



**MARION
EYE CENTERS**

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

Effective: 2/1/2012

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PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

for the offices of

MARION EYE CENTERS & OPTICAL

Property of: MARION EYE CENTERS & OPTICAL

Issued to: _____
Employee's Name

Date Issued: _____

This Personnel Policy Manual does not constitute either an offer of employment or any assurance of continued employment. The policies contained herein do not constitute an employment agreement, and should not be construed as a contract of employment.

These policies are subject to change from time to time. That change is deemed effective when made, so it is the employee's responsibility to verify that he or she has the most up-to-date version of this Manual and the Practice policies.

This Personnel Policy Manual is [originally] effective as of 02/01/2012, and may have been revised periodically thereafter. Revised pages are indicated by a more recent date of revision at the bottom of each page.

This Personnel Policy Manual is in effect for all non-exempt employees.

Marion Eye Center, LTD ("the Practice")

PERSONNEL POLICY MANUAL

SECTION I – INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of distributing these personnel policies is to state, as clearly as possible, the responsibilities of the Practice to its employees and those of the employees to the Practice. **These policies do not constitute, imply or create either an employment agreement or any terms of employment. This Manual should not be construed either as a contract of employment, or as an assurance of continued employment.** Although the Practice hopes each employee will have a long-term employment relationship, either the employee or the employer may terminate that relationship at any time and for any reason.

All employment with the Practice is at all times considered to be "at will."
Nothing herein guarantees or assures an employee's continued employment with the Practice.

Employees are hired because their skill, talent and experience will help this Practice deliver high quality, compassionate, and reliable services. These factors are of extreme importance to the Practice, its patients and their families.

Also, the development of harmonious relations among our Practice personnel is essential to its effective operation. Knowing and communicating the employment expectation is vital to making the practice a pleasant and enjoyable environment in which to work.

Authority

The governing body of the Practice is its Board of Directors (collectively referred to as the "Board"). The Board shall both establish and amend Practice policies from time to time, possibly without prior notice to the employees. The Board has the right to revise any policy at any time in its sole discretion, and without advance notice to, or permission from its employees. It may act at any time on any matter. It may also delegate some or all of its authority to implement its decisions. All such changes are deemed effective upon publication, unless stated to the contrary.

Administration

The implementation of the personnel policies has largely been delegated to the Practice Administrator, and may have been further delegated. An employee acting through channels may initiate any action provided for in these policies. Likewise, any employee who has any questions about any section of this Manual should consult his or her direct supervisor or the Practice Administrator.

Coverage

All employees of the Practice are subject to the provisions of this Manual unless otherwise noted or as specifically exempted from application by a written contract with the Practice.

Principles of Conduct

The Practice does not employ any individual on a permanent basis or for a defined time period. All employees are employees at will and are subject to dismissal without cause or explanation.

This Manual covers all of our employees, except those who have a written (and signed) an employment agreement with the Practice.

Principles of Conduct for All Employees

1. All employees are responsible for the efficient performance of their duties in conformity with the established policies and procedures of the Practice. Employees may not conduct any personal business during working hours.
2. All employees should endeavor to maintain good relationships with their fellow workers by exercising courteous and considerate conduct at all times.
3. All employees should coordinate their efforts with other employees throughout the Practice to ensure continuity of purpose and maximum achievement of the Practice objectives.
4. The medical services rendered to our patients are by their nature quite personal to them. Employees must keep any information about patients, their medical issues, problems, income, relationships and the like absolutely confidential. Nothing can be more embarrassing or potentially damaging to the Practice than a discovery that information has been divulged, even casually, by anyone to a person who has no authority to receive that information, either outside the working relationship or within the Practice. This is perhaps the most important rule the Practice has and the Practice must insist on respecting that privacy, in spirit and in fact. Any breach is cause for immediate dismissal.
5. All employees must be available and in sufficient physical condition to report for and perform their work as scheduled. If an employee is unable either to report for work or perform his or her work due to illness or other justifiable cause, he or she is expected to call and notify Human Resources and his or her supervisor, of the expected absence and the reason(s) for his or her inability to work as scheduled.
6. No employee shall enter the Practice or remain on the premises unless he or she is scheduled for work or on other Practice-related business.
7. Each employee shall faithfully accomplish his or her job, duties and responsibilities and shall be expected to perform work assigned to him or her.
8. No employee shall either restrict the workflow or interfere with others in the performance of their jobs. No employee shall engage or participate in any work interruption.

9. All employees shall be responsible for the appropriate and safe use of all Practice equipment and property assigned to or used by him or her, or in his or her custody and care. The Practice reserves the right to inspect any employee's work area, voice mail and any computer files at any time, without any advance notice, and without any permission. No employee should have any expectation of privacy in the workplace. The employer may at any time access all workstations, lockers, desks, or other storage locations. Each employee not only acknowledges the reasonableness of this standard, but also pledges his or her cooperation in allowing the Practice designee access to all locations in or on the Practice premises and/or equipment.
10. All employees who will (or may) be late for work or will not be in due to illness or a personal situation, should make every effort to notify Human Resources and his or her supervisor before 7:45 a.m. by calling 618-969-8777, EXT. 1229. Failure to report lateness or frequently reported lateness may result in disciplinary action.
11. Habitual absence or tardiness for any reason is subject to disciplinary action. Unsatisfactory attendance will result in a written warning or discharge. Failure to correct an attendance problem will result in dismissal.
12. Each employee is required to abide by all security regulations established by the Practice and/or its landlord. Employees are expected to bring any unsafe or dangerous condition(s) to the attention of the supervisor. All employees are expected to promptly notify the supervisor or his or her designee of any improperly functioning or broken equipment.
13. No employee shall take any Practice property away from the premises.
14. All employees are expected to immediately notify the supervisor or his or her designee of any work related injury, and may further be expected to describe the problem in such a way that (if possible) the injury can be prevented from occurring again.

The following conduct is absolutely prohibited:

1. Falsifying any report or record -- including but not limited to personnel, absence, and sickness records.

2. Falsely stating or making claims of injury.
3. Falsely stating or making a claim of harassment.
4. Abuse or destruction of Practice property.
5. Falsifying time reports.
6. Insubordinate conduct or refusing to follow a supervisor's directions.
7. Storing or using alcohol or other illegal substances on the premises at any time.
8. Disclosing any personal health information (whether protected or deemed Confidential Information) to any person not authorized to receive such information or any person or entity outside of the Practice.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to these policies and procedures throughout this Manual.

Active Employee. An employee who is regularly scheduled to work on a predictable schedule and is not an employee on leave of absence for disability, Family Medical Leave or other reason.

Exempt Employee. An executive, professional, supervisory or other similar employee who is not entitled to receive overtime pay.

Full-Time Employee. An employee who is scheduled to work on a regular basis at least forty (40) hours per week, and is subject to all policies and procedures and is entitled to receive insurance benefits.

Immediate Family. An employee's spouse, parents, children, brothers and sisters.

Leave. An approved type of absence from work as provide by these policies.

Non-Exempt Employee. An employee, other than an exempt employee, who is entitled to receive overtime pay.

Overtime. Time actually worked by a non-exempt employee in excess of forty (40) hours per week that has been appropriately authorized in advance. Pay at the rate of time and one-half occurs once the employee has actually worked in excess of forty (40) hours in a defined workweek.

Part-Time Employee. An employee, who works on a regular basis less than thirty-five (35) hours per week, but is subject to all policies and procedures [and does not receive insurance benefits].

Seasonal Employee. A Temporary Employee.

Temporary Employee. An employee who has been hired for a specific period of time on a full or part-time basis, not to exceed twelve (12) consecutive months and who may work varied hours.

Work Day. The scheduled number of hours an employee is required to work in a given day. The work day may vary for different employees and different positions.

Workweek. The total of scheduled workdays in a seven-day period. The workweek of the Practice is defined to be from 12:00 a.m. Sunday to 11:59 p.m. Saturday.

SECTION II – PRACTICE POLICIES

Children In the Work Place

Employees are discouraged from bringing children into the work place. Prior approval by the supervisor or his or her designee is required before children are to be brought to the Practice. In the event approval is given, the Practice accepts no liability for any harm to any child.

Security of Premises and Access Codes

No employee may at any time use any other employee's login to the computer, access codes, passwords or keys. The sharing or posting of access codes and passwords is strictly forbidden. Likewise, office keys or other access codes may not be shared or copied. The loss of any means of access (login, keys, passwords, etc.) should immediately be reported to the supervisor and/or Human Resources.

Interpersonal Relations

Employees are expected to be kind, cooperative, and understanding to all patients, their families, and their co-workers, no matter how adverse the circumstances may be at any time. Politeness and firmness should be used in dealing with difficult people. Conflicts with supervisors or co-workers are to be handled outside the presence of patients or the general public in a professional and courteous manner.

Dating or other personal relationships among Practice employees is at all times disallowed.

Anti-Nepotism Policy

No employee shall at any time refer any potential candidate for employment to the Practice if that potential candidate is "related" to the employee. Related means by

marriage, parent, sibling or child, including step-parents, siblings or children, or other relatives. [For purposes of this anti-nepotism policy, the term "related" also includes domestic partners.]

Loyalty

Employees should support the policies and reputation of the Practice, the physicians, and the other staff members. Personal disagreements with any policy and/or procedure should be discussed directly and privately with the supervisor and should be handled in a professional and courteous manner outside the presence of patients and the general public.

