

# Employee Human Resource Manual

## Employee Guide



**SAMARTHAN**

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# Human Resource Manual

## 1. Overview

### 1.1 Introduction: About Samarthan

Samarthan is a leading non-profit organization with significant presence in the Indian states of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. With a belief that a strong civil society is a key to socio-economic development, Samarthan started out in the year 1995 as a support organization building capacities and networks of voluntary organizations working at the grassroots. Gradually, Samarthan started working to promote and strengthen participatory rural and urban governance. We worked for strengthening the concept of citizenship in light of the rights and entitlements provided by the State.

We began our work in the Sehore district of Madhya Pradesh, gradually spreading our intervention to other districts. Samarthan's origin was concurrent to the implementation of 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment in the state. Over the years, we realized that underdevelopment could also be attributed, in large part, to poor governance which affects the implementation of development programmes. We believe that participatory governance is fundamental to sustained and equitable development and effective participation by all stakeholders, especially the marginalised, socially excluded and disadvantaged groups, is in turn crucial for promoting good governance. Having gained confidence in our understanding of issues on the ground, we took up the task of strengthening governance by ensuring greater participation of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and by engaging in advocacy with the administration using evidence generated from our work at the grassroots.

We also promote and encourage involvement of local population in planning, execution and monitoring of development projects thereby challenging the mainstream "top-down" development model. In order to enhance public participation in local governance in rural and urban areas, Samarthan has developed vibrant and replicable models through capacity building of elected representatives and empowering Gram Sabha members. The areas of our intervention have ranged from education, employment and social security to water, sanitation and health.

While our work on governance has enhanced our credibility and eminence, we continue to strengthen our civil society partners through training and network building. Over the years, we have also emerged as a knowledge center, producing valuable action research on a range of development issues. Our regular and diverse publications testify to our domain expertise in the subjects of forest rights, gender, decentralization and transparency and accountability. We have harnessed the power of Information Technology for taking our capacity building and outreach efforts to the next level. We have been successfully running e-learning programmes on Social



udit and Decentralized Planning and have a significant presence in the social media.

The programmes of Samarthan are currently organized around three centers. The details of the centers is the following:

**Center for Social Accountability for Addressing Urban and Rural Poverty (CSAP)** team works on the issues of governance of various development programmes. The team specializes in participatory planning, community monitoring and social audit etc. The institutions of local governance in rural (Panchayati Raj) and urban (Nagar Panchayats and Municipalities) are the backbone of grassroots democracy and political empowerment of women. Therefore, the center works to strengthen capacities of the local governance institutions. Recently, the Trainers Manual on Social Audit, prepared by Samarthan, has been published by the NITI Ayog as a national learning resource to be used by the state level officials and trainers.

**The Center for Environment, Water, Sanitation and Community Health (CEWASH)** works towards designing and upscaling grassroots actions in the sector of environment, water, sanitation and health. The team at the Center handles large scale programmes around water, sanitation and community health. There is an effort to develop model watershed areas based on the principles of participatory development in the district of Sehore. Recently, the team worked towards addressing the issues of drought and distress migration in Bundelkhand region of MP.

The third center **Chhattisgarh Samarthan for Participatory Development (CGSPD)** has been working in Chhattisgarh since inception of Samarthan. This center has a mixed bag of programs related with the above two centers viz. CSAP and CEWASH

## 1.2 Purpose of Employee Handbook

This manual is meant to provide a useful guide for Samarthan managers and employees in developing a clear and comprehensive approach to Human Resource Management in the NGO. It outlines the suggested processes and procedures with regard to Human Resource Management (HRM) and is meant to communicate all the employment and working conditions to staff. The Guide provides employees with a set of common and easily understood organizational policies and related procedures.

It is our hope that this HRM manual becomes a user-friendly document available to all staff. Your time to time comments during the use of the manual will be therefore appreciated to improve the policies and guidelines.

## 1.3 Samarthan Management Structure

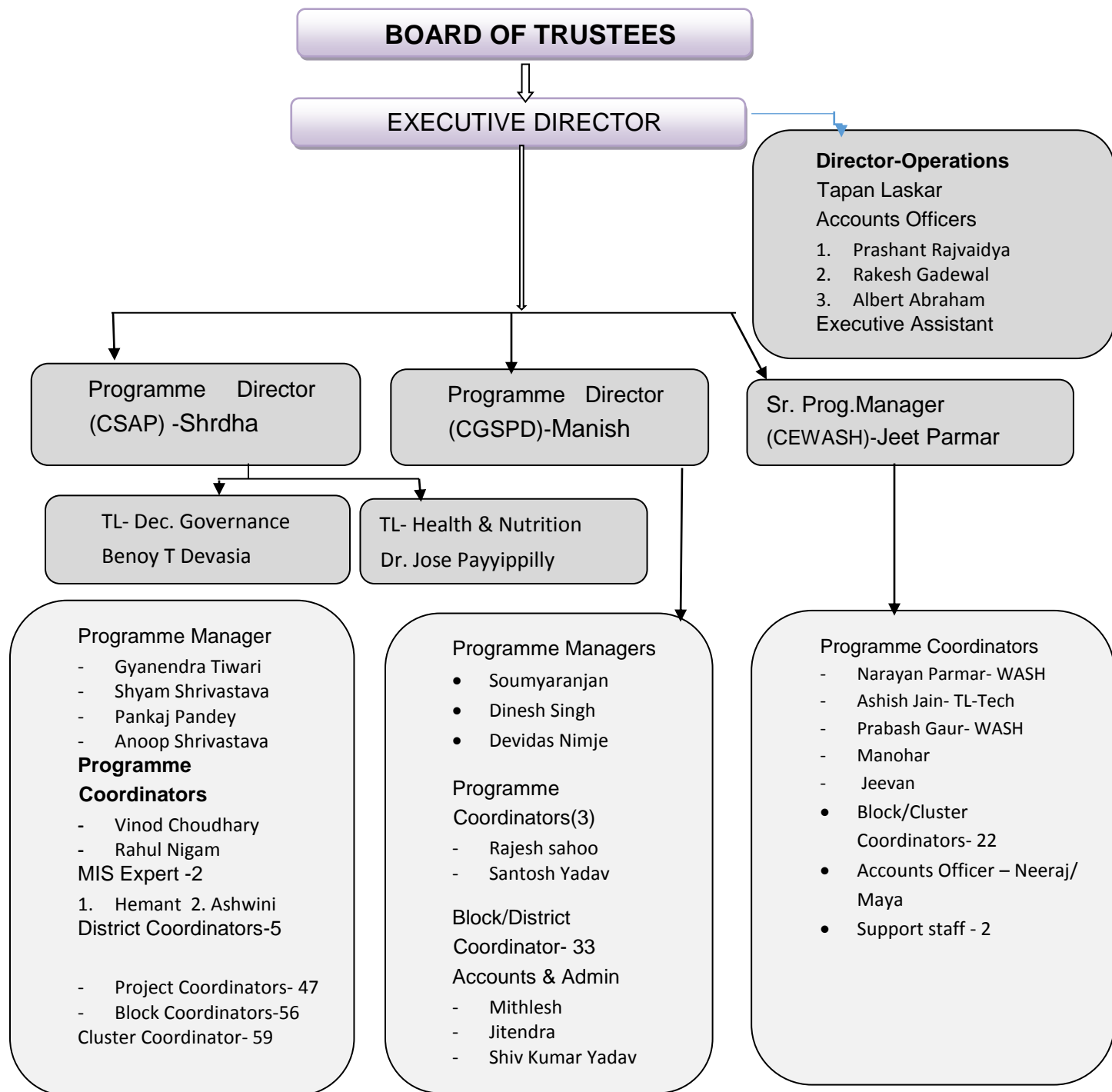
With a Board of Trustees as the overall decision-making body, Samarthan is headed by the Executive Director (who is also the Member Secretary of the Board of Trustees). The

