

GCC Board Directors Institute
HR Policy and Guidelines
Revised 2 August 2020



GCC Board Directors Institute

The HR Policy and Guidelines establish a framework and set standards that guide how employees should conduct themselves as employees of GCC Board Directors Institute (GCC BDI). This includes how employees perform their jobs, make decisions, interact with one another and manage the business operations of GCC BDI. All employees are the ambassadors of GCC BDI in their relationships with all stakeholders including other team members and they are all responsible for exemplifying and maintaining the highest standards of customer service, ethics and integrity in those relationships. Employees should always seek to advance the long-term interests of GCC BDI and to maximize the quality, effectiveness, and productivity of their work.

These Guidelines should be used as a reference and as a general guide rather than as an inflexible rule book. This is a resource for interpreting the variety of situations that can occur in the workplace. In each case when the policies in these Guidelines are applied to such situations, including employee performance and possible misconduct, the appropriate disciplinary or counselling action will be determined at the company's discretion, on the basis of the particular facts or circumstances.

GCC BDI is a Not for Profit Incorporated Organisation (NPIO) registered in the DIFC and as such is subject to DIFC Employment Law.

HR Policy and Guidelines

Board Statement

The GCC Board Directors Institute (GCC BDI) believes that our employees are our most valuable asset. GCC BDI is committed to the best HR practices and providing a safe and healthy working environment. We believe in developing the abilities of our employees, while encouraging a positive, productive and ethical work culture. GCC BDI is a team-focused organization that is characterized by collaborative relationships; courteous, efficient and effective services; approachable and open communications; and flexibility and fairness.

The Board of Governors sets the strategic aims of the company to ensure that the necessary human and financial resources are in place for GCC BDI to meet its Vision, Mission and Goals in line with our Values. The Company accepts its ethical and corporate social responsibilities and recognises its obligation to conduct its activities in full knowledge of, and compliance with, the requirements of applicable employment legislation, regulations and approved codes of practice.

The principal objectives of GCC BDI's HR Policy and Guidelines are to ensure that:

- All HR policies are in line with GCC BDI Values of Accountability, Collaboration and Initiative;
- Recruitment practices are professional, transparent and equitable;
- Management philosophies and practices promote and encourage empowerment, motivation and retention of high calibre employees;
- Employment relationships are based on mutual trust, fairness and equality of opportunity for all;
- The dignity and individuality of all employees is respected;
- No applicant or employee is subjected to discrimination of any kind;
- All employees are trained to carry out their role competently and are supported to develop to their full potential;
- All company activities comply with all relevant legislation and guidance, and follow all health, safety and environmental policies;
- Compensation and reward mechanisms are designed to motivate all employees to work towards the achievement of corporate and individual goals; and
- Communications between management and employees are mutually accepted as open and honest

The Executive Director is responsible for ensuring that this policy is applied. This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis and modified if required.

1. COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS POLICY

1.1 Compensation

GCC BDI is committed to providing a total compensation package that enables the Institute to attract and retain skilled employees for all positions. A competitive total compensation package includes an effective salary and a benefits plan which aims to:

- pay a fair basic salary for the job by benchmarking against similar jobs and similar organisations in the UAE and taking into consideration internal equity, specific job requirements, and the skills, knowledge, and abilities of the employee;
- provide basic benefits; and
- recognise individual contribution through the performance bonus system.

Each employee will receive a pay slip and salaries will be paid on the 25th of each month, or the last Thursday of each month if 25th falls on a weekend. Payment will be made either by bank transfer or by cheque.

Salaries are reviewed at the end of each calendar year with any changes taking effect from 1st of January.

A written offer of employment will set out any additional allowances which employees may be entitled to.

1.2 Working Hours

The normal working week is Sunday to Thursday from 0830-1730hrs. Employees are required to work an average of 48 hours per week and are entitled to take a one hour break for lunch each day. However the nature of the business dictates flexibility and employees may be required to work in addition to, or outside of these hours, as may be necessary for the proper performance of their duties.