Policy Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination

Respect for the dignity and value of every individual is a basic tenet of the Practice. Each individual has the right to work and live in an environment conducive to equal opportunity and free from discriminatory practices. Each staff member is responsible for maintaining an atmosphere free of discrimination and harassment and for displaying respect for his or her co-workers.

No physician, supervisor, or other employee will threaten or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, overtly or covertly, that an employee or applicant's refusal to submit to sexual advances will adversely affect that person's employment, work status, evaluation, wages, advancement, assigned duties, shifts, or any other condition of employment or career development. Similarly, no employee will explicitly or implicitly, overtly or covertly, promise, imply or grant any preferential treatment to another employee or applicant for sexual conduct/favors.

The Practice is committed to equal opportunity in employment. The Practice will not base any employment decision on an individual's race, national origin, sex, sexual preference, religion, age or disability.

The Practice does not tolerate harassment on the basis of race, national origin, sex, sexual preference, religion, age or disability. Such harassment in the workplace is also a form of employment discrimination and is prohibited by law. All employees are responsible for keeping the Practice free from all forms of harassment. All existing employees and new hires will acknowledge the Practice's policy against harassment and discrimination in the workplace by signing an acknowledgement form.

Harassment prohibited under this policy includes verbal, visual, or physical conduct relating to matters of race, national origin, sex, sexual preference, religion, age or disability, which is unwelcome to a reasonable person. Examples of conduct expressly prohibited by this policy include:

- Sexually suggestive touching, including intentional brushing against another's body;
- Grabbing, groping, kissing, fondling;
- Offensive e-mail, screen-savers, pictures, letters or verbal communications;
- Questions about another's sex life or overly personal questioning including repeated requests for dates; or
- Sexual favors in return for employment reward, or threats if sexual favors are not returned.

Any employee who experiences, witnesses, or is the subject of harassment on the basis of any factor listed above is expected to promptly report that event to his or her supervisor. If the supervisor is the source of the unwanted action or does not act on that knowledge, the employee should tell the next person up in the chain of command. This policy applies to all incidents of actual or threatened harassment or discrimination whether those actions occur on or off the Practice premises, during or after regularly scheduled work hours, and whether the action is by a co-worker, supervisor, outside contractor, patient, or otherwise. If any complaining employee is dissatisfied with the action of the supervisor, he or she may appeal this decision directly to the Practice Administrator.

If the Practice determines that such disapproved actions did occur, then those actions shall be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.

The Practice policy prohibits any form of retaliation for filing a complaint. Nonetheless, if after the investigation, the Practice determines that the complaint was not bona fide; not made in the good faith belief that it occurred; or if it was false or malicious, then disciplinary action may be taken against the employee who filed the false claim, up to and including termination.

Periodic Medical Examination/Screening

The Practice may request any potential employee to undergo a post-offer pre-employment examination and alcohol/drug screening to be conducted by a physician not associated with the Practice. Any offer of employment is contingent upon satisfactory completion of the examination(s) and the opinion of the examining physician that the applicant is capable of performing the essential functions of the position offered, with or without a reasonable accommodation.

As a condition of continued employment, each employee may be required to undergo a periodic examination and/or drug or alcohol screening, consistent with applicable laws.

[All Practice-required screenings are at the sole expense of the Practice.]

Professional Conduct and Appearance

Personal conduct, physical appearance, and the appearance of work areas are direct reflections on the Practice and the quality of the services it provides. All employees are at all times expected to conform to the Practice dress code. Professional conduct includes cooperation for the common good and mutual respect for each other's position and responsibilities

SECTION III – WORKING HOURS

Work Hours

The Practice is usually staffed and open for business starting at 8:00 a.m., Monday through Friday, with ending times dependent upon patient schedules and work demands. Saturday hours start at 8:00 a.m. and usually continue through 12:00 p.m.. The actual time that each employee will be expected to be available for work will vary by position. Some employees may start earlier than 8:00 a.m., while others will be expected to start later. Each employee will be advised of his or her estimated starting and ending times by a schedule, though it may be subject to change. All employees are expected to be punctual and to stay until relieved or dismissed. Chronic lateness and/or leaving early will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action, which may include employment termination.

Circumstances will sometimes arise, which necessitate working beyond normal Practice hours. Employees are expected to stay when their services are required, unless a prior arrangement has been made with the supervisor or his or her designee.

Non-exempt full-time employees are scheduled to work at least forty (40) hours in each workweek. Forty (40) hours per week constitutes a full time.

Non-exempt employees will be paid at the standard rate for working hours up to forty (40) hours per workweek, and at the rate of time-and-one-half (150%) of their usual hourly rate(s) if the aggregate time actually worked is more than forty (40) hours in a particular workweek. If an employee does not work forty (40) hours per work week, the employee must use personal or vacation time to build time to forty (40) hours. If an employee is sent home due to lack of work no personal or vacation time will need to be used.

No employee should, at anytime, do work for Marion Eye Center off of the clock. All employees must be paid for time worked.

Breaks

Employees may be allowed to take one break in the morning and/or one break in the afternoon, IF the schedules allow. The breaks are to be 10 minutes or less or you will be required to clock out. If you leave Marion Eye Center property, you MUST be off the clock. You are required to get your supervisor's approval prior to taking a break.

Employees may not consume beverages at their desk or outside in view of the patients. At no time may any beverages be placed upon any operating equipment or patient files and beverages should, if possible, be kept in containers that will not easily spill if knocked over. Personal space must be kept neat and tidy.

Lunch Breaks

The normal lunch break is one (1) hour and this time should be taken. This lunch break is considered non-compensated time; therefore, employees are free to leave the office during this period. Employees may not change their working hours or scheduled lunch times without prior approval of the supervisor. Employees should "clock out" when they begin their break and "clock in" when they return.

The larger offices remain open during lunch, and therefore lunch breaks will be scheduled by the supervisors to assure coverage of all office duties during lunch breaks. Employees should not interrupt someone on a scheduled "lunch" break, as the Practice attempts to provide a "work-free" break. Lunch breaks may not be taken at the beginning or the end of a shift or workday.

The Labor Board states any employee that is scheduled to work a minimum of seven and one half (7.5) hours, must take a minimum of a twenty (20) minute break off of the clock. (Away from work related duties) beginning no later than the end of the fifth hour of the work day.

Record Keeping

Accurate records must be kept regarding hours worked and absences taken, regardless of the hourly or salaried basis of compensation to comply with federal and state employment regulations. Each employee is responsible for checking their own timecard for errors or inaccuracies and to ensure the timecard is ready to be approved by their supervisor. Any discrepancies in hours/pay due to incorrect information submitted to payroll will be adjusted the following pay period. Time worked commences when an employee is ready, willing and able to work in his or her designated area. "Clocking in" may be evidence of that readiness if the Practice uses a time clock or computerized system. ***[Employees are expected personally to log in at the commencement of their shift and log out for lunch, and at the end of their shift. No employee may log in or out for any other employee.]***

Time worked ends when an employee leaves, or "logs out." All employees are expected to report the time they worked truthfully. If an employee is required to work through lunch or other breaks, he or she shall be paid for that time. Likewise, if an employee is expected to travel during usual work hours, (make a bank deposit, pick up or deliver items, etc.), that time will be considered work time. Employees required to travel between offices during the workday or otherwise should consult with the supervisor as to whether (or not) compensated time covers travel time.

Overtime

In accordance with federal regulations, employees with a non-exempt status (that is, employees who are not executive, administrative, or professional personnel) are eligible to receive overtime compensation at the rate of one and one-half (1.5) times their base hourly rate for all hours actually worked over forty (40) in each workweek. This does not include vacation, personal, or holiday hours.

The overtime compensation requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) do not apply to employees who are exempt or employed in an executive, administrative or professional capacity.

An employee's exempt/non-exempt status is determined when he or she is hired (or promoted), and is based upon the type of work he or she performs. The Practice Administrator assigns these classifications based upon the job responsibilities of the position. Employees are informed of their classification at time of hire (or change in position).

All overtime work must be assigned and/or approved in advance by the supervisor or with his or her designee's approval, except when this is not practical. Hours during which an employee did not actually work but which are compensated (e.g. vacation days, sick days) are not counted for purposes of computing overtime.

Travel

If you are asked to report to an office requiring you to drive your personal vehicle a greater distance than you would typically drive to get to work, you will be paid mileage for each mile over and above your normal driving distance from your home to your home office at a rate of .35 cents per mile.

If you are asked to travel from your home office to another office, you will be eligible for mileage reimbursement, if a company vehicle is not available. If a company vehicle is available and you choose to drive your own vehicle, you will not receive mileage reimbursement. If multiple employees are traveling to the same office, they must ride together in a company vehicle, if available. If you travel with another employee in their vehicle, only the vehicle owner will be compensated.

If you are required to work in an office other than your home office, you will be paid for the travel "time" to and from that office, IF your drive time is in excess of what you normally drive to your home office. In the case of arriving at your home office and then

being required to travel to another office (unexpected travel) you will be paid travel “time” for the entire drive.

A mileage reimbursement form must be filled out and submitted to your supervisor. All forms must be completed totally or they will be returned. Mileage is paid on a monthly basis. The forms are available from your supervisor or on the employee web page.

SECTION IV – COMPENSATION AND PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

Pay Period

Employees are paid one pay period in arrears. This allows the Practice time to calculate hourly and overtime compensation.