professionals (staff) looking after programs, administration and finance are drawn from various



eputed institutions as well as constituting committed youth emerging from the grassroots as community leaders in our intervened areas. Such hiring practice enables the organisation to maintain balance between extensive experience and updated skills. Research, training, capacity building and advocacy pertaining to various sectors such as Education, Health, Governance, Participatory Planning, and so on are the work areas.

## Samarthan - Organization Structure



## **1.4 Samarthan Vision, Mission and Aims**

### **1.4.1 Samarthan Vision**

Every citizen contributes meaningfully in shaping democratic State and enjoys benefits based on the principles of equality and equity.

### **1.4.2 Samarthan Mission**

Promote and support participatory governance for equity and inclusion in development processes by capacity building, generating evidences and advocating the perspective of the most marginalized for enriched democracy

### **1.4.3 Samarthan Strategic Aims**

- To develop as a centre for research based advocacy on social justice issues and citizens' rights in the areas of decentralized governance and development, including the promotion of the Right to Information Act.
- Monitor service delivery systems using participatory monitoring, dissemination of experiences and examining data from legitimate perspectives.
- Capacity building to improve effectiveness of social change organizations in decentralised governance, including media and academia.
- Encourage marginalised groups to enroll in leadership posts within voluntary organisations through capacity building and the development of learning materials.
- Develop effective models for participatory governance and development alongside partner and voluntary organisations to be used by policy makers.
- Focus on rural and urban governance. Poverty and exclusion of the marginalised sections of society remain important challenges both in the rural and urban contexts, which are ultimately inter-related and interdependent.
- To become a self-sufficient support centre with gradual reduction of dependency on grants. Samarthan will look towards consultancies, public contributions and corporate donations instead of reliance on overseas funds.

## **2. Employment**

### **2.1 Valuing Diversity and Gender Equality**

Samarthan is committed to creating an ambience in which all employees can work together in an atmosphere where diversity is valued. In accordance with the general intention of its vision, Samarthan confirms its commitment to a comprehensive policy of valuing diversity in employment in which individuals are selected and treated on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities and are given equal opportunities within the workplace. It is Samarthan's policy as





an employer to treat all people equally irrespective of sex, age, Scheduled Tribe, Scheduled Caste, Minority Class, Other Backward Class, religion, colour, race, ethnic origin, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, creed, mental or physical disability, political belief, national origin, HIV/AIDS status, or any other reason. The aim is to ensure that no job applicant or employee should receive less favourable treatment on any grounds not relevant to good employment practice.

Samarthan also promotes gender equality by providing equal opportunities for women. In order to promote women at workplaces, Samarthan attempts to provide favourable work conditions and sensitivity to allow them to work in equal terms.

## **2.2 Dignity at Work**

All employees, including other persons who have dealings with Samarthan, have the right to be treated with dignity. We expect that employees act responsibly to establish and maintain a gender sensitive working environment free of any form of discrimination, bullying, intimidation or victimization. In particular discrimination is unlawful in the workplace.

Any employee who is found, after investigation of the facts, to have engaged in harassment or discrimination of any kind will be subjected to appropriate action in accordance with our disciplinary procedure on the basis of gross misconduct.

Samarthan recognizes the subjectivity of harassment. If any employee is subjected to discrimination or harassment then initially they should attempt to resolve the problem informally by explaining clearly to the person engaging in the unwanted conduct that the behavior is not welcome, that it offends them and interferes with their work or in the case of discrimination that the behavior is or may be illegal.

If an employee would find this too difficult or embarrassing, then they should seek confidential support from the Senior Management i.e. Programme Directors, any committee set up by the organization to deal with such issues or the Executive Director. All allegations will be dealt with as soon as possible and confidentially with a view to protect the employee from victimization.

### **Recruitment and selection Overview:**

Hiring managers must work with the HR HO Team to identify a position with job description, available resources and later post positions, screen, interview and select candidates. It is the responsibility of each hiring manager to ensure compliance with both local regulations and Samarthan policies. Hiring of a candidate requires approval from Executive Director of Samarthan before an offer is extended.



## 2.5 Contract of Employment & Classification

You should refer to your contract of employment for specific details regarding your employment status and classification.

## 2.6 Job Duties

Your job responsibilities are outlined in your job description. From time to time, you may be asked to work on special projects, or to assist with other work necessary or important to the operation of the organisation. Your cooperation and assistance in performing such additional work is expected. It is your responsibility to fully understand and carry out the performance expectations of your position. The organisation reserves the right, at any time, with or without notice, to alter or change job responsibilities, reassign or transfer job positions, or assign additional job responsibilities at any time during your employment.