Employees are encouraged to take their lunch break and not work through in order to leave early except in exceptional circumstances.

Employees should ensure that they do not all take lunch at the same time in order to ensure coverage of telephones during working hours.

During the Holy Month of Ramadan, Muslim employees who are fasting shall not be required to work more than 6 hours per day.

1.3 Job Description

Every job holder must have a job description approved by the Executive Director and acknowledged by the job holder. Duties and job titles may vary and change as the business requires and job descriptions should be reviewed annually at the same time as the Performance Review.

1.4 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Every job holder will have annual KPIs set by the Executive Director. The Executive Director's KPI's are set by the Board.

1.5 Annual Performance Appraisal

Formal performance appraisals occur annually. Each employee and his/her manager prepare a written evaluation of the performance of the employee. The goals of this performance appraisal are to:

- a. facilitate communication of all aspects of performance between the employee and the manager;
- b. identify areas in which improvement and learning will help the employee become more successful in the future, allowing him/her to make further contributions;
- c. identify individual development needs, desires, and plans;
- d. establish a permanent record of the employee's work history that is as straightforward and objective as possible;
- e. serve as a basis for salary reviews and performance bonuses; and to
- f. incorporate goals for meeting the employee's career development plan.

Appraisals are discussed with employees and placed in their employment files. Employees have the opportunity to comment in writing on their evaluations and to discuss them fully with their manager.

1.6 Annual Salary Increase

Subsequent to the annual performance appraisal, GCC BDI management will consider each employee's performance and determine whether a salary increase is warranted (based on cost of living increases, any change in duties of the employee and the financial position of GCC BDI) and make recommendations for the proposed amount of the increase, if any. The Executive Director will approve all increases in consultation, as necessary, with the Board of Governors. The Board of Governors, led by the Chairman, will be responsible for recommending and approving any increases to the Executive Director's salary. Any statutory annual increases are paid as per local legislation and will be incorporated in the annual increase, if any.

1.7 Annual Performance Bonus

Subsequent to the annual performance appraisal, employees with more than six months service, may be awarded a discretionary annual performance bonus, which reflects their own performance as well as the overall performance of the company. Performance bonuses will only be paid to employees who have been in service before 30 June each year and who are in permanent employment at the time of the bonus payment and where neither party has given notice. The company reserves the right to withdraw or modify the bonus scheme at any time and without notice.



GCC BDI management will consider each employee's performance and determine whether a performance bonus is warranted and shall make recommendations for the proposed amount of the bonus, if any. The Executive Director will approve all performance bonuses in consultation with the Board of Governors, as required. The Board of Governors, led by the Chairman, will be responsible for recommending and approving any performance bonus for the Executive Director.

Annual performance reviews will normally take place in December and bonus payments will be paid in January.

1.8 Benefits

GCC BDI's benefits programme is updated regularly. It is the responsibility of the employee to review benefits information and, where appropriate, make personal choices on the benefits available to him/her.

Job related benefits include:

- 20 days paid holidays per year
- Mobile telephone allowance
- Health insurance
- Travel Insurance as required for travel outside UAE

Eligibility, level of coverage and contributions are determined by the nature of an employee's appointment. Details of the content, conditions and applicability of various benefits are contained in each employee's contract.

1.9 Salary Disputes

GCC BDI seeks to provide a fair and equitable compensation system. If an employee disagrees with a management decision, he/she may use GCC BDI's Grievance

Procedure to seek resolution to their concerns. If this process fails to resolve the problem, the employee may appeal to the Board of Governors whose decision will be final.

1.10 Leave

Public Holidays: Employees are paid for all UAE public holidays for the private sector (designated as such by the UAE Labour Law and/or the concerned authorities) that fall within their working week.

Although the Company recognises Statutory and Public Holidays in the UAE, the needs of the Institute and the requirements of the work may define the arrangements that will prevail at such times. No additional payments will be made for working during such periods as compensation has already been included in the salary. Time off in lieu may be authorised in appropriate circumstances.