The usual Practice payday is bi-weekly on Friday for the preceding payroll period based on information supplied for that period. If you will be working at an office other than your “home” office on pay day, you must let HR know where your check needs to be sent by 1:00 pm on Thursday, prior to pay day. In the event that this day falls on a holiday, paychecks will be issued on the last working day prior to the normal pay date. **No advance in salary will be made under any circumstances.**

Employees are paid by check or by direct deposit. Employees may make changes in their direct deposit set-up any time. Anytime that a direct deposit is set up, or any changes are made to a current direct deposit, it takes 10 business days to go into effect. Employees with special circumstances who wish to temporarily opt out of direct deposit should make a request to Human Resource Dept. All employees are at all times expected to review their paychecks. If there is any error of any kind, the Employee should immediately contact Human Resources.

Pay Adjustments

Employees are not compensated for time during any of the following events:

- Unauthorized absence; tardiness, leaving early.
- Absence due to illness after authorized sick leave has been used.
- Absence due to suspension from duty.
- Approved leaves of absence.
- Any other absence not authorized by the Practice policies or the Administrator.

Payroll Taxes and Other Withholding

All compensation paid to employees is subject to federal, state and local withholding and to Social Security and Medicare taxes based on the exemption information completed and supplied by the employee and submitted to the Practice. The Practice contributes an equal amount to each employee's share of Social Security paid. Full information on the Social Security Act and its application to employees may be obtained from a local Social Security office.

The Practice will withhold all appropriate taxes from employees' paychecks as governed by federal, state and local authorities. These taxes likely include:

1. Federal. Based on the allowances reported on Form W-4, required amounts are withheld from all wage payments. When an employee has a change in his or her withholding allowances, a revised W-4 must be requested by the employee and submitted to the Human Relations.
2. State. The state Personal Income Tax is deducted from employees' wages based on the withholding required. Also, the Practice withholds the appropriate state unemployment taxes.
3. F.I.C.A. Under the Federal Insurance Contribution Act, a specified percentage of gross earnings up to a specified maximum salary is withheld from each employee's paycheck. The money withheld from gross earnings is contributed toward Medicare and Social Security benefits. The Practice also contributes to Medicare and Social Security by matching each employee's withholding amount.
4. Local. To the extent that there is a local tax (earned income tax required to be withheld from each employee's paycheck), that too, shall be withheld.

The Practice also withholds insurance premiums, retirement plan deferrals and other designated benefits, pursuant to the plans in place at the Practice and the employee's elections.

Confidentiality of Payroll

Salaries are strictly confidential and may vary for many reasons. No one other than the employee, the Human resource Dept. is authorized to have information about the salary rates of employees.

The unauthorized disclosure of an employee's compensation package or any other employee's compensation package is deemed to be disrespectful of the privacy of other employees and may be grounds for immediate dismissal.

Lost or Stolen Paychecks

Lost or stolen paychecks should be reported promptly to the Human Resources. The Practice will attempt to put a stop payment on the check. If able to do so, the Practice will cancel the lost/stolen check and issue another check. The Practice does not take any responsibility for lost or stolen paychecks. If the Practice is unable to stop payment on a check, the employee will be responsible for such loss.

Performance Evaluations – General

The Practice periodically analyzes and appraises the job performance of all its employees. Supervisors shall submit employee performance reports on each regular employee annually and at such other times as deemed appropriate.

Performance appraisals provide the basis for establishing an understanding among the supervisor and the employee concerning job responsibilities and individual performance. Merit increases are granted to recognize "good" or better performance. The amount of the increase is determined by the rating given on the performance appraisal form.

Practice employees are our most valuable assets, so employee development and motivation are a prime concern to us. Similarly, the Practice considers its patient

satisfaction to be of paramount importance. Favorable patient interactions are critical. Some of the factors that the Practice looks for in its employees, and upon which employees will be evaluated include the following:

- Cooperation with other staff members;
- Responsiveness to patient needs and sympathy for their problems;
- Clinical/administrative competence to perform the duties of the position;
- Willingness to perform the tasks and role assigned to the employees; and
- Integrity and maintenance of standards of professional conduct and decorum in the office and with the patients.

Employees sign the performance appraisals to indicate that they have read and understand them, and that those appraisals have been discussed with the employee. The employee's signature does not necessarily signify agreement with the appraisal, and **even an excellent performance review does not in any way assure continued employment or an increase in pay.** There is room on the appraisal for the employee to comment, and the Practice encourages employees to do so.

SECTION V – PERSONNEL FILE AND RECORD KEEPING

Personnel File and Records

The Practice maintains personnel files for each employee. Those files include documentation of employment and may include the initial job application, references, performance appraisals, letters for disciplinary and commendation and the like.

Personnel files shall be established and maintained on each employee. These files shall contain all records and correspondence pertaining to that employee. Personnel files shall be maintained in a confidential manner. However, any employee may upon request review their personnel file, in the presence of a Human Resource representative.

Every hire, transfer, promotion, demotion, change of salary or rate, disciplinary action and any other temporary or permanent change of telephone number, address, or marital status of employees shall be entered into the personnel file.

Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) prohibits the hiring and retention of aliens not authorized to work in the United States, requires all employers to verify employment eligibility and retain certain records, prohibits discrimination on the basis of national origin and citizenship status, and imposes substantial civil and criminal penalties for violation of the law.

IRCA makes it unlawful to hire or to continue to employ an alien who has not been lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence or otherwise authorized to be employed. IRCA also makes it unlawful to hire any individual without verifying his or her employment authorization and identity.

All new employees hired by the Practice must provide the required documentation within three (3) business days of commencement of employment to maintain their position. If a new employee does not have the required documentation, federal law

allows for an exception if an application to secure the documents is submitted within the three (3) day period and the document itself is presented within twenty-one (21) days of commencement of employment. A new employee and the Administrator are required to complete Form I-9, verifying that the employee is not an unauthorized alien. Verification is based on examination of specific documents to establish both employment authorization and identity.

The Practice will maintain Form I-9 for at least three (3) years from the employee's start date, or one (1) year after termination if that is longer than three (3) years from the date of hire. If a former employee is re-employed, the Practice will rely on Form I-9 if completed within three (3) years prior to the rehire and if the form is inspected and indicates a continuing eligibility to work.

The Practice is permitted by IRCA to copy any document presented by the employee to establish both employment authorization and identity.

Leave of Absence

Any approved leave of absence shall be entered in the employee's personnel file.

Change of Employee Status

Each employee is personally responsible to alert the Human Resources Department immediately upon there being a change in one or more of the following

- Address;
- Telephone number;
- Person to notify in case of emergency;
- Name change, through marriage, or otherwise;
- Marital status;
- Number of dependents;
- Insurance beneficiary;
- Military status;
- Driving privileges; or
- Health status.

Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action.

SECTION VI – EMPLOYEE CONTINUING EDUCATION

Training

The Practice provides training to enable employees to perform more effectively and to advance the services of the Practice. Appropriate supervisors shall periodically assess the training needs of the employees and consult with the Practice Administrator to obtain information on applicable training programs. Some of the training shall be "hands on" and may include monitoring.

Conferences and Professional Association

The Practice recognizes the benefits and importance of continuing education and it encourages its employees to maintain their skills. Dues to professional associations for employees, if approved in advance by the employee's supervisor or Practice Administrator, shall be paid by the Practice when the activity is reasonably related to employees' skills or required by the position in the Practice.

Where the Practice has agreed to permit educational absence or has agreed to be responsible for payment of licenses, continuing education, or so on, the employee shall clarify which (if any) expenses and out of pocket costs shall be approved.

Seminars and Educational Events

The Practice supports and encourages employees who seek to improve their skill levels. Practice management will review with interested employees seminars or other educational events of interest. Subject to the ability of the Practice to provide adequate coverage for the absent employee and the actual cost of the event, the Practice may approve such events on a case-by-case basis.

All requests for seminars and events should be submitted well in advance.

Employees who become aware that they cannot attend a seminar, for which they are registered, are required promptly to provide cancellation notice to the educational provider, and to obtain the maximum refund possible for the Practice. An employee, who fails to cancel such a registration when feasible, shall reimburse the Practice for the cost of any penalty or fees for attendance.

Expense Reimbursement

Employees shall be reimbursed for all reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their assigned duties. The Accounts Payable supervisor requires appropriate receipts and justification to all reimbursements. All expenses shall be recorded and submitted to the bookkeeper for reimbursement.

SECTION VII – PERSONNEL ACTIONS

ALL EMPLOYMENT AT THE PRACTICE IS "AT WILL." POLICY AND PROCEDURES STATED HEREIN MAY BE CHANGED WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

THIS MANUAL IS NOT A CONTRACT OF EMPLOYMENT, EXPRESSLY OR BY IMPLICATION.

Promotion – General

The Practice policy is to consider "promotion" of current employees to fill vacancies whenever possible, and to promote the most capable and qualified employee for any position regardless of the employee's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, age, sex, mental or physical handicap. The burden is on the employee to apply for a change in position if he or she wishes to be considered for the change.

An employee must possess the qualifications necessary for any position sought. The appropriate supervisor, with the consent of the Practice Administrator, shall be responsible for assessing whether or not an employee possesses the necessary qualifications for promotion to a particular position.

Separation

Separation of employees from positions with the Practice may be accomplished by any of the following: resignation, layoff, disability, retirement, disqualification, end of temporary assignment, and employment dismissal.

Employees who terminate their employment, voluntarily or involuntarily, will be entitled to compensation earned but unpaid including vacation time accrued but unused. Used vacation that has been taken but unearned will be deducted from the final paycheck. No pay will be granted for unused sick leave/personal days.

In no event will the Practice have any obligation to pay any severance benefits for any reason to any employee.