## 2.7 Training Period

The first three months of your employment will consist of a training period. During this time, your performance will be closely monitored and reviewed and your employment may be terminated by either you or Samarthan giving to the other, not less than one week's previous notice in writing. Subject to the satisfactory completion of the training period, the period of notice required to terminate your employment will be as stated in your contract of employment. Samarthan reserves the right to extend the training period for a further three months if required.

## 2.8 Induction & Training

Capacity Building in various areas is one of the important features of Samarthan and forms the part of its wider objectives. To fulfill its vision, Samarthan has prioritized the issue of capacity building and accordingly have established systems for the capacity building of institutional employees, community members and various institutions, which are as under:

a) **Training and Capacity Building for employees of the Institution:**

1. **Newly appointed employees:**

At the time of joining their duties, all the new employees shall be provided with relevant planning documents, annual progress reports, service rules and conditions, job charts etc., and accordingly, a short term 2-hour induction program shall be organized for them by the senior employees. The induction program includes a discussion on the aforesaid documents and the new incumbents shall be informed about the various on-going programs of the Institution. Thereafter, an exposure visit to project areas may be organized for the new employees to introduce them with all the program beneficiaries. This exposure visit shall not be for less than one week (7 days) duration. Upon completion

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f exposure visit, the new employees shall be subjected to an in depth discussion with the senior employee for sharing their experience during the exposure visit and to raise questions to clarify their doubts.

2. There will be a bi-annual review of performance of every employee to identify the training needs of respective employees and accordingly training opportunities will be made available to him. Such trainings may either be in-house and/or outside.
3. Normally, such training shall not be for more than a week. All the expenses to be incurred during such training shall be borne by the Institution. Since such trainings are meant for developing the personal capacity building of the employee, therefore, except for training course fee and travel expenses, no other allowance shall be payable to the employee.
4. In addition to aforesaid personal capacity building training, to meet the requirement of new programs of Samarthan, the employees shall also be provided with short term trainings by the Institution. All the expenses to be incurred during such training programs, shall be borne by the Institution and the employees shall also be entitled for all the allowances as per prevailing rules.

Subject to approval by the Management of Samarthan, the employees may be provided with long term trainings, ranging between 1 month and 3 months. Since such trainings shall be for the personal capacity building of the employee, therefore, except for training fee and travel expenses, no other allowances shall be payable to the employee.

## **2.9 A Productive Work Environment**

We expect that all employees act responsibly to establish and maintain a pleasant working environment free of discrimination, bullying, intimidation or victimization to enable employees to work efficiently and effectively.

## **2.10 Medical Procedures**

Samarthan will endeavour to accommodate employees with serious medical illnesses and diseases, for example AIDS, HIV, TB, cancer and depression. You should speak with the Executive Director in confidence if you require such support. The staff is entitled for medical insurance based on certain criteria. The details of coverage are given in the finance manual. The cost of any health related expenditure can be met from the insurance. Samarthan may provide additional support in exceptional cases. Such cases may be referred to the ED by the immediate supervisors.

## **2.11 Policy for Promotions, Transfers or Demotions**

The purpose of this policy is to achieve optimum utilization of all our employees' skills and talents by agreement to employ the person in a more advantageous work situation through promotion, transfer, or demotion, and to enhance the career, learning and development of employees. The policy is attached at Appendix II.



## **Working Hours**

The normal working hours are 10.00 am to 6.00 pm, Monday to Saturday, with the exception of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays of every month, including a lunch break of half an hour per day to be taken at a convenient time (preferably between 1 and 2pm). However, you may be required to work such additional hours as are necessary for the proper performance of your duties.

### **2.14 Outside Employment**

While being working with Samarthan on a full time basis, you are prohibited from having any outside employment. Severe disciplinary actions, including termination of employment, may be taken if found so.

Some of the programme staff having high professional competency may be allowed for short term consultancy assignment that are consistent to the work of Samarthan. The staff will have to inform the ED and work out an appropriate mechanism for receiving the consultancy amount on case to case basis.

### **2.15 Termination of Employment**

Samarthan seeks to ensure consistent treatment among employees whose working relationship with the organisation is ending.

#### **2.15.1 Voluntary**

Should you decide to leave Samarthan you should, in the first instance, discuss your decision with the Executive Director. You should then confirm your resignation in writing addressing it to the Executive Director. The period of notice to be given are set out in your contract of employment. You may be asked to attend an exit interview. During the notice period you will continue to be bound by the terms of your contract, our policies and practices, and to be obliged to pursue Samarthan interests in a professional manner. Your full co-operation in handing over your responsibilities and recruiting a suitable replacement may be expected.

#### **2.15.2 Involuntary**

In the instance of involuntary terminations such as redundancy, liquidation and dismissal, the Executive Director will advise as to the term and work responsibility during notice period and any other conditions upon leaving.

#### **2.15.3 Separation Procedures:**

### **1. Return of Samarthan Property**

Any staff member leaving his/her job at Samarthan (voluntarily or involuntarily) must return all



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ets belonging to Samarthan. All assets include all equipment handed over by Samarthan (computer and accessories, cellphone and accessories, office keys, I- Card, Visiting Cards etc.), as well as all work/files developed and maintained while working at Samarthan.

## **2. Facilitating Work Transition**

Prior to departure, all Staff is expected to organize all files and paperwork, backing up all important electronic files to minimize data loss. The departing staff member's manager must jointly fill out an Exit Checklist.

## **3. Last Day and Final Payment**

The last day worked will usually be the last day of employment and will not be extended by remaining leave. Final paychecks, less any amount due to Samarthan, will be made on the regular payday after employment ends unless otherwise required. The staff member's last paycheck will be withheld until all assets are returned, advances are paid, and a proper handover occurs for all work.

## **4. No Dues Certificate**

At the sole discretion of the Executive Director, you may be provided with a No Dues Certificate and an Experience Certificate at the time of your leaving, should you make a request for the same.

