

TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Disclaimer

This handbook is not a contract, either expressed or implied, nor does it guarantee employment for any specific duration. All information contained in this handbook is intended to help employees understand relevant policies and practices.

Our Great-Great-Great Grandmother Sikey Thomas, a full blood Choctaw, was known as an Indian Doctor and Midwife, who gathered herbs and used Indian Medicine to heal the sick.

Our Great Grandmother Lottie West served as the Midwife of Boggy Hollow. She passed away in Spring 2006 just a few days shy of her 100th birthday. She would tell stories of being called out in the middle of the night, in all kinds of weather, to help deliver the babies born in the little country community.

Our Grandmother, Juanita Noah, became a Licensed Practical Nurse and began her nursing career at Latimer County General Hospital in Wilburton in the early 1970's. She recently retired as a Community Health Representative for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

Our mother, Joy Brown, is a Registered Nurse with many years of service in the home care industry. She continues, at present, as the supervising RN for *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.*

Looking back at several generations of our elders, you can see that meeting the health care needs of our sick and infirmed neighbors and friends is one of our family's proudest *TRADITIONS*.

We believe that one of the fundamental rights of every human being is the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and independence possible in the safety and comfort of home. We are committed to seeing that our patients are granted this advantage, regardless of his/her age, race, religion, political belief, sexual preference, and economic or social status.

TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC. is obligated to cooperative efforts with community resources and is committed to continually seeking new ways and means of being responsive to the ever-changing needs of in-home patient care.

TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC. is dedicated to rehabilitating disabled individuals, enhancing convalescents and assisting with terminally ill individuals within the safe confines of their homes; in order that they can maximize their contribution and fulfill their goals as a family member, with minimal conflict.

As a part of our home health care team, you will be a valued employee. We would like to welcome you to our team, wishing you the very best in your professional growth and development.

Sonny Nix, *Administrator/Owner*

John C. Noah, *Director of Operations/Owner*

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EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC. is an equal opportunity employer. *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* does not discriminate against individuals because of race, national origin, religious beliefs, sex, age or disability.

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Persons wishing to be employed by *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* are required to complete and submit an application for employment. Applications are available in each office of the *agency*.

The employment application is a permanent part of the employee personnel file. It is used as a tool to determine eligibility for employment and promotion. It must be completed fully and accurately. Any misrepresentation or false information will be grounds for immediate termination of employment. Applications submitted to the *agency* will be kept on file for a period of six months.

EMPLOYMENT HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Before being allowed to provide patient care, applicable employees must show evidence of being free of communicable disease. Employees must also attest that they are physically able to meet the physical requirements of the job with or without cause. Patient care employees are required to provide evidence of current and annual Tuberculin skin tests. Any employee with a proven history of a positive TB skin test may be excluded from this requirement if the employee has had a documented negative chest x-ray and no symptoms suggestive of tuberculosis. Hepatitis B Vaccine (proof of, or request for or declination) must be on file for all employees providing patient care services. Once the hepatitis series is started (at the *agency* expense) if the employee does not concur with the recommended schedule of the series, the employee will assume the cost of starting the series over or must sign a declination statement.

EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATION

Employees fall into one of the following classifications as defined in the *Traditions Home Care, Inc.* policy and procedure manual:

Full-Time Salaried
Contract

Full-Time Hourly
Probationary

Per Visit
Part-Time

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Each employee of *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* will have a detailed, signed job description, for his/her current position, in the employee's personnel file which will be maintained in the corporate office. The job description clearly identifies the duties, responsibilities and qualifications for which an employee is hired.

EMPLOYEE OFFER/TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Each candidate of *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* will sign an employment offer with the *agency* upon acceptance of terms and conditions offered by Administrator.

HOURS OF OPERATION

The offices of *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* are open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday with the exception of certain holidays (listed in Employee Benefits section).

ON-CALL

The agency has a skilled nurse on-call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The skilled nurse on-call may be reached by calling the office toll-free number.

PERSONNEL RECORDS

A confidential personnel file will be maintained in the corporate office on every employee. As a condition of continued employment, employees are required to maintain their employee file with current information.

PAYROLL GUIDELINES

RECORDING OF TIME

All employees who are paid a salary are required to record his/her work hours on a time/visit record. Time/visit records will be reviewed for accuracy by the employee's direct supervisor prior to the employee being paid for time/visits worked.

Falsifying or altering a time entry, documenting someone else's entry, or tampering with someone else's documentation of hours worked are grounds for immediate termination of employment.

HOURS OF WORK

A full workweek is considered 40 hours/visits. The workweek is established as Sunday through Saturday. Employee daily work schedules are determined by the person designated by the Administrator or Director to schedule visits and work assignments.