At the time of separation and prior to final wage payment, all records, assets, and other items paid for by or belonging to the Practice in the employee's custody will be returned to the supervisor or his or her designee. Any amount due because of damage, shortage or other injury to the Practice to the above shall be withheld from the employee's final compensation or collected through other appropriate action.

It is the employee's responsibility to return all equipment, property, files, documents, records, and all copies thereof prior to the termination date, including any keys, cards and identification badges. Employees are reminded that their duty of confidentiality extends beyond their employment with the Practice, regardless of the reasons for employment termination.

To resign in good standing, an employee must give the supervisor or appropriate supervisor at least two (2) weeks' prior notice. A written resignation is required to be submitted by the employee to the supervisor giving the reason for leaving.

References will be given for a former employee if the employee approves the reference in writing. In lieu of such permission, the Practice may only verify dates of employment and the position held.

Disciplinary Action

Employment with the Practice is "at will" (that is, either party can end the employment relationship at any time and for any or no reason), and the Practice reserves the right to immediately terminate employee's employment depending on the nature and severity of the infraction. If job performance and/or conduct simply does not meet expectations, the Practice typically takes the following steps towards job performance correction:

- Step One: Verbal warning
- Step Two: Formal Notice (in writing) to the employee
- Step Three: Termination of Employment

If the action underlying the discipline puts the Practice, its employees, or its professional reputation at risk, the Practice may in its sole discretion, and in lieu of any progressive discipline, terminate the offending employee's employment.

Because unsatisfactory job performance and unacceptable conduct have different levels of seriousness, the Practice may decide to bypass a level of counseling. Circumstances, which may affect such a decision, include, but are not limited to:

- The severity of the conduct, the conditions under which the substandard performance occurred and whether the unacceptable behavior violated more than one rule of conduct;
- The employee's demonstrated willingness to make improvements in performance or conduct as needed; and
- The quality of the employee's overall job performance.

Job performance correction will not be followed in the following instances:

- During the introductory period (first 90 days of employment);
- When the Practice is of the opinion that remedial efforts are unlikely to be successful (for example, where a negative attitude has been demonstrated, where personality conflicts are present or where an employee appears to be unreceptive to the corrective actions);
- When the employee has engaged in misconduct, or conduct, which falls so far below Practice expectations that employment cannot be continued.

Examples of conduct that may result in immediate discharge include, but are not limited to:

Physical or verbally harassing, coercing, intimidating or threatening a patient or Practice employee on or off Practice premises, or anyone on Practice premises;

- Discourteousness to a patient;

- Theft or dishonesty, including, but not limited to: willful falsification of any pay, time, business, expense or employment record (including your Application for Employment or Resume) or misappropriation of Practice property or property belonging to any of the employees of the Practice, its patients or guests;
- Violation of any of the Practice rules regarding drugs, alcohol, fitness-for-duty and/or possession of firearms or other deadly weapon while on the premises of the Practice;
- Unauthorized disclosure or use of Practice or patient confidential information or documents;
- Failure to follow direct instructions of a supervisor;
- Gross neglect of duties or job responsibilities; or
- Other serious misconduct, as determined by the Practice.

Any time an employee's performance, attitude, work habits, or personal conduct falls below a desirable level, the supervisor, or his or her designee shall inform the employee promptly and specifically of such lapses and provide counsel and assistance as needed. If appropriate, a reasonable period of time for improvements may be allowed before initiating disciplinary action. In some instances, a specific incident may justify severe disciplinary action in and of itself. However, the action to be taken depends on the seriousness of the incident and the whole pattern of the employee's past performance.

The following actions may, by example only, be deemed sufficient to cause disciplinary action:

- Fraud or deception in securing or maintaining employment with the Practice;
- Incompetence, unsatisfactory performance or inefficiency;
- Insubordination;
- Dishonesty, willful damage, waste, theft or negligence in the use of Practice property;
- Intoxication, reporting to work or working while under the influence of alcohol;
- Addiction to the use of narcotics or habit forming drugs, reporting to work or working under the influence of narcotics or habit-forming drugs;
- Absence without leave;
- Discourteous or abusive treatment of patients and/or employees;

- Acceptance of any valuable consideration that was given with the expectation of influencing the employee in the performance of their duties;
- Falsification of records;
- Violation of Practice rules, regulations/procedures or the willful violation of these policies and procedures;
- Absenteeism, unexcused lateness, leaving work without prior permission;
- Conducting business other than that of the Practice during working hours;
- Use of the Practice supplies, assets, personnel or services other than in furtherance of the Practice business objectives; or

Disclosure of proprietary information regarding patient lists, methods of operation, etc., except in the normal course of business. In situations where a verbal warning has not resulted in satisfactory improvement, or where more severe initial action is warranted, a written reprimand may be sent to an employee and a copy will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

The supervisor, for the aforementioned reasons or other justifiable reasons, may suspend an employee without pay when alternate personnel actions are not deemed appropriate.

The supervisor and/or the appropriate designee may dismiss an employee when, in his or her opinion, the disciplinary action has not resulted in the desired improvements, the whole pattern of the employee's past performance is unsatisfactory, or the employee has committed an action of such severity that immediate dismissal is warranted.

Exit Interviews

When an employee leaves our employ for any reason, Human Resources will conduct an exit interview so that the Practice may learn and verify the reason(s) for departure and work to improve the Practice where it is deficient.

If any employee believes at any time that there has been any action of impropriety, then he or she shall be asked to bring that matter to the attention of the supervisor, his or her designee or Managing Physician during his or her employment.

SECTION VIII – GRIEVANCES GENERALLY

General

If any employee has a complaint relating to his or her employment, he or she may address that concern to his or her supervisor. If the direct supervisor is either unavailable or is the source of the problem, the Practice Administrator should be contacted directly. If an appropriate person is not available, Human Resources may be contacted.

Reporting of Problems

If any employee at any time believes that there is a problem in the work environment, either due to a safety issue, work issue, equipment issue, inappropriate display of behavior, illegal or inappropriate practice or occurrence, or the like, that employee should immediately contact the supervisor. If the employee believes that the supervisor is (part of) the problem, he or she should contact Human Resources and report the problem. Failure to report actions that an employee reasonably believes to occur or be occurring which are harmful or offensive to other employees or the Practice may be deemed as tolerance or acceptance of the (inappropriate) activity by the employee, which could be grounds for termination.

SECTION IX – DRESS CODE

To maintain an appropriate and professional atmosphere, a dress code has been established for all employees. This dress code will enable our patients to easily identify each of our staff members.

Guidelines

All employees are expected to wear solid color scrubs. Each store is responsible for notifying their respective employees on specific colors and days certain colors may be worn. White may be worn with regular scrub colors but all white scrubs are not permitted. White lab coats or lab coats which match the color of scrubs that you are wearing or Marion Eye Center fleece jackets ONLY may also be worn. If you wear a shirt under your scrubs, they MUST be solid colors only (and with no writing or pictures on them). They must also coordinate with the color of your scrubs. If you wear the snap down tops open, necklines should not be less than 3 inches from the base of the neck. Traditional nursing type shoes, clean white sneakers with white laces are also required. No open toe styles allowed. Socks or hosiery required.

Skirts with hem lines below the knee are allowed. Excessively tight or loose clothing, suggestive attire, visible body piercing (other than pierced ears), visible tattoos, etc. are not permitted during working hours.

The Practice will provide name badges for all employees. Employees must wear name badges at all times. No employee may wear another employee's badge or misrepresent his or her position in the Practice.

Jewelry, such as bracelets, rings, and earrings, and/or some other personal items may be worn, provided such items are appropriate business accessories and are not excessive in either amount or size. The Practice does not permit employees to display jewelry in pierced body parts other than ears. If employees have other parts of their body pierced, they should refrain from wearing jewelry in these pierced areas while at the

Practice. Tattoos are to be covered, with bandaids or clothing. We must maintain a professional appearance at all times.

Hair must be neat, clean and well groomed; good personal hygiene is essential. Heavy perfumes or colognes should be avoided at all times in the Practice. Employees may consult with the supervisor in advance if they have any questions as to what constitutes proper attire.

Lab employees are to wear scrub tops and have the option to wear blue jeans or scrub pants. If jeans are worn they should not have holes or freys. Halter tops, Capri pants and open toe shoes are not allowed. OSHA rules must be adhered to.

The supervisor, his or her designee, or Practice Administrator has the right to have unsuitably attired employees sent home to change. Time away from the office will not be compensated. The repeated failure to adhere to these dress code guidelines may be cause for termination.

SECTION X – PAID TIME OFF

OPTION ONE – PTO

General Policy

The following types of compensated absence are permitted: certain holidays (as defined New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Day), vacation, sick and/or short term disability time, military service, emergency time, bereavement, and civil. The supervisor may grant leave in conformance with the policies established for each type of leave. Advance approval by the supervisor or his or her designee for leave, to be compensated, is required. Vacation, personal or sick days may be taken in any increment.

If an employee takes a leave of absence without pay, upon return to work the employee will resume his or her original position, if available, or any comparable position available. The Practice does not and cannot guarantee that there will be a comparable available position upon employee's return to work, except as required by law.

The Practice shall be considered "open" at all times during regularly scheduled hours. If for some reason (bad weather, disaster, etc.) the Practice is actually "closed," then employee may use PTO to be compensated for that time. In the alternative, the employee may, in his or her discretion, work such time. Nothing herein is intended to induce or force an employee to work when it is unsafe either to do so in the office or in the travel to or from the office. If employee decides to travel on such day(s), he or she does so at his or her own risk.