### **2.16 Retirement**

All employees will retire upon reaching sixty years of age. Staff on the Programme Director's position and above will retire on reaching the age of 65. For lower staff, the Executive Director may provide extension of services on contractual basis for a term of maximum 2 years at a time. Extension of services of the Executive Director and Programme Directors beyond the age of 65 will be decided by the Board of Trustees.

## **3. Pay Practices**

### **3.1 Salary Administration**

Subject to availability of funding, salaries (after all deductions) are generally paid in the first week of the next month after verification of attendance and other records of the staff. The cycle of payment of salaries will be determined by the ED based on the needs and workload.

### **3.2 Pay Reviews**

Salaries are reviewed annually at the end of the financial year and are based on performance. Increased salaries will be effective from the next Financial Year, subject to approval from the Executive Director. An employee doesn't have a contractual right to an increase in salary. Executive Director However, the ED may increase the salary of certain staff engaged in specific projects in the middle of the financial year depending on the availability of budgets in specific projects. Such changes may also be specifically for the project period.

### **3.3 Gratuity**



Gratuity is paid to employees who have completed five years of continuous employment with Samarthan. The gratuity shall be paid as per Gratuity Act which is currently 15 days for every completed year of service, gratuity years would be rounded to next number, for example if an employee worked for 6 years and 7 months then number of gratuity years would be taken as 7 years, however the minimum 5 years (definition as per Gratuity Act) need to be completed for being eligible for gratuity.

### **3.4 Salary Advances**

In certain circumstances, staff members may be granted a salary advance (i.e., an interest-free employee loan) at the discretion of the Executive Director. All advances must be granted and documented in accordance with Samarthan Policy.

### **3.5 Deductions**

Although the payment of all taxes is the staff member's responsibility, Samarthan will withhold taxes from a staff member's salaries and pay those withholdings to the government on behalf of the staff member as required by local law.

Statutory deductions from a staff member's salary include: Income taxes, Professional Tax and employee provident fund contribution. It may be noted that these are subject to change, as they are dependent on local labor law.

## **4. Reimbursement of Employee Expenses**

### **4.1 Travel & Expenses Policy**

Samarthan reimburses employees for the expenses incurred on official travel. Please refer to detailed Travel Policy for further guidance.

## **5. Employee Benefits**

### **5.1 Summary of Benefits**

#### **5.1.1 Eligibility**

The benefits described below are offered only to full-time employees working 40 hours/ week. Samarthan reserves the right to withdraw, amend or replace the policy or any of its terms at its absolute discretion and all staff shall be advised of any changes.

The employees may voluntarily contribute extra time for the growth and development of Samarthan's vision and mission. Samarthan may charge

#### **5.1.2 Medical Insurance**

Upon commencing employment, staff shall be provided with the option to join the medical insurance scheme, that can be extended, by own contribution, to cover spouse and children. All employees are entitled to a medical insurance coverage through a private medical insurance carrier. Covered employees will be issued health cards by the empaneled agency. All health insurance claims should be made directly to the health insurance company and not the



organization. A summary of the current scheme can be found within the Executive Director.

### **5.1.3 Group Insurance Scheme**

Samarthan provides a policy to give some financial security for family and financial dependents in the event of the retirement or the death of an employee. An employee will be eligible to join the scheme at the start of each financial year. The policy applies whilst the employee is in Samarthan's service.

### **5.1.4 Retirement Benefits**

Each employee is covered under provident funds benefits provided by the regional provident fund offices. In this scheme each employee contributes 12% of his/her monthly basic salary towards Provident fund & employer contributes matching amount out of which 8.33% of basic salary is deposited in Family Pension scheme and rest of the employer contribution is deposited in Provident fund along with employees own contribution. This will be applicable for the staff who have opted to be part of the provident fund contribution.

### **5.3 Educational Assistance**

Eligibility for any of the benefits under this policy is dependent upon employee's commitment towards Samarthan and the course requirements. Funding and support is therefore entirely discretionary and contingent upon the employee's on the job work performance, attending all courses, exams and working diligently towards successful completion of the program.

The Executive Director will be authorized to provide such Educational Assistance on the merit of each case.

### **5.6 Relocation**

Funding for relocation is discretionary and will be considered by the ED or the official authorized by the ED Executive Director on a case-by-case basis.

## **6. Company Premises and Work Areas**

### **6.1 Employee Health & Safety**

Samarthan endeavours to assure a safe working environment for all its staff. In the unfortunate circumstances of an employee being injured at the workplace or during performance of work, the employee is to inform the concerned Manager and the Executive Director as soon as practicable.

If applicable, the HR Lead/ Executive Director will provide information about filing insurance compensation. If an accident occurs outside of work, standard sick leave and/or insurance procedures should be followed, but in all cases staff should inform the concerned personnel/ Executive Director outlined above to ensure proper support and workflow adjustments. Any requests for short or longer term support or modifications to work schedule or working environment should be discussed with concerned manager and/or the Executive Director.



## **6.2 Maintenance of Work Areas**

Employees are required to organize their work efficiently with all documents appropriately filed. The back up of all the official files in various formats should be submitted to the PMU or any other designated official/unit at least once in a month.

## **6.4 Solicitation**

Samarthan does not permit third parties to distribute literature or printed material of any kind, to sell merchandise, to solicit financial contributions, or to solicit for any cause during working hours without the prior consent of the Executive Director.

## **6.5 Parking**

Samarthan provides an area for parking and use of the space is at own risk. It may be noted that provision of on-site parking is not a contractual right.

## **6.6 Security**

Samarthan endeavours to provide a secure working environment and in turn expects its staff to safeguard Samarthan's property. Weapons on the work premises are strictly prohibited. Samarthan reserves the right to search employees if they are suspected Samarthan ensures adequate provisions for women staff working during late hours to ensure their safety, dignity and transportation assistance from the workplace to the nearest point of their residence.

## **6.7 Smoking**

Samarthan maintains a smoke-free policy throughout the office premises.