Historical/Religious Leave: Employees are entitled to 1 day's paid holiday each year to mark a specific historical or religious event; to be taken each calendar year by giving at least one month's prior written notice.

Annual Leave: Employees accrue annual holiday entitlement of 20 working days per year, upon completion of one full year of continuous employment. Employees who join GCC BDI after the 15th day of a month or leave on or before the 15th day of a month, may not accumulate leave for that month.

Employees are encouraged to take all their leave entitlement in any one year and not to accrue unused leave for the following year.

The leave year will run from 1 January to 31 December with employees joining after 1 January having a pro-rata entitlement to be accrued after the first 3 months of service. During the first year of employment the amount of leave which an employee may take is limited to the amount of leave deemed to have accrued at that time, less the amount of leave already taken during the year.

Booking holiday leave: Employees must apply for leave in writing using an authorised leave request form and leave will be approved on the basis of first come first serve and taking in to consideration the requirements and commitments of the Institute. Employees must give notice of their request to take annual holiday and the notice period must be at least one month. Management approval must be obtained before booking holidays. However, the maximum leave which can be taken at one stretch will depend on the exigencies of the Institute's program and activities. Furthermore, more than two consecutive weeks' holiday may not be taken without

GCC BDI's special permission, which it will give in its sole discretion. Short notice for odd days will only be authorized by exception.

GCC BDI will give the employee notice at least equal to the period of time that has been booked if it decides that it needs the employee to work during the leave period requested. GCC BDI will give not less than 2 weeks' notice if it requires the employee to take holiday on a specified date or dates.

Employees may not take leave during the first three months of employment unless special permission has been given in writing. Should the employee's length of service last less than three months, there will be no payment of any holiday leave of any kind.

Should leave be required for compassionate reasons, the company may in exceptional circumstances, grant leave of absence, with or without pay.

Unpaid Leave: In some exceptional circumstances, the company may agree to grant a period of unpaid leave. This would normally be a one off and the minimum length of service for this consideration would usually be 5 years. Any requests should be submitted to the Executive Director with reasons for the request. Unpaid leave is



granted in lieu of normal paid leave and additional holiday entitlement will not accrue during the sabbatical period. The period of absence will be non-qualifying for any bonus scheme and no leave will be normally granted for a 6 month period after the sabbatical period. Certain benefits may be continued during the sabbatical period providing the employee compensates the company. The employee should be contactable during the leave period to handle any unforeseen issues.

On termination of employment: During the employee's notice period, GCC BDI reserves the right to require the employee to take all or any part of any annual holiday entitlement that has been accrued but not taken, or to make payment in lieu, at the employee's final salary rate, for any such accrued holiday. If, on termination, the employee has taken annual holiday in excess of their entitlement, GCC BDI may deduct the value of this from their final salary payment. During the last year of employment, leave entitlement will be pro-rated according to the number of full weeks employment. Should the employment contract be terminated by the employer, for any reason other than Gross Misconduct, the employee may be paid salary in lieu of holiday for any outstanding entitlement.

1.11 Sick Leave

Employees are entitled to sick leave as per DIFC Employment Law. Unused sick leave shall not be extended or accumulated from one year to another.

If the employee is sick or unable to come to work for any reason, the employee must notify both his/her direct superior and the Executive Director as early as possible on the first day of absence and by 0900hrs. The employee should keep both his/her direct superior and the Executive Director informed on a regular basis of his/her progress and when he/she is expected to return to work.

When the employee is absent for less than 5 working days, he/she must complete and return, to the Executive Director, a self-certification form. When the employee is absent for more than 5 working days, the concerned employee must provide a doctor's medical certificate. If his/her sickness is prolonged, he/she should continue to submit regular medical certificates and keep the company informed of his/her condition and likely when to return to work.

During any period of sickness, the company may require the employee to undergo a medical examination by the company's medical advisor, or provide any evidence of his/her medical condition, as may be reasonably required. The company reserves the right to require its employees at any time to present a medical certificate or to explain any absence for medical reasons.