Weather-Related Absence

Weather and particularly winter storms sometimes make it difficult or dangerous to get to and from work. The Practice is sensitive to this problem and may close the

office, if weather conditions warrant. If the office is open for business and you are unable to get to work from your home, call Human Resources to inform them of your inability to work. Call your Supervisor to notify them of your absence so they can make other arrangements.

Vacation Leave

Time away from the job is beneficial to the employee's mental and physical well-being. The amount of vacation time to which each employee is entitled is accrued per pay, 1.54 hours for the first year of employment and 3.08 hours per pay thereafter.

Vacation time is earned on a prorated and accrued basis throughout the year. If more vacation has been taken than earned on the last day of employment termination or resignation, then the value of the extra time will be deducted from the employee's final paycheck. Employees can only be paid for time accrued. Borrowing hours in advance is not permitted.

Vacation scheduling is subject to advance approval by employee's supervisor or in his or her absence, by the Practice Administrator. Requests for vacation time must be submitted in the computer (ADP) if possible, at least one (1) month prior to the leave period. Employees will be notified within two (2) weeks thereafter if leave time is approved. Individual requests for vacation days on less than one (1) month's notice will be considered at the discretion of the supervisor. Because of coverage requirements, only a certain number of employees may be away at any one time. This number will vary by work group, and Practice location, and so employees will be advised by their supervisor. Change to an already approved vacation leave requires two (2) weeks' notice and subsequent approval so that coverage can be assured.

For full-time employees only, if a regularly scheduled holiday occurs during a vacation period, the Holiday will be used (and counted) instead of the "vacation day."

If there is a conflict in vacation schedules, the employee with the most seniority will have preference. Otherwise, approval will be based on a first-come, first-served basis.

No vacation can be taken during the first three (3) months of employment, although time will accrue from the first day of employment.

Sick Leave

Sick leave is provided to full time employees to protect the employee from financial hardship due to the loss of wages during personal illness or injury. Therefore, sick leave is considered to be used only if needed, rather than a benefit to which an employee is automatically entitled. Sick days are accrued at 1.54 hours per pay. No time is accrued while on leave of any type. "Borrowing" hours is not permitted

Each full-time employee will be entitled to receive his or her normal pay at his or her standard hourly rate for absences resulting from illness on the basis described below.

During the first three (3) months of employment, sick leave is uncompensated. Thereafter, the following schedule will be in effect for all full-time employees. Part-time employees are not entitled to any paid sick leave.

Sick leave (Personal Time) may be accumulated from one year to the next, up to 40 hours on the books. Unused days are not paid if they are accrued but unused when an employee leaves or terminates his or her employment.

To receive sick leave pay, an employee who is unable to report to work must call his or her supervisor and Human Resources before 7:45 a.m. This is necessary so that coverage can be arranged. A physician's note will be required for sick time used. If you have been off work under the care of a doctor **you will not be permitted to return to work without a written work release signed by your doctor.**

Maternity Leave

Absences due to any pregnancy-related conditions will be treated under the policy covering disability/sick leave/FMLA and paid according to the personal time/sick leave policy.

Holidays

The following paid Holidays are recognized by the Practice and are available to full-time employees only after completion of at least three (3) months of employment.

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day, and day after
- Christmas Day

Holiday pay is based on the regularly scheduled eight (8) hour workday.

Policies regarding Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve or other such days will be determined on an annual basis and reported to the employees. If a paid holiday falls on a Saturday, the practice will be closed Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the practice will be closed Monday.

Death of a Family Member – Bereavement Leave

In the event of the death of a member of a full-time employee's immediate family (a spouse, child, sibling, or parent), the Practice will permit absence for up to three (3) days as bereavement leave. Vacation or personal time may be used, otherwise, the time will be without pay.

Military Leave

Any full or part-time employee who is called to active military duty or to Reserve or National Guard training (or who volunteers for the same) should immediately, upon receipt of such orders, submit copies of those papers to his or her supervisor. Such an employee will be granted a military leave of absence without pay for the period of military service in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. If the employee is a reservist, the required training is handled in the same manner.

Eligibility for reinstatement after the applicable military duty or training is completed is determined in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.

Leave of Absence

This office grants leaves of absence only when it is in the best interest of the employees and this office. Leave of absences may be considered for full-time and part-time employees who have completed at least one (1) year of continuous service. Requests for leaves of absence will be considered for prolonged disability, maternity and adoption leave, military leave, and leave for other compelling personal reasons.

A leave of absence must be requested in writing and must include the reason for the leave of absence. It must be submitted at least thirty (30) days prior to commencement of the leave period unless it is an emergency. Emergencies are determined on a case-by-case basis. You must use any vacation and/or personal time that you have on the books first. Any remaining time would be unpaid.

While an employee is on a leave of absence for any reason, including FMLA leave, he or she may not work in another employment or contractor position or otherwise "moonlight."

An employee who returns to work at the conclusion of an approved leave of absence shall be restored to his or her former position or a similar position, unless

circumstances have so changed that it is impossible or unreasonable to reinstate the employee. Employees will need to make arrangements to pay for their own health insurance premiums and all other benefits during an approved leave.

Married Couples Who Work For the Practice

In the event both a husband and wife work for the Practice and each wishes to take leave for the birth, adoption or placement of a child in foster care, or to take care of a parent with a serious health condition, the husband and wife may only take a combined total of twelve (12) weeks of leave. In the event that each wishes to take Military Caregiver Leave, the husband and wife may only take a combined total of twenty-six (26) weeks of Military Caregiver Leave.

Fitness for Duty Certification

Eligible employees granted a leave of absence will be required to provide a Fitness-For-Duty certification signed by his or her health care provider. An employee who fails to provide such certification may be denied reinstatement to his or her position until he or she produces such certification.

Reinstatement Rights

Exceptions may also apply for certain highly compensated employees under certain conditions. Employees who fail to return to work at the end of FMLA leave may be considered to have voluntarily resigned his or her position with the Practice. In addition, the employees on a leave extension are not guaranteed reinstatement.

Civic Duties

Employees are encouraged to participate in both the judicial and election process. Full-time employees summoned to serve on a jury will be permitted such absences over and above any sick leave and vacation time. Summons for jury duty should be reported

immediately to employee's supervisor, since work schedules must be readjusted if an employee is called to serve. A copy will need to be given to Human resources.

Employees will be paid by the Practice for jury duty during a normally scheduled workday up to a limit of five (5) working days in any calendar year. The employee shall turn over to Employer any stipend received for such jury duty in exchange for being paid by the Practice

Employees are allowed time off if summoned to court as a witness. Employees may request a vacation day if he or she so chooses. When the court appearance does not take a whole day, the employee is expected to return to work. Pay will be made only for the hours actually worked.

To be eligible for such payment, the Employee must submit a copy of the summons to his or her supervisor as soon as possible. The Practice will not interfere with the Employee's service as a juror.

Participation in the election process should be performed on the employee's own time.

Disability Leave

Disability leave is an absence from work due to an occupational or non-occupational illness, injury, or condition. Disability leaves will be granted for the period during which an employee is unable to work due to his or her personal disability. The employee must inform the supervisor or his or her designee of the circumstances and an estimated time period for the leave. The Practice reserves the right to require verification of the disability from the employee's physician and to seek a second opinion if so desired. If the employee is unable to return to work after six months, he or she will no longer be considered an *active* employee.

Family and Medical Leave Act

Effective August 5, 1993, FMLA entitles eligible employees to take up to a total of 12 weeks of job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons. To be eligible, an employee must:

- Have worked for the employer for at least a total of 12 months
and
- Have worked at least 1250 hours over the prior 12 months
and
- Work where there is at least 50 employees employed by the employer within 75 miles.

Reasons for leave:

- For the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care.
- To care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) with a serious health condition.
 - Medical leave when the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition.

Anytime one takes a leave of absence for any reason, you must use any vacation and/or personal time you have on the books first, the remaining time would be taken without pay. If one takes leave under the FMLA, ones insurance will stay effective, but the employee will be responsible for paying their portion of the insurance the first of each month. No vacation or personal time is accrued during any leave of absence.

The employee will also be responsible for paying Marion Eye Centers for any additional deductions.

The 12 weeks that you are allowed, is available after one year of employment or 12 months following your last FMLA incident.

Forms for FMLA can be obtained from Human Resources. If further information is needed, please contact the Human Resources department. Please notify Human Resources anytime you have an employee out for an extended period of time.

SECTION XI – EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Details and summary Plan Descriptions for all benefit plans are available to employees on request. The terms of the policies in effect from time to time shall govern the actual benefits entitlements. **This policy** does not supersede or control the actual plan documents, which may be changed or amended from time to time or terminated by the Practice in its sole discretion without any advance notice. Specific information will be provided to each employee when he or she becomes eligible to participate in the plan benefit(s). Additional information can be obtained from Human Resources

First 90 Days of Employment

Each new employee is hired on a ninety (90) day introductory period. During this period of evaluation and training, no time off or benefits may be used. Holidays will not be paid during the introductory period. The supervisor will make every attempt to evaluate the new employee's performance at the end of the first and second month of employment, to determine whether performance has been satisfactory. Any employee whose employment is terminated during the introductory period shall not be entitled to any pro rata payment for vacation or other leave.

No benefits under this section are payable to any employee during the first ninety (90) days of employment, regardless of their status, unless a personal specific arrangement was made in writing and signed by the Practice Administrator.