# **7. LEAVE POLICY**

## **7.1 Attendance & Punctuality**

As an employee of Samarthan, all staff members are expected to be punctual and regular in attendance. Any exceptions to the scheduled working hours must be approved in writing by the employee's supervisor. All staff members are expected to arrive at work on time and ready for work. If unable to report to work as scheduled, notify your manager. Excessive absences, habitual late arrivals or early departures may lead to disciplinary action, deduction from the salary, up to and including termination. Executive Director

## **7.2 Leave entitlement**

The leave policy set forth in succeeding paragraphs below aims to standardize the leave entitlement and allow for efficient administration of leave process. The provisions of this section apply only to pay-roll staff of Samarthan. No Earned leaves are permissible during the probation period, however, casual and medical leaves can be availed on pro-rata basis. In the first three

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onths, no leaves are granted except approved by the Center head or ED.

### 7.3 Leave categories & procedure for availing leave:

All staff members are entitled to avail following categories of leave:

- a) **Casual / Medical Leaves:**
- b) **Earned Leave:**
- c) **Maternity Leave:**
- d) **Paternity Leave:**
- e) **Optional leave:**

**a) Casual Leave cum Sick Leave** – Samarthan provides 20 calendar days of CL/SL in an year subject to approval. These are principally to cover absence from office due to sickness or any planned medical treatment / investigation or to attend any unforeseen personal contingencies.

It can be availed in multiples of full/half days till the end of the calendar year. Any left-over leave lapse at the end of the calendar year and shall not be carried over to next year. In case of planned leave, prior intimation of leave application should be submitted to the competent authority/Supervisor before at least three working days. In case of any emergency, at least a telephonic intimation to the competent authority is a MUST, and a proper leave application shall be submitted immediately upon joining, otherwise the leave will be treated as 'Leave without Pay'. Leave can either be suffixed or prefixed with an intervening holiday, but any leave with both prefixing and suffixing holidays are not permissible and in that case intervening holidays shall be counted as leave days. Leave for more than three continuous days, a medical certificate is required to be submitted along with the leave application. However, in case of any prolonged illness, the leave can be combined with Earned leave at the discretion of the Management.

**b) Earned Leave (Non En-cashable)** – Samarthan provides 15 calendar days of Earned leave for planned breaks/ vacations.

It can be availed for a minimum of three days at a time, but not exceeding twice in a calendar year. Employees are expected to provide an advance notice of 10 days from the expected date of commencement of leave to their Line Manager. The sanction/approval of such leave shall depend upon the exigencies of work and would be at the discretion of the Line Manager.

Employees are encouraged to avail their full entitlement of Earned Leave in order to rest and rejuvenate and Managers are expected to ensure that such breaks are indeed taken with employees enjoying complete break from work.

**d) Maternity leave** – Samarthan provides Maximum of 6 months of Maternity Leave to its female employees, for the first two children, which can be availed after the delivery. A notice of 2 months should be provided before availing the leave along with a certificate from the Doctor. It Additional one hour per day is allowed for lactating mothers for two months from the date of re-joining after the maternity leave.



e) **Paternity leaves** - Samarthan provides for 6 WORKING days of Paternity leave to it's male employees after the delivery of hischild. This is applicable only to those employees who have completed one year of regular employment.

### **7.5 Leave Travel Concession (LTC):**

LTC can be claimed from the earned leaveonce in two years up to a maximum of 10 days. . A total reimbursement of 50% of the basic salary will be made towards travel after furnishing of tickets

### **7.7 Leave Entitlement for Consultants:**

All Consultants having a valid contract for 6 months and more,shall be entitled to avail leave as per organization policy, except the earned leave. In case of Consultancy contracts for less than 6 months, Consultants shall be entitled for one leave per month.

THESE LEAVE RULES SUPERSEDES ALL OTHER PREVIOUSLY ISSUED CIRCULARS, LETTERS, AND SHALL REMAIN EFFECTIVE TILL FURTHER NOTIFICATION AND ARE TO BE STRICTLY ADHERED TO.

ANY PERSON WHO DOES NOT FOLLOW PROCEDURE OF TAKING LEAVE WILL BE SUBJECTED TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND LEAVE TAKEN SHALL BE CONSIDERED "LEAVE WITHOUT PAY".

### **7.8 Holidays**

Samarthan observes 12 holidayseach calendar year including 3 National Holidays.Whilethe dates for National holidays such as Independence Day (15th August), Republic Day (26th Janauary) and Gandhi Jayanti (2nd October) are fixed, the dates for religious holidays such as Diwali and Id etc. changes each year. In addition, there will be two optional holidays. A list of festival and optional holidays will be circulated in the month of January every year. The staff members are required to submit their options in respect of optional holidays in advance to the Administrative Section. However, the Management reserves its right to ask any staff member to alter their optional leave to ensure smooth functioning of Office.

**Optional leaves** - 2 Optional leave in a year are provided in addition to scheduled holidays to the staff members to meet their specific requirement. However, in case a person has not completed three months of continuous service, he/she shall not be entitled for any optional leave. To avail the optional leaves, every staff member is required to submit his/her options/alternates in the beginning of the year and the same shall be sanctioned ensuring smooth working.

## **8. Personal Conduct**

### **8.1 Workplace Behavior**

It is important that Samarthan employees are exemplary in their conduct at work. Samarthan

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employees are expected to give the highest possible standard of service, and where it is part of their duties, to provide appropriate advice to external agencies and fellow employees impartially. Employees will be expected, without fear of discrimination, to bring to the attention of the Executive Director, any deficiency in the provision of service, impropriety or breach of procedure. Employees must ensure that they use Samarthan funds entrusted to them in a responsible and lawful manner. Employees should strive to ensure value for money to the local community and to avoid legal challenge. Samarthan endeavors to maintain a professional and positive image to have confidence of the external stakeholders and all employees are expected to act accordingly.

## **8.2 Personal Appearance of Employees**

Employees are expected to dress smartly and decently. However, while working on field, staff members are expected to dress according to the audience.

## **8.4 Receipt of gifts/honorarium**

Employees should not accept gifts/ honorarium of more than nominal financial value (up to Rs. 1000/-) from partners, vendors, suppliers or other Samarthan employees. The appropriate authority should be informed about it and in case of higher value, permission should be taken to keep it as a personal benefit.

## **8.5 Use of Office Resources**

Employees should always ensure to use office resources such as stationery, telephones, IT or photocopying, only for the performance of their duties. No personal work should be undertaken during office hours and using office resources. Executive Director Loading of any software on any Samarthan computers by users is prohibited. Management reserves the right of access to all office computers and other assets.