PAY PERIOD AND PAYDAY

All employees shall be paid twice per month in two week intervals. Paydays are every other Friday. Paychecks are available in the office after 2:00 p.m. each payday.

OVERTIME

Time and one half will be paid to an employee for hours/visits worked over forty (40) in one workweek. Overtime must have prior approval of the Administrator.

BREAKS AND LUNCH

Employees are entitled to and encouraged to take a 15 minute break in the morning and a 15 minute break in the afternoon. Employees have 30 minutes for lunch.

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT

Employees will be reimbursed an untaxed trip fee for mileage and vehicle expenses as follows: Effective 4/26/06, the Director of Operations will monitor gas prices from gas stations in each office location. Prices will be monitored on each pay day and appropriate changes will take effect the next pay period.

- If the average gas price is \$2.00-\$2.25 the trip fee will be \$4.00 for 25 miles or less; and \$6.00 for 26 miles or more.
- If the average gas price is \$2.26-\$2.50 the trip fee will be \$4.50 for 25 miles or less; and \$6.50 for 26 miles or more.
- If the average gas price is \$2.51-\$2.75 the trip fee will be \$5.00 for 25 miles or less; and \$7.00 for 26 miles or more.
- If the average gas price is \$2.76-\$3.00 the trip fee will be \$5.50 for 25 miles or less; and \$7.50 for 26 miles or more.
- If the average gas price is \$3.01-\$3.50 the trip fee will be \$6.00 for 25 miles or less; and \$8.00 for 26 miles or more.
- If the average gas price is \$3.51-up the trip fee will be \$6.25 for 25 miles or less; and \$8.25 for 26 miles or more.

Administrative and other staff traveling while on duty will be reimbursed for mileage and expenses at a rate of \$.375per mile.

For field staff, trip fees will be calculated to each patient's home.

If an administrative nurse is called from the office to make a SN visit the trip fee will be calculated from the office to the patient's home.

The BOD retains the right to re-evaluate the mileage reimbursement at any time.

ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS

Regular attendance is vital to the *agency's* ability to provide the care needed by our patients. It is the employee's responsibility to call the *agency* as far in advance as possible when he/she is going to be late or absent from work.

Employees must contact their supervisor or on-call nurse if the office is closed.

An employee who fails to report for work/visits as scheduled and fails to give appropriate notice may be terminated immediately.

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC. is required to take payroll deductions from paychecks for federal income tax, social security, Medicare, and state income tax.

Changes in marital status and the number of claimed exemptions must be made by submitting an amended W-4 with the payroll or human resources department.

WAGE ASSIGNMENTS

In the event that a wage assignment is levied against an employee's earnings, the *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* will comply with state and federal regulations. The employee will be confidentially advised of the wage assignment served against him/her.

TIME OFF FROM WORK

Requests for scheduled time off must be made in writing to the Branch Clinical Director at least two (2) weeks in advance of taking scheduled time off from work. Approval for time off from work will be granted on a case-by-case basis and at the discretion of the Administrator or Clinical Director.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

After three (3) years of employment, a leave of absence may be granted for the maximum period of one year. During this a leave of absence, any available benefits do not accrue but tenure is retained. At the discretion of the Administrator, the employee's position may be retained.

JURY DUTY

Employees are required to let their supervisor know as soon as a jury summons is received. A jury summons must be presented to the Administrator as soon as it is received so that days off can be scheduled. A copy of the affidavit from the Court Clerk verifying jury hours must be submitted to the Administrator.

MILITARY LEAVE

Military leave will be granted in accordance with Federal law.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

FMLA provides eligible and covered employees with up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave for certain family and medical reasons; as well as certain military-related "exigencies". Additionally, FMLA leave up to 26 weeks for care of certain "injured military service members" may be available. Employees are eligible if they have worked for *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* for at least one (1) year, and for 1,250 hours over the previous twelve (12) months, and if there are at least 50 employees within 75 miles of their job site. – FMLA information is available in the Human Resources Office.

BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Three (3) days bereavement leave may be granted for the death of immediate family members. (father, mother, spouse, children). This benefit is available to eligible full-time employees only who have met their 90-day probationary period.

RISK MANAGEMENT

PERSONAL SAFETY

The safety and protection of our employees and patients is a major concern at *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* It is in your best interest to inform us of any condition that might limit your capabilities. In this way we will strive to ensure that you are placed in a safe environment. *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* complies with all applicable federal, state and local regulations regarding client and employee safety. Your on-going safety consciousness is critical to the achievement of an incident free workplace. (*See Policy & Procedure Manual, Safety 12.0 for more detailed policies.*)

USE OF PERSONAL AUTOMOBILE WHILE ON DUTY

Employees are expected to obey all traffic laws while on duty. It is the responsibility of the employee to provide current proof of liability insurance on every vehicle used while on duty. *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* staff will not transport patients and/or other passengers, not authorized by the *agency*, in their own automobile or in a patient's automobile, while on duty.

LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS

PROFESSIONAL LICENSES OR CERTIFICATIONS

Licensed employees must present current licenses prior to employment. Renewal licenses must be presented as received. Renewal of the license or certification is the full responsibility of the employee. Licensure will be verified with the appropriate state licensing board. Employees are not allowed to work in a licensed/certified position unless that license/certification is current.

CPR CERTIFICATION

Patient care employees are required to be CPR Certified. Evidence of current certification must be presented within three (3) months of employment and renewal information must be presented as received.

COMPLIANCE PROGRAM

CODE OF ETHICS

Traditions Home Care, Inc. abides by all the State, Federal, and Agency Policies, Procedures and Regulations which govern our duties and responsibilities. All employees will participate and abide by Code of Ethics. Traditions Home Care, Inc. employees work to provide only the highest quality care and strive to be honest, forthright, and accountable in all their dealings with physicians, clients, co-workers, and the agency.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All employees must conduct business in compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations as well as with the company's code of ethics and conduct and policies and procedures at all times.

FRAUD AND ABUSE – IMPORTANT FACTS!

ANTI-KICKBACK STATUTE (AKS)

Prohibits physicians from referring designated health services to an entity with which they have a financial relationship. It also prohibits offering, soliciting, providing or receiving remuneration in exchange for or as a reward for providing referrals of federally reimbursable services.

STARK PHYSICIAN SELF REFERRAL LAW

Prohibits a physician from referring designated health services to an entity in which the physician has a financial relationship.

FALSE CLAIMS ACT

- Imposes liability on any person who submits a claim to the federal government that he or she knows (or should know) is false.
- Imposes liability on an individual who may knowingly submit a false record in order to obtain payment from the government.
- Imposes liability in those instances in which someone may obtain money from the federal government to which he may not be entitled, and then uses false statements or records in order to retain the money.
- Allows government and/or whistleblowers to sue for false claims.

For employees who wish to make an anonymous or confidential report of ethical violations, violations of law, or any other information the employee feels he/she cannot otherwise report to a supervisor. The Compliance Hotline is Tammy Pope: 918-759-8836 or Cynthia Hohmann: 904-534-4938. If you feel uncomfortable making a report via the Compliance Hotline, you may send a written report to tpope918@aol.com or cynthiahohmann@aol.com. You may also submit by mail to: Compliance Officer, c/o of Traditions Home Care, Inc. 100 S. 3rd Street, McAlester, OK. 74501.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

ORIENTATION

An orientation will be provided for all new employees prior to their first assignment. *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* will tailor orientation to the specific needs of the employee involved. General orientation will acquaint the employee with the philosophy, objectives, and all policies of the *agency*, patient's rights, safety procedures, and other materials pertaining to employee and employer responsibilities.

A signed Orientation Checklist will validate completion of the orientation process for new employees.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Upon employment, employees will automatically be placed on a 90 day probationary period during which an employee can be terminated without cause and without due process. The probation period may be extended, at management discretion, as necessary. Upon successful completion of the probationary period, a full-time employee will become eligible for any employee benefits.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC. will not offer work assignments to any employee who is chronically tardy, has repeated late cancellations, whose work performance or attitude draws repeated complaints from patients and/or co-workers, who has been found to be dishonest, unreliable, or incompetent. Verbal or written warnings may be issued by an employee's supervisor in an effort to resolve any conflicts or misunderstandings that may occur. An employee who does not fulfill his or her job description or does not comply with the policies and procedures set forth by the governing Board of *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* will be disciplined according to the Disciplinary Action Policy & Procedure: *Personnel 22.0*

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.'s commitment to excellence is fulfilled in part through an on-going performance improvement process. Evaluations are objective and intended to improve performance of individual employees as well as the company.

An employee's job performance will be evaluated at the end of his/her 90 day probationary period by his/her direct supervisor and may or may not be documented.

An annual evaluation will be performed by the employee's direct supervisor on or before the employee's anniversary date of hire. The annual evaluation will be documented and will be retained in the employee's confidential personnel file.

EDUCATIONAL IN-SERVICES

TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC. is committed to our employee's continued professional growth. To ensure further professional development and to comply with regulations *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* offers an annual in-service curriculum. This curriculum will be coordinated with licensure and condition requirements as well as current patient and employee needs.