COBRA

Legislation commonly referred to as COBRA (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act) basically provides for continuation of employer-sponsored health insurance coverage to divorced and widowed spouses of employees, dependent children who become ineligible under the employer's plan, spouses of Medicare eligible employees and most terminated employees. COBRA generally applies to employers who employ twenty (20) or more employees. This coverage continues at the individual's own

expense for the length of time and under such conditions as prescribed by law. The Practice, to the extent required by law, complies with the COBRA requirements.

HIPAA

The Health Insurance and Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) allows employees who have been covered by a group health insurance plan to continue that coverage after the cessation of employment. Affected employees are encouraged to seek additional information as needed.

Group Term Life

A group term life insurance policy is offered to all full-time employees. The policy is term life, but is convertible. The premium is paid by the employee. Employees are eligible the first of the month following 90 days full time employment.

Dental Insurance

Marion Eye Centers offer a group dental plan in which all full time employees and part time employees, who work at least 20 hours per week, may participate. The employee pays the premium for coverage. Dental insurance is available to eligible employees the first of the month following 90 days employment.

If you don't sign up during the enrollment period, and decide to do so later, there will be a waiting period before benefits will be paid.

If you cancel your insurance through Marion Eye Centers and later decide to sign up again, there will be a 6 month waiting period between canceling and re-enrolling.

AFLAC

Marion Eye Centers offers all employees the opportunity to have supplemental insurance through AFLAC after 90 days of employment. This is a pre-tax plan that can provide tax savings for the employee. The premiums are withheld as a payroll deduction from each paycheck. If you have any questions, please contact Human Resources.

Vision Benefits

One exam per year (after probation period is completed) for the employee, spouse, and children.

One free pair of glasses per year on the anniversary of employment (restrictions apply)

If you purchase a second pair (after your free pair), you will receive a 50% discount.

Any glasses purchased for spouse or children (immediate family) will receive a 50% discount.

Medical exams will be submitted to health insurance with no out of pocket expense to the employee.

Health Insurance Plans

The health insurance plan(s) maintained by the Practice defined below are for full-time, active employees of the Practice who have been employed for at least one year of service to the Practice.

The Practice shall pay a portion of an individual premium for coverage. The Practice's sole responsibility under these plans is to grant an allowance, as determined

from year to year by the Board of Directors for the premiums of health insurance coverage under a group health insurance policy.

The coverage provided by the Practice to any qualifying employee shall be as follows: (a) Full-time exempt employees: health insurance allowance as determined each year; [(b) Part-time employees: no coverage.]

Any employee may at his or her own expense increase coverage (from individual to family, etc.) so long as he or she meets requirements for insurability under the adopting corporation's group health insurance policy and take such steps as the Administrator may reasonably require to obtain such additional coverage. The employee may elect health insurance coverage under any such plan currently provided by the Practice. (HMO policy, PPO, or the like.)

If you have been part time and change to full time, but have been employed for at least one year, you will be eligible to sign up for insurance the first of the month following 90 days of full time status.

The employee will be required to complete appropriate forms provided by the Practice regarding Practice sponsored health insurance coverage. Employees who choose not to receive coverage through the practice shall sign a waiver indicating their choice. Health insurance coverage may be continued under COBRA provisions upon an employee's termination. Questions about COBRA should be directed to Human Resources.

Any employee who experiences difficulty in filing medical claims, understanding coverage, or collecting on a claim made should immediately see Human Resources.

[OPTION – 401(k) Retirement Savings Plan

The Practice maintains a 401(k) Retirement Savings Plan. An eligible employee

(employed with the Practice for at least one year and is at least 21 years of age) may elect to contribute to his or her fund through payroll deductions on a pre-tax basis. Participation, eligibility and governance of the plan are dictated by Federal regulation. See Human Resources for the Summary Description of the Retirement Savings Plan.]

SECTION XII – WORKPLACE ACCIDENTS AND HEALTH, SAFETY AND SECURITY

Accidents or Complaints

Any accident of any nature that occurs on the Practice premises and involves one or more employees, patients or other persons must be reported immediately to the director of human resources and their immediate supervisor. Each employee who either is injured or witnesses the occurrence should make a complete written report of the occurrence, including the time, place, circumstances, names of persons involved, and the names of witnesses, if any.

Accidents specifically include:

- Injuries sustained by an employee, a patient, or any other person while on the premises.
- Injuries sustained by or caused by an employee while off the premises but in the course of the Practice business.

All accidents must be reported, no matter how slight the injury or damage might seem to be, or who was responsible for the occurrence. Employees may be required to submit a drug test. All accidents must be reported to Human Resources within the first 24 hours following the incident.

Workers' Compensation

In connection with accidents involving employees, the Practice is insured under the Workers' Compensation Act. Under the terms of this insurance, accidents and injuries *must* be reported promptly to the director of human resources. Additional terms and regulations may apply under the Workers' Compensation Policy in effect at that time.

The Practice is committed to providing a safe, clean, healthy work environment for all employees. The Practice's ability to fulfill this responsibility requires your willingness to assist actively in the prevention and reporting of hazardous conditions and circumstances, which may cause injury and/or illness to you, our visitors, and other employees.

1. Safe Workplace

The Practice is committed to the protection of property from misappropriation and the prohibition of possession of contraband, illegal drugs and the like while on Practice premises. To accomplish these goals, the Practice reserves the right to examine any person's work area and belongings while on Practice premises.

2. Illegal Drugs

The use, possession, manufacture, sale, dispensing, or distribution of illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia while at work or on the Practice property is strictly forbidden and may result in an employee's immediate discharge.

3. Alcohol and Tobacco

The use of alcohol and tobacco while on the Practice's premises or during working time is strictly forbidden and may result in an employee's immediate discharge. Likewise, the possession of an open container of alcohol while on Practice premises is strictly forbidden and may result in an employee's immediate discharge.

The Practice specifically precludes an employee from consuming alcohol while at lunch if the employee is scheduled to return to work. If an employee reports to or returns to work under the influence of alcohol, he or she will be considered unfit-for-duty and may be subject to immediate discharge.

4. Fire Safety

Knowledge and observance of all fire safety regulations is essential in the prevention of fires. Each employee is responsible for observing the Practice Smoke Free policy, for using extreme care when handling flammable materials, and for disposing of waste and rubbish safely and properly. Each employee is responsible for knowing the locations of extinguishers and for being familiar with their operation and use.

If any employee suspects the presence of or actually discovers a fire on Practice premises, **remain calm and immediately notify the other occupants calmly that they must leave the building.** Exit the building and call 911

5. Office Access

The doors to the Practice offices are locked after the regularly scheduled hours. Employees should relock the door when exiting and arriving before 8:00 a.m. and after 5:00 p.m. each weekday and at all times on weekends and holidays. Employees may not provide their own security keypad code to anyone and may not use their code to allow entry to the Practice to anyone other than current, active employees. Relatives, friends, former employees, vendors, or employees on any form of leave may not be provided security codes or keys.

The last person to leave the office each evening should turn off the copiers and printers, coffee makers, and other equipment, adjust the heat/air conditioning, set the alarm if applicable, and lock the door.

6. Firearms & Deadly Weapons

Employees are prohibited from bringing firearms or other deadly weapons onto Practice property, or taking possession of firearms or other deadly weapons on

Practice property. Employees who become aware of the presence of firearms or deadly weapons should promptly report the location to the supervisor.

7. Report Unsafe Conditions, Threats to Security, or Accidents and Work-Related Illnesses

It is important that employees notify the supervisor immediately if they become aware of any situation, which may pose a threat to the personal safety or security of anyone at the Practice. If a visitor is injured or there is a loss or damage to the Practice premise, equipment or visitor/patient property, report such occurrences immediately. Accidents or injuries in the course of work should be reported to the supervisor and Human Resources without delay.

8. Personal Property

The Practice takes reasonable precautions to secure all of its offices. No employee should bring personal items to work, especially those of a sentimental or monetary value. Nonetheless, where valuable personal property is brought to the office(s), it should be in a locked area. Purses and wallets should be kept out of sight in a secure area. Cars should be locked, especially if they contain any valuable or other easily removable devices.

The Practice, the landlord, or the Practice insurance carrier cannot accept responsibility for the loss, damage or theft of personal items; however employees should always report such occurrences promptly to Practice management.

Housekeeping

Good housekeeping is especially important from the standpoints of safety and patient relations. Each employee is responsible for the neatness and good order of his or her own workspace, and keeping in mind that occasionally a temporary employee may

need to work at your location. All employees should cooperate in maintaining the entire office in the best and neatest possible manner. Employees are responsible to clean up after themselves in the lunchroom and bathrooms.

SECTION XIII – USE OF OFFICE FACILITIES AND PROPERTY

Smoke-Free, Alcohol-Free and Drug-Free Office Environment

Purpose

As providers of healthcare services, Marion Eye Center has an obligation to our patients and to the public to strongly assert the risk of tobacco use. Preventing the use of and exposure to tobacco products is consistent with our mission to provide the highest quality health care.

The use of tobacco has been irrefutably linked to many serious health problems, complications, and even death. Therefore, tobacco use will be prohibited at all Marion Eye Centers.

Policy

Marion Eye Center has the right to establish policy. Compliance with policy is expected due to the important message it conveys to our patients as well as the implications the policy has on the health and well being of our employees.

Beginning September 6th, 2011, any use of tobacco will be strictly prohibited in any indoor area, company owned or leased vehicle, and on managed or maintained grounds owned by Marion Eye Center, including in your vehicle if on Marion Eye Center property. Adherence to this policy is a condition of continued employment with Marion Eye Center.

Procedure

All employees are authorized and encouraged to communicate this policy with courtesy and diplomacy to patients.