## **8.7 Information Systems Policy**

### **8.7.1 Personal E-mail Policy**

Whilst employees may send and receive personal messages, this must not interfere in the proper discharge of their duties and responsibilities or be detrimental to the job responsibilities of other employees. The content of all work related emails must avoid any possibility of offence or harassment and must therefore exclude any sexual, racial or religious content, whether explicit or implicit, and must be written using only vocabulary acceptable for professional communication in

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### **8.7.2 Internet**

The Internet Service is provided to all employees primarily for official purposes. However, it is acceptable for individuals to utilize this resource for personal use provided that usage is reasonable, sensible and managed by each employee responsibly, especially in respect of the time utilized when accessing the internet. All users agree to Samarthan monitoring and reviewing Internet access. Users may not use the Internet in such a manner that might be prejudicial to the interests of Samarthan. An example of this might be subscribing to a web site that contains illicit or illegal material. Employees may not use the Internet for playing online games or for online gambling.

Employees may not use the Internet to locate, download, access or otherwise investigate material of a nature which may cause offence to other Samarthan employees on grounds of gender, race, religious belief or otherwise. Prohibited uses of the Internet at all times include, but are not limited to, viewing and, or storing and, or distributing or otherwise using the facilities for the following: illegal activities (including any violation of copyright laws); threatening, abusive, harassing or discriminatory behavior; slanderous or defamatory purposes; obscene, suggestive or intimate messages or offensive graphical images or pornographic materials, political and religious activities; activities that will incur a cost to the organisation without prior proper authorization; private, commercial activities for profit making purposes; malicious damage.

Some of the web-based application such as WhatsApp are being used for information sharing and management of programmes. Such mobile or computer based facility should be used for official purposes and there should be no misuse of such platforms to share any political or socially undesirable content. The organizational web-site, social media platforms should also be used judiciously for the promotion of the contents of the organisation's strategies, approaches, successes and best practices. No way, such platforms be used to promote personal ideologies or socially undesirable contents.

The person posing will be personally responsible and will be subjected to disciplinary action as per the laws of the land.

### **8.7.3 Security and Access Considerations**

Samarthan is entitled to make provision to protect itself and its computer systems, websites and employees from external or internal security threats, real or potential. Examples of security measures which may be deployed include but are not limited to the following: Firewalls and Proxy Servers to block outgoing / incoming Internet traffic; Anti-virus software; Access control software (typically restricts access to specific web sites) and measures to prevent the downloading of software.



Whilst access to the Internet is generally unrestricted for those who are provided with the Internet, Samarthan may block access to known sites that contain or are believed to contain illegal, pornographic or otherwise offensive material. This is at the discretion of Samarthan.

Samarthan computer systems and resources are the property of the organisation, or are managed by Samarthan, and are to be used in furtherance of Samarthan purposes. Accordingly, Samarthan reserves the right, without further notice to monitor employees' use of any Samarthan computer systems or network resources including the use of Internet services.

### **8.8 Conflicts of Interest**

All employees have an obligation to ensure that actual or potential conflicts of interest are avoided. A conflict of interest may occur if one is in a position to influence a decision that may result in his/her a personal gain. In case any such conflict of interest arise, it should be brought to the notice of the concerned officials or the ED immediately.

### **8.9 Confidentiality**

All staff members are required to maintain confidentiality of all Samarthan related work and dealings. The obligation to maintain confidentiality at all times is included in the contract of employment. Program, finance or any other information which is not in the public domain should not be shared outside the organization without permission.

### **8.10 Grievance & Disciplinary Procedure**

Employees should refer to Appendix III whereby guidelines for a progressive discipline system and procedures for addressing work-related complaints are established.

### **8.11 Alcohol & Drugs Policy**

Samarthan seeks to provide a safe working environment that is free from the effects of alcohol and drug misuse. Under no circumstances should alcohol or unlawfully obtained, non-prescription drugs be brought or consumed at work place. Moreover, the staff should not be found under the alcohol or drug abuse outside the office hours in an socially undesirable state to be termed as public nuisance.

## **9. Other HR Policies**

### **9.1 Data Protection & Access to Information / Personnel Records**

Samarthan will hold and process, both electronically and manually, the data which it collects relating to employees in connection with their employment for the purpose of administering and managing its employees and complying with applicable laws, regulations and procedures. An employee has a right to inspect certain documents in their respective file, in the presence of an appropriate authority at a mutually convenient time. No copies of documents in the file may be made, with the exception of documents that have been previously signed. Comments may be added to any disputed item in the file, subject to approval of the Program Directors or official designated by the EDExecutive Director.



Samarthan will restrict disclosure of employee file only to authorized individuals within the organisation. Any request for information contained in employee files must be directed to the Executive Director. Only the Executive Director is authorized to release information about current or former employees. Disclosure of employee information to outside sources will be limited. However, Samarthan will cooperate with requests from authorized parties conducting official investigations as legally required. All requests for references must be directed to the Executive Director. No other employee is authorized to release references for current or former employees.

## **9.2 Changes to Personal Information**

Employees are required to advise the Executive Director of any change in their personal information.

## **9.3 Performance Appraisals**

Samarthan conducts an annual process of performance review, against overall job requirements, to ensure; that employees are valued for their work, development needs are identified and for a better understanding of their job responsibilities.

Every staff member is required to submit his / her half yearly appraisal, on the prescribed format, highlighting achievements during the last six months together with plans for the next six months, for the review of the Line Manager/ Program Director.

Upon completion of minimum 6 months as on 31<sup>st</sup> March, of service from the date of respective joining, every staff member shall be issued an Annual Appraisal Form, to be filled in individually, providing information highlighting the outstanding achievements, problems and difficulties faced during the appraisal period together with suggestions for remedial measures. The annual appraisals shall be submitted either to the H.R. Section or the person so designated, by the 10<sup>th</sup> of succeeding month in which a staff member has joined his / her duties each year, and shall also prepare an analysis, submitting the same to the Director for his review.

Based on the analysis, review and assessment of half yearly and annual appraisals, the Director, at his sole discretion, may announce the respective awards in terms of either promotions and / or increments, in addition to any other perks or benefits.