Attendance will be verified by signature of attendance log and will be recorded in the employee personnel file.

Certified Home Health Aides are required to complete at least 12 hours of educational in-service per year in order to maintain his/her certification.

TERMINATION

The employee/employer relationship is voluntary and as such, can be terminated at will by either party. Definitions and types of termination are as follows:

- ***Termination without prior notice.*** An employee who resigns without giving appropriate prior written notice is not eligible for rehire.
- ***Resignation.*** When an employee submits a timely written notice of resignation, he/she may be eligible for rehire.
- ***Dismissal.*** If the employer initiates separation due to a variety of reasons including, but not limited to: violation of agency policy, misconduct, inability to perform job functions, substandard performance, and elimination of position or layoff. Employee may be eligible for rehire at the discretion of the Administrator.
- ***Termination during probationary period.*** The employer or employee may initiate the termination without recourse or ramification during the probationary period.

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Employment with *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* is based on mutual consent. The employee chooses to work for the *agency* and the *agency* chooses to hire the employee.

It is a practice of *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* to place as few restrictions as possible on personal conduct. The *agency* is justifiably proud of its employees and the manner in which they conduct themselves. *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* relies on individual good judgment and sense of responsibility to the company, our patients and the communities served. Employees are expected to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. However, for the protection of its property, business interest, and other employees, the *agency* has established certain rules for conduct.

When an employee is unable or unwilling to perform his/her job requirements in a satisfactory manner, or has omitted to perform, it is the policy of *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* to discipline that employee. While progressive discipline may be utilized, termination on the first offense may be imposed in the discretion of management.

All disciplinary action records are made a permanent part of the employee's confidential personnel file.

It is the employee's responsibility to become familiar with the policy found in *Personnel 22.0 Disciplinary Action* of the Policy and Procedure Manual. Here the employee will find clear definitions of what behaviors will result in Disciplinary Action as well as those behaviors that warrant immediate termination.

GENERAL AGENCY DISCLOSURES

HARRASSMENT / SEXUAL HARRASSMENT

The *agency* has established a policy prohibiting unlawful harassment of employees, including implied or expressed forms of sexual harassment. As used here, sexual harassment means any verbal, written, visual or physical acts that are offensive in nature, intimidating, unwelcome, or that could reasonably be taken as objectionable. See Policy and Procedure Manual: *Harassment 21. Note that each employee has the obligation of notifying Traditions of any suspected harassment.*

VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

The *agency* has established a policy prohibiting violence toward any of its employees, including implied or expressed threats to a person's safety. (See Policy & Procedure Manual: *Safety 8.2 – Violence in the Workplace*)

COMPLAINTS OR GRIEVANCES

A complaint should be in writing, contain the name and address of the person filing it, and briefly describe the action alleged. A complaint should be filed in the office of the Administrator within 30 days after the person filing the complaint becomes aware of the alleged action. The Administrator (or designee) will conduct an investigation of the complaint to determine validity. The Administrator will issue a written decision determining the validity of the complaint no later than (30) days after its filing. (see Policy and Procedure Manual: *Administrative/Organization 18.1 – Employee Complaints and Grievances*)

NOTE: Staff recommendations for *agency* improvement are received at all times by the supervisor or administrative staff. Employee input is vital for performance improvement activities.

EXPOSURE TO BLOOD BORNE PATHOGENS

Any employee exposed to a blood borne pathogen shall immediately report the exposure to the agency. The agency will require the employees to submit to a baseline blood test and any counseling as required. (See Policy and Procedure Manual: *Safety 2.0 Exposure Control Plan*)

POLICY CHANGES

The Board of Directors of *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* may make changes to policies and procedures at any time and for any reason. Policies are effective immediately upon a favorable vote of the Board and circulation to employees.

DRESS CODE

All employees of *TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC.* shall maintain a professional appearance while on duty. The following clearly outlines acceptable and appropriate attire for the *agency* employees:

PATIENT CARE STAFF:

1. The photo employee identification badge must be worn when making patient visits and while representing the *agency*.
2. Nursing uniforms/scrubs dresses, pants, tops are required to be worn by all patient care staff while on duty. Capri or cropped length pants may be worn. Shorts are not allowed.
3. Only clean and/or polished, closed toe shoes may be worn.
4. At no time will patient care staff be allowed to wear low cut, revealing or transparent articles of clothing.
5. Fingernails are to be short, clean and neatly kept.
6. Earrings and rings are limited and restricted to those that will not snag on equipment, injure a patient or employee, or that may impede the employee's job performance.
7. Long hair should be pulled back and secured at all times when possible contact of the hair with equipment, procedures or contact with the patient exists.
8. Perfumes, scented body lotions and/or aftershave lotion are highly discouraged due to patient sensitivities and/or allergies.
9. Patient care staff are not allowed to wear jeans on Friday's (or any day).