Supervisors are responsible to ensure this policy is implemented and enforced.

Employees using tobacco products on company property are in direct violation of this policy and will be subject to corrective action. (see “ Termination and Discipline” in the employee handbook)

Posting of parking lot and entrances of all buildings with prominent “No Smoking” signs at all locations.

Employees will be held responsible for any and all damages to Marion Eye Center properties that are found to be caused by the use of tobacco.

Personal Use of Office Equipment and Supplies

The Practice's supplies, copy services, postage meter and support personnel are for Practice business and shall not be used for personal needs.

Personal telephone calls during business hours, both incoming and outgoing, should be limited to those, which are absolutely necessary and should be kept to a minimum. Personal calls consume time, tie up telephones and trunk lines, and may delay an important patient or business call.

Employees may not carry personal cell phones or other personal communication devices while working. Cell phones brought onto Marion Eye Center property must be set to "vibrate" or "silent" and kept in a locker, or other area where personal storage is permitted. Employees may not receive, make or respond to calls or messages while on the clock. Personal calls or messages are to never interfere with patient care. Wearing a hands-free device while working is not allowed. Using any form of a personal communication device or camera to take a picture of any patient or anything in the office without the advance permission of the Administrator is expressly forbidden.

No employee may make any toll calls involving 900 numbers, or other such fee-based or non-professional calls, which are inappropriate to a professional work environment.

Medical Practice Confidentiality

By the very nature of its patient work, the Practice receives information that patients rightly expect to be kept in the strictest of confidence. As (a group of) provider(s), the Practice has legal, ethical and moral responsibilities to its patients. All communications among the Practice, its staff and agents of the Practice are confidential and protected by law.

Employees must not reveal confidential information learned in the course of their work. Any employee who violates the confidentiality policy is subject to immediate employment dismissal. Additionally,

- Employees should always ensure that their oral communications about the Practice or patient matters are not overheard.
- Medical records, related materials and waste paper must be discretely handled.
- The reception area and business office should discourage visitor access to confidential written information by ensuring that medical records, memos and letters are neither visible to patients or visitors, nor left unattended.
- Computer screens should be shielded from the view of unauthorized individuals, including patients, and non-offensive screen savers should be used.
- Conversations in or adjacent to the receptionist area, business office or waiting room must be quiet and discrete. This includes conversations between patients and employees, conversations among employees, and conversations on the telephones or intercoms. Meetings taking place in offices where they can be overheard can also compromise confidentiality. Accordingly, doors should be closed when meetings are in progress, and interruptions regarding other matters including telephone and intercom interruptions should be scrupulously avoided.
- Employees should never discuss confidential information outside the office. Discussion between employees in public places (such as elevators or restaurants) can be easily overheard by other people. Additionally, employees must remember that patients and their medical conditions are not to be discussed with spouses, family and/or friends.
- The telephone can often lead to loss of confidentiality. Never give any information about a patient over the phone unless approval of the patient or a supervisor has been obtained first. Additionally, all employees must be sensitive to telephone conversations, which may be held in the presence of others.
- Physicians often keep sensitive material that may be of a very confidential nature to their patients, families, and others. To avoid accidental violations of confidentiality, under no circumstances should any confidential material be offered to a patient, vendor, or other unauthorized person without the direct consent of that Practice Administrator/Privacy/Security Officer.

These examples are not inclusive of all situations and issues the employee may encounter. If an employee is unsure of how to handle a situation, the employee should seek advice from the Administrator/Privacy/Security Officer

Computer Hardware and Software

The technological environment of the medical office continues to develop and change. These changes increase productivity and workplace flexibility but can also be challenging and complex. For these reasons, the Practice is committed to both keeping current with technological advances and providing the necessary training and support to our staff.

1. General Policy

To limit the exposure of the Practice to computer viruses, avoid software conflicts, and properly manage our information systems, only the designated computer support vendor or Information Technology (IT) Manager of the Practice may load software on any Practice computer. No independent "boot" disks may be used at any time to circumvent the Practice programs. Unauthorized software loaded on any Practice computer will be immediately removed. Employees are not permitted to make any hardware modifications to Practice equipment, or to use any computer hardware (including handheld items) brought in from the outside and connected to Practice equipment without the prior express approval of Practice management.

The Practice expressly forbids downloading of any non-Practice related devices or software or the installation of any such device or software not approved in advance by the Practice IT Manager or vendor. Practice management must approve all hardware and software purchases. This includes specialized software. All software disks should be virus scanned before any other activity is performed on the disks. In the event a virus is detected, it must be cleaned before proceeding further. If you are unsure how to do that contact the Administrator [System Administrator] for assistance before proceeding.

Computer software or hardware problems and questions should be directed to the Administrator. Do not attempt to personally correct hardware problems.

2. Offensive Materials

Employees may not download pornographic or otherwise offensive materials from the Internet. Likewise, employees may not view, save or print such materials utilizing Practice equipment and the Practice Internet connection. The Practice may block access to such sites if this is or becomes a problem.

3. Ownership of Information

All information, in any format, stored by any means on the Practice electronic facilities (voicemail, computer network drives, hard disks, or individual CD/flash drive) is the property of the Practice, and subject to inspection by the Practice management at any time without any advance notice. Do not assume that any electronically stored information is private or inaccessible by others.

Employees may not copy any information contained on the Practice electronic facilities for personal use or for disclosure outside the Practice without the express written permission of Practice management.

4. Software Licenses and Copyrights

The Practice licenses the use of its computer software from a variety of outside companies. The Practice does not own either this software, or its related documentation and, except as authorized by the owner thereof, does not have the right to reproduce it. Employees shall only use the software in accordance with the license agreement(s). Employees shall not copy any software from Practice computers.

No employee shall knowingly make, acquire, or use unauthorized copies of any Practice computer software for any purpose. Employees knowing of any misuse of

software or related documentation within the Practice should notify Practice management without delay.

Many of the materials on the Internet are similarly copyrighted. Employees may not download, copy, or disseminate such information if it violates any copyright policy, even if for use by the Practice.

Under the law, one who illegally reproduces software may be subject to civil damages and criminal penalties including fines and imprisonment. The Practice does not condone the illegal duplication of software. Violation of these policies will result in disciplinary action, and may be cause for employment discharge.

5. Electronic Data Privacy

Because the computer systems are owned and operated by the Practice for the work and benefit of the Practice, no expectation or personal right of privacy by an employee exists in any file contained within the computer or transmitted by the computer. Computer files may be accessed by Practice management to maintain and protect the computer system for the benefit of the Practice, to undertake the professional obligations of the owners of the Practice, or for any other business purpose of the Practice. If an employee does personal work on the computer system, the Practice has no responsibility to the employee if such work is lost or disclosed within or outside of the Practice. To protect such information from deletion or destruction, the employee should copy the work onto a CD/flash drive and remove it from the system. Employees should be aware that information in personal files may be retained by certain software.

The Practice prohibits the use of the Practice network and computers for personal correspondence and documents, [even if such activity does not interfere with the employee's performance of his or her duties at the Practice.] Use of the Practice network and computers for private business activities or for the benefit of non-patient related third parties is not permitted without the approval of Practice management.

Employees should be aware that computer programs can store information in many different formats and locations and that even when a user purports to delete data from the Practices computer system, the data may still be retrievable (e.g., from a system backup).

6. Data Security

Unauthorized copying of computer files or records, disclosure of the Practice or patient's proprietary or confidential information, disclosure of passwords, damage to systems, removal of files, destruction or removal of data or records, removal of programs or use of information contained in the computer system other than for providing lawful and proper service to patients of the Practice is prohibited, and may be cause for discharge.

Software Piracy/Office Technology

Copyright laws protect computer software. No computer software is to be copied for personal use or given to any other individual. Software may only be copied as a backup in case the computer network fails or the original disks are damaged. Backup copies should be kept in a locked, remote location. The Administrator [System Administrator] and [Billing Coordinator] should be aware of the location of all backup material. Employees may not install any computer software on any Practice computer or computer network without the Administrator's [System Administrator's] advance [written] approval. No applications may be downloaded from the Internet, e-mail, or otherwise without the advance consent of the Administrator [System Administrator]. All downloaded e-mail attachments or files must be scanned for viruses prior to opening or installing any such files.

All office technology (including telephones, computers, e-mail and Internet access) is to be used for normal Practice business only and is not to be used to conduct personal business except in an emergency. Employees are strictly prohibited from sending or receiving any e-mail or using the Internet to view materials that could be

construed to be of a harassing, sexual, offensive, discriminatory or intimidating nature. Such conduct and other conduct in violation of the Practice computer policies adopted from time to time may result in disciplinary action, including termination. The Practice shall at all times have the right to monitor all Practice-related technologies including, but not limited to telephones, computers, e-mail and Internet access without any advance notice to any employee at any time and without their permission to do so. By signing the acknowledgment of receipt of this Manual, the employee expressly acknowledges this monitoring, and affirms that he or she has no expectation of privacy in any of these areas.

Each employee with computer access will be designated a computer password. Individual computer passwords are to be kept confidential by the employee and should not be shared with anyone else. Employees are not permitted to change their computer password unless they have notified the Administrator [System Administrator] in advance of such change. At all times, the Administrator [System Administrator] should be informed of the passwords used by each employee.

Employees are encouraged **not** to write down their passwords or leave them in an area accessible to others. All employees who have access to confidential Practice information, including patient information, should use screensavers to prevent the broadcast of such information while away from their computers. All employees with any access to such confidential Practice information are further required to follow the Practice Guidelines and Compliance with other regulations governing their conduct and use of such information.