The announcement of respective awards for the individual staff member shall be made upon completion of his / her one year's of service from the date of joining the duties.

Based on the extra-ordinary and outstanding performance by any individual staff member, the Director may announce the award at any time of the year and in any form he may deem fit and proper, as a management gesture to reward, recognize and encourage the individual

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#### **9.4 Flexible working**

Samarthan recognises the need for flexible working arrangements in today's work environment and may accommodate requests for alternate working schedules provided that alternate working times meet organisational requirements and are agreed in advance with the Executive Director. It is Samarthan's aim to give serious consideration to each request to work flexibly and to ensure a fair procedure. However, due to the nature of some of Samarthan's operations there may be significant limitations on the type of flexible arrangement that can be accommodated. Where a specific request cannot be accommodated, Samarthan will always consult with the employee to see if any alternative solution can be agreed.

#### **9.5 SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY:**

Sexual Harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It can be physical, verbal or written. Acts which may not be deliberately or intentionally offensive but which nevertheless cause offence may also constitute sexual harassment. Although this is not an exhaustive list, some examples of sexual harassment are:

- a) Unnecessary touching or unwanted physical contact;
- b) Suggestive remarks or other verbal insults or abuse of a sexual nature;
- c) Suggestions that sexual favors may further someone's career or that refusal may damage it;
- d) Compromising invitations;
- e) Display of offensive pornographic materials that is not relevant to the work of SAMARTHAN;
- f) Physical or sexual assault;
- g) Unnecessary or irrelevant gossip and scandal mongering that may incite other employees/consultants to treat a staff badly, or may injure the reputation of that staff member generally.

The disciplinary procedures of SAMARTHAN shall deal with complaints proceedings in case of sexual harassment in the workplace,

SAMARTHAN shall follow laid down guidelines to investigate any complaints, and shall implement the punitive consequences that follow from an established and proven instance of sexual harassment.

If any employee/consultant is experiencing any form of sexual harassment (no matter how minor it may seem), it is requested and required that this be immediately brought to the attention of the immediate supervisor who is requested to bring it to the attention of the Sexual Harassment Committee of SAMARTHAN, which shall comprise of the Executive Director, Senior Programme Manager, Manager- Administration and HR.



All reports dealing with sexual harassment will be considered in SAMARTHAN as confidential by all parties concerned.

### **Disciplinary and Complaints handling procedure:**

#### Complaints procedure:

- a) Any employees/consultants facing sexual harassment shall lodge a formal written complaint to the Sexual Harassment Committee (SHC) of SAMARTHAN., which shall be acknowledged.

#### Investigation procedure:

- a) SHC of SAMARTHAN shall then constitute an investigation team to inquire into the merits and demerits of the complaint.
- b) During the investigation process, the investigation team shall maintain complete confidentiality of all respondents, handle the investigation and cross examination with sensitivity with the objective of gathering impartial credible evidence to substantiate the contents of the complaint.
- c) The investigation team shall within a period of not more than one calendar month submit a detailed investigation report.

#### Review of investigation report:

- a) The SHC of SAMARTHAN shall impartially analyse and review the investigation report and discuss with the investigation team if required for a comprehensive understanding of the investigation report.
- b) Based on its review, the SHC shall either acquit the accused or frame charges against the accused if adequate and credible evidence to substantiate the same has been put together.

#### Acquittal:

- a) In case the investigation report reveals that there is no merit in the complaint, the SHC shall recommend to the Executive Director of SAMARTHAN that the accused be acquitted and damages, if any, that may have been caused to the falsely accused because of the complaint, be considered as per SAMARTHAN policies.
- b) All actions thereafter shall be undertaken by the Executive Director of SAMARTHAN to conclude the case.

### 17 Framing of charges:

- a) If the investigation report reveals that there is substantial evidence to support the complaints made by the complainant, the SHC shall frame appropriate charges and





bmit the same to the Executive Director.

- b) The Executive Director shall at that time determine appropriate disciplinary and punitive action against the guilty.

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## Appendices

Appendix I	Recruitment & Selection Policy
Appendix II	Promotion, Transfer or Demotion Policy
Appendix III	Disciplinary & Grievance Policy
Appendix IV	Confirmation of Receipt of Employee Handbook Form

### Appendix I: Recruitment and Selection Policy

#### Policy

Samarthan's Recruitment policy is non-discriminatory on the grounds of age, sex, caste, creed or any other reason. Before initiating the process of hiring, the Hiring Manager needs to ensure that the position is as per the Donor Agreement and approved by the Executive Director.

#### Job Posting:

When a position is available, a job description shall be posted on external recruitment portals; additionally and if required by nature of the job and/or circumstances of the case, a job may also be posted on alumni recruitment portals of leading academic institutions and leading media outlets. Applications received previously may also be examined for the purpose. Job Posting should explicitly state the organization's positive approach towards employing people from different groups to attract diverse talent.

#### **Executive Director The Selection Process**

1. All applications received should be thoroughly scrutinized to shortlist candidates suitable for the position;
2. If large number of applications are received, an initial screening may be done through telephonic interview by the HR;
3. All shortlisted candidates should be called for a personal interview. If the position so requires, a written test should be conducted to assess the skills & technical knowledge of the candidate;
4. The interview panel must include a minimum of two people (preferably three), including the Hiring Manager;
5. Scoring should be done basis the written test and the interview, as per format. Reasons for selecting or rejecting a candidate should be appropriately documented;
6. A second round of interview should be conducted by the Executive Director or any other



- erson so designated, of 3-4 highest scoring candidates;
7. Final discussions should be done with the selected candidate in terms of salary, joining time etc.
  8. Reference checks should be done before issuing the offer letter.

## **Appendix II: Policy for Promotions, Transfers or Demotions**

### **Purpose**

Samarthan strongly believes in the career progression of its staff. Samarthan encourages the policy of open promotion, transfer and demotion of individuals to positions on the basis of qualifications and suitability. All promotions, transfers and demotions should have the prior approval of the Executive Director.

### **Promotions and Transfers**

The Executive Director may promote or transfer a qualified employee to a vacant position without advertising the vacancy. However, all employees of the organisation must be made aware of the vacant position and be given a fair chance. The Executive Director will determine if the employee is qualified for the position before a commitment to transfer or promotion to the individual is made. As Samarthan works under contracts of several donors, the policy of the donor will also be considered in this regard.