Subject to the rules on statutory sick pay, any further payments, when the employee is absent due to sickness, is at the sole discretion of the company. To receive any payment during absence from work due to sickness or injury, the employee must comply with the notification procedures set out above. The company reserves the right not to pay for any absence from work which is not authorised.



2. CONDITIONS OF WORK

2.1 Attendance, Punctuality and Conduct

GCC BDI and its customers depend on employees reporting to work regularly and on time. Employees should be punctual and maintain satisfactory attendance. Frequent or unscheduled absences and repeated lateness may result in disciplinary action.

The company may, at its discretion, allow some flexibility of working hours but core hours of 0930-1630hrs must be respected.

Employees are required to serve the company to the best of their ability and to use their best endeavours to promote, develop and extend the business of the company, and its interests generally, and during working hours, to devote the whole of their time, attention and abilities to their duties.

Employees should carry out all reasonable and lawful instructions given to them by the company and abide by the terms and conditions of their employment.

The business of the company imposes a special obligation on all employees to maintain its reputation and integrity. As representatives of the company, employees are reminded that they must not act in a manner prejudicial to the company's interests. Efficient service and courtesy must be observed at all times both to clients and fellow team members.

2.2 Smoking and Other Substances at Work

No smoking is allowed in GCC BDI offices and employees who do smoke should ensure they only use approved smoking areas. Alcoholic beverages shall not be consumed on the office premises at any time. Employees shall not allow the consumption of alcohol or drugs to adversely affect their work performance or official conduct. To be under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs will be considered a dismissible offence.

2.3 Appearance

GCC BDI does not seek to inhibit individual choice in relation to employee's appearance. However, in order to promote a professional image that enhances and promotes a positive corporate image, all employees are expected to maintain high standards of personal hygiene and grooming and dress appropriately, respectfully and professionally at all times in relation to their role. Any employee who attends work dressed in an inappropriate manner may be subject to disciplinary action.

Since GCC BDI receives members and clients in our offices, business casual dress is the most appropriate office attire. Inappropriate clothing includes beach clothes, exercise and sports clothes. Equally clothing that is too revealing is not appropriate for a place of business. Torn, dirty, or frayed clothing is unacceptable. When traveling or

visiting a customer or potential customer, it is important to ascertain the accepted dress code and match it in one's attire. This is especially important when the employee is traveling globally representing the company as customs and dress may differ from those observed in Dubai.

2.4 Personal Property

Any personal property (e.g. jewellery, cash, and credit cards) left on GCC BDI premises is done so entirely at the employee's own risk. Employees are strongly advised not to leave any valuables unattended, either on GCC BDI premises or in their own vehicle. GCC BDI does not accept liability for loss or damage to any personal property whatsoever.

3. STAFFING, RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

GCC BDI recognises that its employees are fundamental to its success and is committed to ensuring that the staffing, recruitment and selection process is conducted in a manner that is systematic, efficient and effective, and that promotes equal opportunities and diversity. A strategic and professional approach will enable the Institute to attract and appoint employees with the necessary skills and attributes to fulfil its strategic aims and support GCC BDI's values. This policy has been designed to provide a flexible framework that promotes good practice.

GCC BDI recognises that the basis of successful recruitment is dependent upon finding and retaining people who have the appropriate level of skills and qualifications, who will identify with the objectives, values and aims of GCC BDI and who see themselves as making a positive contribution towards the company. It is an integral part of GCC BDI's policy to encourage the personal development of all members of staff and GCC BDI endeavours to actively support and guide its employees in a positive manner so that they are fully capable of meeting the requirements of the job and the Institute. All employees are selected based upon their attitude, skills, experience, references and aptitude.

GCC BDI's recruitment process also aims to be effective in producing and employing sufficient and suitable candidates in as cost-effective way as possible.