NOTE: CQI staff must either wear scrubs (as above) or always have a lab jacket, name badge and bag available (in the event it is necessary to make visits).

OFFICE STAFF:

1. Casual, professional office attire.
2. Cropped or Capri length pants may be worn.
3. Shorts or skorts (any style) are not allowed.
4. Skirts or dresses should be at least fingertip length.
5. Denim or colored jeans may be worn on Friday's ONLY.
6. At no time will office staff be allowed to wear low cut, revealing or transparent articles of clothing (no cleavage and no skin at the waistline area to be visible).
7. Straps on tops must be at least 3 finger-widths wide.
8. Flip-flops are not allowed at any time.

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE:

1. Casual office attire.
2. Professional dress when appropriate.
3. *Agency* name badge will be worn at all times when representing the *agency*.
4. At no time will office staff be allowed to wear low cut, revealing or transparent articles of clothing (no cleavage and no skin at the waistline area to be visible).
5. Straps on tops must be at least 3 finger-widths wide.
6. Shorts or skorts (any style) are not allowed.
7. Flip-flops are not allowed at any time.

USE OF TELEPHONES/INTERNET

The patient's telephones are never to be used for personal telephone calls. Office telephones are for work related business only. Telephone, for personal calls, should be used only for emergencies or during break. Internet access is for business purposes only.

SMOKING

Smoking is not allowed in a patient's home or in any office building.

OFFICE MACHINES, SUPPLIES & EQUIPMENT

Office machines, supplies, and equipment are for *agency* use only and not available for personal use.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Home health services are provided in individual home environments. Periodically, certain environmental factors may prohibit service implementation.

Information provided by the local weather stations will be utilized to make decisions as to road conditions. When road conditions prohibit travel, it is the responsibility of each scheduled employee to contact his/her immediate supervisor.

ON THE JOB INJURY

An on-the-job injury must be reported immediately to the immediate supervisor (or designee) of the *agency* and to the Director who will in turn report such injuries to the Administrator.

This employee must complete an Occurrence Report validating a work-related injury no more than twenty-four (24) hours from the date of the injury. This report will be filled out completely and include (but not be limited to) date, time and place of injury, how the injury occurred and the type of injury sustained. (See Policy & Procedure Manual: *Personnel 19.0 – On-the-Job Injuries*)

DRUG ABUSE POLICY

TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC. maintains a specific policy relative to drug and/or substance abuse. The purpose of this disclosure is to fully inform all employees of the same. This policy applies to all employees both administrative and patient care givers. For the purpose of this policy, the term “drug” includes alcoholic beverages and prescription drugs, as well as illegal inhalants and illegal drugs or substances. This policy shall exclude prescription drugs when disclosed and taken as directed by the employee’s physician. (See Policy and Procedure Manual: *Personnel 9.0 – Drug / Substance Abuse*)

SOLICITATION

Solicitation of any kind from patient/families is forbidden.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

An employee must be employed with the agency for 90 day in full time capacity to be eligible for benefits.

HOLIDAY PAY

TRADITIONS HOME CARE, INC. recognizes the following holidays:

New Years Day, March 2 (Lotta Thomas West Holiday), Good Friday, July 4th, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day.)

Full-time employees who do not work on a recognized holiday will be paid their regular rate of pay. Employees who do perform work on a recognized holiday will be paid time and one half their regular rate of pay, pending approval of the Administrator.

An employee calling in absent the day before or the day after a holiday will not be paid for the holiday (unless a physician statement is submitted).

PAID DAYS OFF

PDOs will be accrued at a rate of 1 (one) day per month. PDOs will be earned by all full time (40 visits or 40 hours per week) employees. PDOs will not be earned by contractual, part-time or temporary employees.

PDOs (not to exceed ten {10} days) may be carried forward to the succeeding year. PDOs will not accrue for the month in which an employee is terminated or terminates. An employee must be employed with the *agency* for 90 days in full time capacity to be eligible for benefits. An employee who gives written notice must actually work until the last date of the notice in order to be eligible for PDOs and must have completed the 90 day probationary period. If an employee is terminated for cause (“immediate termination”) as a result of disciplinary action defined in the policy and procedure manual, the employee forfeits all unused PDOs at the time of termination.

VISION, DENTAL AND HEALTH INSURANCE

Vision, Dental and Health Insurance is offered to all full-time employees, following the successful completion of the 90 day probationary period.