### **Demotions**

If the situation so warrants, Samarthan may demote an employee by reassigning him / her to another position or by reclassifying the employee's position, to a level at which he / she will be able to meet performance requirements.

### **Temporary Assignments**

Assuming other duties for a brief temporary period of time does not constitute a promotion and generally would not entitle the employee to additional compensation. However, individuals placed in an acting status or who are required to assume significant additional responsibilities for an extended period of time may be entitled to a temporary salary increase upon approval by the Executive Director.

## **Appendix III: Disciplinary and Grievance Policy**

### **Disciplinary Procedure**

Samarthan aims to ensure that there will be a fair and systematic approach to the achievement and maintenance of standards of conduct, attendance and job performance affecting all employees within Samarthan.



When standards are not maintained, disciplinary warnings should be seen as an attempt to improve an employee's performance or conduct, but where employees consistently fail to meet the standards required, they may be dismissed.

Examples of behavior warranting disciplinary action include but not limited to the following,

- Violation of Samarthan Policies;
- Conduct issues such as late arrivals/ early departures, unsatisfactory attendance, and abusive behavior;
- Capability or attitudinal issues such as failure to meet the required standards of job performance.

Depending on the seriousness of the offending behavior and any damage caused by the conduct, all or some of the corrective action steps described below need to be followed.

In addition, Samarthan is not limited exclusively to the actions listed below. Some situations may warrant more serious and immediate action, up to and including immediate dismissal.

### **Verbal Advisory/Warning**

In case of a minor policy violation or code of conduct, a verbal warning may be issued by the line manager. The manager should notify the Executive Director and HR Lead of the situation, ideally prior to issuing the warning. When the warning is issued, it should be clearly stated that

- (1) This is the first step in the disciplinary process, and
- (2) If conduct is repeated or the situation does not improve, further disciplinary action may be taken, up to and including dismissal. The manager shall make a record of the date, time and reason for the verbal warning.

### **Written Warning**

If the severity of an incident warrants or if informal discussions or one or more verbal warnings have not resulted in sufficient improvement, a written warning describing the mis-conduct or violation shall be issued. The warning must indicate

- (i) The desired behavior modification;
- (ii) The time scale over which such improvement is expected to take place ('the review period');
- (iii) Any guidance needed to assist in such improvements.;
- (iv) That the staff member may be subject to dismissal for failure to address the issue. Written warnings must be approved by the Executive Director and appropriately documented.

### **Administrative Leave**

Administrative leave is a time-limited suspension, typically to allow for an internal or external investigation into an alleged serious incident. Depending on the nature of the incident leave will be with or without pay.

### **Dismissal**

Dismissal of a staff member must be approved by the Executive Director In all cases, dismissals will be both procedurally and substantively correct.



## Summary Dismissal & Gross Misconduct

Summary dismissal is a dismissal that is deemed serious enough to warrant immediate dismissal without notice or pay in lieu of notice. Samarthan will only take this route for the most serious offences involving Gross Misconduct.

The following are examples of Gross Misconduct, which may result in summary dismissal. The list is not exhaustive.

- Misappropriation of Funds or Fraud;
- Breach of confidentiality.
- Bringing Samarthan or its external partners name into disrepute.
- Discrimination, Victimization or Harassment.
- Serious abuse of the I.T systems including any breach of Samarthan email or Internet policy.
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs whilst at work.
- Unreasonable refusal to obey lawful instructions or carry out duties or obligations.
- Non-performance on assigned responsibilities
- Negligence or deliberate damage.
- Breakdown in trust and confidence.

The decision whether to summarily dismiss will be taken following a formal disciplinary hearing, normally conducted by the Executive Director.

## Executive Director Grievance Policy

Samarthan encourages regular communication between staff members and their managers to help avoid and resolve concerns that might affect the quality of work life and effective operations. The objective of the grievance procedure is to resolve disputes as quickly and fairly as possible while promoting an open dialogue. If unable to resolve a work-related conflict through informal means, Grievance Policy must be followed to resolve the issue.

## The Informal Approach

Often minor issues are handled most effectively through informal discussion, with the objective of resolving the issue jointly.

## Submission of Complaint

If a work-related conflict is not resolved through informal means, a written statement should be



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ted to the Line Manager/ Executive Director, that explains the issue or concern and the requested remedy or resolution within fifteen working days of the action or incident on which the matter is based.

Executive Director

The written complaint should:

- make clear the nature of the problem;
- list the relevant facts; and
- indicate any witnesses who should be interviewed.

### **Investigating the Complaint**

Once a formal complaint has been raised, an investigator will be appointed, who will:

- talk to the concerned employee about his/her complaint, obtaining any further relevant details;
- investigate the facts surrounding the grievance including taking witness statements from relevant people;
- arrange for a hearing to take place;
- give reasonable written notice of the proposed time and date of any hearing and
- produce a summary of the investigation within 10 working days of the appointment

### **Appeals**

An employee has the right to move to the next stage of the procedure if he/she disagrees with the outcome of the grievance hearing.

In order to appeal, a written statement should be submitted to the Governing body, within 7 working days of receipt of decision.

### **Other Policies of Samarthan:**

Following are the other Policies of Samarthan. You may ask for a copy of the same from the

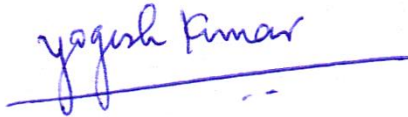


Head Office:

1. Anti Corruption Policy
2. Child Right Policy
3. Disposal Policy
4. Finance Manual
5. HIV AIDS Policy & Sexual Harassment
6. Policy on Board of Trustees
7. Recruitment Policy
8. Samarthan- Code of Conduct Policy
9. Samarthan- Conflict of Interest Policy
10. Whistle Blower Policy

#### **Appendix IV: Acknowledgement of Receipt of Employee Handbook**

I acknowledge receipt of a copy of this Samarthan Employee Handbook. I confirm that I have read and understood the terms of this handbook and agree to accept my employment under such terms.





Executive Director

