

The Governing Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity), disability, age, religion, military status, ancestry, genetic information (collectively, "Protected Classes"), or any other legally protected category, in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities.

### Reports and Complaints of Unlawful Discrimination

Employees who believe they have been unlawfully discriminated/retaliated against are entitled to utilize the complaint process set forth below. Initiating a complaint, whether formally or informally, will not adversely affect the Complainant's employment. While there are no time limits for initiating complaints under this policy, individuals should make every effort to file a complaint as soon as possible after the conduct occurs while the facts are known and potential witnesses are available.

### Retaliation

Retaliation against a person who makes a report or files a complaint alleging unlawful harassment/retaliation or participates as a witness in an investigation is prohibited. Neither the Board nor any other person may intimidate, threaten, coerce or interfere with any individual

because the person opposed any act or practice made unlawful by any Federal or State civil rights law, or because that individual made a report, formal complaint, testified, assisted or participated or refused to participate in any manner in an investigation, proceeding, or hearing under those laws and/or this policy, or because that individual exercised, enjoyed, aided or encouraged any other person in the exercise or enjoyment of any right granted or protected by those laws and/or this policy.

Retaliation against a person for making a report of discrimination, filing a formal complaint, or participating in an investigation or meeting is a serious violation of this policy that can result in imposition of disciplinary sanctions/consequences and/or other appropriate remedies.

Formal complaints alleging retaliation may be filed according to the internal complaint process set forth in NCOESC Policy 1422, 3122, 4122.

The exercise of rights protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution does not constitute retaliation prohibited under this policy.

## Technology

### Acceptable Use of Technology

All computers, telephone systems, electronic mail systems (e-mail) and voicemail systems are the property of the NCOESC and are to be used primarily for business purposes. Personal messages via NCOESC-owned technology should be limited. The NCOESC retains the right to access and review all electronic and voicemail, computer files, databases and any other electronic transmissions contained in or used in conjunction with the NCOESC's technology. Staff members are prohibited from sending offensive, discriminatory or harassing messages via computer, email or voicemail.