Only employees authorized by the Practice Administrator are permitted to receive and/or respond to patient e-mail messages. Copies of each incoming patient e-mail message and reply e-mail message are to be printed and filed in the patient file. All employees who are expressly permitted to send or receive such information shall follow all Practice policies regarding Patient Privacy and the handling of patient e-mail.

Responding to patient voice mail, filling of prescription by phone, or otherwise communicating to or with Practice patients or their designees is covered by Practice policies that all employees should follow at all times.

Use of the office telephone for outside calls or personal matters or, personal cell phones, pagers or other personal communication devices must be held to a minimum. Personal phone calls (other than in an emergency) that interrupt an employee's job responsibilities or interfere with another employee's job responsibilities are not allowed under any circumstances. Urgent or emergency local calls may be made at the employee's discretion.

No employee will use for his or her own benefit, or remove from the premises, any office equipment, instruments, documents, records or other property of any kind belonging to the Practice or under its control, without prior written authorization from the Administrator. In addition to non-removal of patient information, business papers and the like, it also means that there should be no personal use (other than for the Practice benefit) of any postage meter, delivery accounts, charge account, credit card, office supplies, and so on.

In addition, unless prior approval is granted, no children, other family members or friends may be brought into the office while an employee is working. Exceptions, of course, are made if these people are being seen that day as patients of the Practice. Such persons are requested to remain outside of patient or work areas, so as to minimize any potential disruption to the Practice.

E-mail and Other Telephonic Communications

All electronic and telephonic communication systems and all communications and information transmitted by, received from, or stored in these systems are the property of the Practice and as such are to be used for the efficient operations of the Practice only. Employees using this equipment for personal purposes do so at their own risk and may be

subject to disciplinary action. To ensure that the use of electronic and telephonic communications systems and business equipment is consistent with the legitimate business interests of the Practice, authorized personnel may monitor the use of such equipment from time to time, without notice to the employee and without their permission. [Employees are hereby advised to have no expectation or privacy in any electronic or other Practice based communications: therefore they should not send or receive any personal correspondence.]

This Practice is concerned about the privacy of its patients and their medical information. Only authorized individuals are permitted to send or retrieve non-routine or patient e-mail. Those individuals may also be subject to additional policies.

In addition, for all communication, whether or not in electronic format, the following guidelines shall apply:

1. When communicating with patients, referral physicians or Practice business associates or contacts, through electronic mail, the approved Practice disclaimer (use signature function) should be included with *every* transmission.
2. Advise a recipient, particularly if a patient, about the risks associated with the use of e-mail and obtain the person's consent, either orally or in writing, before transmitting any information. The preferred method is to e-mail the recipient and request confirmation before sending any patient-sensitive information. Maintain a file of those consents to use e-mail.
3. All attachments to incoming e-mail should be scanned for viruses before opened.
4. All "opened" e-mail regarding any patient are to be printed in a way that identifies it as having been received from e-mail, who the sender was, the note, and filed (with the Practice response thereto) in the appropriate patient file.
5. Hard copies of any patient related information (requests for medication refills, etc.) should be presented to the treating physician or other designated person to sign off (via initial, etc.) before it is filed in the

patient chart or other designated place. The patient file should contain all transmissions, including messages sent and those received.

6. Although less formal than a letter, e-mail content should be written as if it will be disclosed and preserved. Do not put anything in writing in an e-mail that an employee would not want his or her fellow employees, patient or adversaries to read.
7. Before replying to any e-mail, check the recipient to assure that it is the designated person you intended. Do not assume the authors/senders are who they state they are. Confirm (through use of code word, special security, etc.) they are a person to whom disclosure is permitted.
8. E-mail should not be used to threaten, harass or intimidate. Harassing, derogatory or pornographic material will not be tolerated.
9. Remember that e-mail messages are retrievable, even after they are deleted, and may become the subject of a discovery request in future litigation. E-mail messages sent to one person can be easily forwarded to others without the sender's knowledge or permission. Remember also that some tables or special formatting options may corrupt in the transmission, so have a back up plan.
10. Exercise good judgment in the use of e-mail.

Work Place Searches

To safeguard the employees, the premises of the Practice, the equipment that it maintains on the premises, and to comply with the Practice policies on drugs and the like, the Practice reserves the right to inspect any suspect items that enter the Practice premises, including handbags, briefcases, or other items. No employee should have any reasonable expectation of privacy in their desk, locker, office, files, or other location designated for the placement of personal effects.

New Technology

The Practice acknowledges that as technology continues to evolve, it shall continue to express policies that ensure the principle dual intent of patient and Practice privacy are met. For example, the use of Practice phones in the Practice to transmit any

patient or Practice data or image, though not expressed above, is clearly forbidden when the employee does not follow the intent of the privacy notices expressed.

Use of Cell Phones, Blackberries, Etc.

To safeguard the employees while traveling, all employees are specifically instructed not to use cell phones or similar technology to communicate (by talking, texting, etc.) with others in any means that diverts their full attention from driving. Seat belts and safe driving practices are also required.

SECTION XIV – MISCELLANEOUS

Outside Employment

The Practice expects its employees to be able to work efficiently and effectively during their scheduled work hours. Therefore, regular outside and/or after-hours employment is discouraged. If a full-time employee wishes to engage in employment outside of this office, the employee should discuss the matter with Human Resources in advance of such employment.

Employees have a duty of loyalty to the Practice as their employer. Regular outside employment concurrent with employment with the Practice will not:

- hinder the employee's ability to work overtime as the job may require;
- compete with the services of this office;
- become so demanding on the employee's time and energy that it negatively affects the employee's job performance at this office for any reason.

Outside employment that has any of the above effects will be considered a breach of that duty and shall be grounds for employment dismissal.

Employee Information

The Practice publicly and clearly provides information to employees on certain matters, which concern them, such as wage and hour regulations. To facilitate this communication process, the Practice has designated the bulletin board in the kitchen break room for this purpose.

The items posted on the bulletin board will be restricted to those notifications which the Practice is either required by law to provide, or to other information which the Practice may desire to communicate to its employees. Employees shall not put any items on the bulletin board of a personal or other nature without permission of the supervisor.

Expenses

Reimbursement will be made for **authorized** expenses. Your supervisor or management should approve these expenses. Receipts must accompany requests with a note explaining what it is for. These requests should be sent to Accounts Payable.

Gifts

An Employee may not give or receive gifts of an unusual value, which may appear to compromise the integrity of you or the Marion Eye Centers. This is strictly prohibited.

Soliciting

There is to be absolutely no soliciting of any kind at any of the Marion Eye Centers. Other than drug reps that have an appointment with a doctor or reps that are leaving samples, no other vendors are to be at any location. Drug reps are not allowed to give gifts of any type, such as food, dinners, gift cards, etc.

Under no circumstances are there to be outside vendors in stores selling food, makeup, art, jewelry, etc. No solicitation by employees to other staff members is allowed on Marion Eye Center property.

Employees are not allowed to give gifts to supervisors. Supervisors are not allowed to give gifts to employees. The exception to this rule is gifts which are given as a group. Examples are when an office group go together to give a gift for a birthday, baby, marriage, bereavement, etc.

Amendment Policies

The only constant in life is change. The business of our Practice is affected by changes from many directions, including the general economy, the legal and business

climate, and the ebb and flow of our Practice. Therefore, subject to the law, the Practice reserves the right to amend or withdraw any of the policies or benefits provided in this Manual or communicated verbally or in writing or by any other medium of communication, now or in the future, at any time, with or without notice, as it sees fit. The Practice will take reasonable steps to attempt to notify employees of any changes that will affect the employee, whenever reasonably possible, but will not be liable for wages or damages of any kind whatsoever if it has not done so through inability, oversight, or unintentional error.

Ten Good Customer Service Habits to Develop

1. **SMILE!** Before you pick up the phone or greet a patient, SMILE! Smiling produces a physiological response that changes our body language and our tone of voice makes us sound happier and more cheerful. Think about what your facial expression is going to tell your customer about the type of service they can expect.
2. Treat ALL customers as individuals, and with dignity and respect. Caring, personalized, individual attention is what patients are looking for. This type of customer service can be accomplished by smiling, using the patient's name in conversation, and remembering something about the last time you helped them.
3. ALWAYS provide accurate information. If you do not know the answer, tell the patient, but promise to get back to them with accurate information. Never tell them to call you back. Patients appreciate the promise of a correct answer and that you are willing to get back with them in a timely manner.
4. Offer options. A customer-focused response should always include options. They may not always be the options the customer is looking for; however, it shows you care enough to anticipate their needs and are trying to work with them.
5. Reframe the situation. Often when a patient is upset, our initial response is to become defensive. Being upset usually stems from frustration, worry, or just having a bad day. Try to remember how you would like to be treated; YOU can make a difference in their day.
6. Give the patient your name and take personal ownership of every patient transaction. This is often all it takes to calm them. Telling a patient that you will personally take care of a problem offers the sense of reassurance.
7. Saying "I'm sorry" or "I can understand your frustration" can diffuse 80% of potential "difficult" customer situations. Approaching the problem in this way does not mean that you caused the problem; it is simply an acknowledgement to the patient that you recognize that **they** believe something has gone wrong or that there is a problem.
8. Say "please" and "thank you." This sounds pretty basic, but it really means a lot to the patient.
9. Treat your co-workers with **respect**. Every job at Marion Eye Center has an impact on the practice, or that job would not exist.
10. **Treat your patients as the most important part of your job – because they are!**