GCC BDI's staffing, recruitment and selection policy aims to:

- ensure that all individuals are selected, promoted and treated fairly on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities;
- ensure that equality of opportunity and diversity plays a dominant role in all aspects of the recruitment process;
- promote and actively encourage best practice for all types of recruitment throughout all levels and categories of post within GCC BDI.

3.1 Staffing

As a responsible and respected employer, GCC BDI aims to be in a position to offer secure permanent employment opportunities. In acknowledging this aim, GCC BDI recognises that there will be times when this is not always possible and that there will be circumstances in which it is only feasible to offer temporary or supply employment. The decision to recruit and what format the employment should follow will be made by the Executive Director, in conjunction with the Board of Governors, if appropriate, according to the professional requirements of the Institute.

3.2 Scope

Regardless of the category of post, (permanent, temporary, relief, etc.) the Staffing, Recruitment and Selection policy applies to all employees and the principles contained in it should be applied consistently as far as reasonably possible, even when posts may need to be filled at very short notice.

3.3 Equal Opportunities

GCC BDI is committed to a policy of equal opportunities to ensure that no unlawful discrimination occurs in the recruitment and selection process on the grounds of race, religion or belief, colour, sex, age, national origin, disability or sexual orientation.

3.4 Workforce Continuity and Succession Planning

As part of its Staffing, Recruitment and Selection Policy, GCC BDI recognises that workforce continuity and succession planning are important elements. In this respect, GCC BDI will:

- monitor absences and resignation data
- make appropriate leave provisions
- implement and encourage knowledge sharing systems
- ensure exit interviews and management of knowledge handover

3.5 Planning and Preparation

When a vacancy arises it presents an opportunity to consider restructuring or to reassess the requirements of the job. The following questions need to be asked:

- has the purpose of the job changed?
- has the job changed from its original destination?
- have work patterns, new technology or new products altered the job?
- are there any changes anticipated which will require different, more flexible skills from the future job holder?

Where a vacancy occurs through the resignation of an existing employee, the employee should be encouraged via an exit interview to give feedback on their role, responsibilities and associated issues to see if useful changes can be made to the job description and/or person specification.

The answers to these questions should help to clarify the actual requirements of the job.

3.6 Job Profile

Before advertising, a job profile should be drawn up using the standard Job Profile Template (Appendix 1). A review of the content should always take place at this stage. This should detail the main purpose, the main tasks and the scope of the job. A good job profile is vital to the success of the recruitment and selection process as it is the foundation upon which the person specification, the advertisement, the interview and appraisal and performance procedures will be derived. Writing a good job profile helps in the process of analysing the needs of the job. A good job profile also enables prospective applicants to assess themselves for the job and provides a benchmark for judging achievements.

3.7 Person Specification

Having established the duties of a job through the process of drawing up a job profile, it is necessary to clearly establish what attributes a person needs to be able to fulfil the duties of the job. The person specification describes the knowledge, skills, abilities, experience and qualifications needed by the individual to carry out the duties of the job, as described in the job profile. This should be prepared using the Person Specification Template (Appendix 1). The criteria specified under these headings should be measurable and justifiable, as they will form the basis of the selection process. It is very important that the skills, aptitudes, knowledge and any criteria relating to personal qualities or circumstances included in the specification are related precisely to the needs of the job. It is also essential not to discriminate against particular groups of potential applicants. The person specification helps the selection and subsequent interview to operate objectively and in a systematic way by reducing subjectivity and bias.

3.8 The Selection Panel

A selection panel shall be chosen. All staff involved in the recruitment and selection process will receive appropriate guidance in fair interviewing and selection procedures and must be aware of the principles of sex, race, disability and age discrimination and other relevant legislation. The selection process must be carried out consistently for all jobs at all levels. The selection of new employees will be based on job requirements and the individual's suitability and ability to do the job and information sought from applicants will relate only to the qualifications for or requirements of the job. The panel should consist of at least two people and should involve the Executive Director and one or more of the GCC BDI team and/or Board members. As soon as the membership of the panel is identified they should plan and set dates for the whole recruitment schedule. The panel should:



-agree the recruitment channel or channels and the design and content of the advertisement

- agree on selection methods, e.g. interviews, selection tests such as practical psychometric tests, role plays, team exercises etc
- shortlist applications
- develop interview questions
- decide if references/medicals are to be requested and when
 - conduct interviews and any selection tests
- make the appointment decision

3.9 Advertising

All positions will be advertised internally, and where appropriate, externally using GCC BDI's website, and, if necessary, external advertising and/or a recruitment agency. All postings where possible will have at least a 2-week closing date from the date of advertising/posting.

3.10 Shortlisting

Before the interview stage, a shortlist of candidates who best match the job description and person specification will be drawn up and these candidates will be invited for interview.

3.11 Interviews

Planning for the interview is very important. It not only ensures that all applicants are treated fairly but are also left with a positive and professional image of GCC BDI. The panel should decide how the interview will be structured and plan the questions. A structured interview designed to discover all relevant information and assess the competencies of the applicant is an efficient method of focusing on the match between job and applicant. It also means that there is a consistent form to the interviews. All questions should relate to the selection criteria and should be free of bias. Appropriate interview arrangements should be offered to disabled applicants to enable them to compete on an equal basis. If selection tests are to be carried out they must be free of bias and relate to the necessary requirements of the job. Consideration in giving any tests must include the objectives of such a test, the efficiency of the method selected, the number of applicants and the costs and benefits of such a method.

The purpose of the interview is to draw information from the applicant beyond that already contained in the application form to decide if they would be suitable for the job and to allow applicants the opportunity to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and abilities against the person specification. Each panel member should make separate ratings against the pre-determined essential and desirable criteria from the job person specification using Interview Assessment Forms supplied to all panel members. Each candidate should be rated immediately after the interview to avoid forgetting details. This assists transparency as it provides a clear audit trail which ensures good practice.

The panel should keep an open mind on all applicants and a decision should only be made after all applicants have been interviewed and assessed against the person specification. The panel needs to be clear about why applicants were not selected and ensure that their notes reflect the decision making process. At the end of the interview, scores can be compared to reach a final decision. Where consensus is reached by the interview panel there is no need for further discussion. However further discussion and a second interview of the top 2 or 3 candidates may be necessary if there is not complete agreement on ratings for each candidate. The outcome should be a fully transparent process allowing robust and helpful feedback to the candidates upon their request.

3.12 Pre-employment Checks

-References – two references will be obtained for the successful applicant. The successful candidate will be advised that an offer of employment is subject to obtaining references which are satisfactory to GCC BDI. One reference should be sought from the present/most recent employer and one from a previous employer. Personal references will be sought where it is not possible to obtain employment references.

-Qualifications -candidates invited for interview for all posts will be required to bring with them or make available the original copies of any relevant academic qualifications and certificates gained. Relevant checks will be made on the authenticity of academic qualifications if these are essential for the post

-Eligibility to work in UAE- all job offers will be subject to approval of UAE residence and work permits.

-Declaration of Fitness -candidates will be asked to make a self-declaration of their physical and mental capability to undertake the work on offer as part of their contract of employment.

3.13 Job Offer

Once the successful applicant has been identified, he/she will receive a letter of offer in two copies which will also serve as a contract and which will state the main terms and conditions of employment, the specifics of the job and any other conditions, including any pre-conditions or post-conditions. The applicant will be asked to indicate their acceptance of the terms and conditions of employment by signing and returning one copy to GCC BDI for its records within seven days. A

notification should then immediately be sent to all unsuccessful applicants to thank them for applying and to inform them of the outcome.

3.14 Induction

Following the appointment to the post, an induction programme will be developed for the new employee in line with their responsibilities and job description.

3.15 Records Management

Records of all applications and recruitment will be kept for a period of six months.

3.16 Review of Recruitment Practice

Recruitment procedures and practices will be kept under review so as to ensure that this policy is being adhered to and to ensure that it does not include requirements or conditions that constitute, or may lead to, unlawful discrimination.

3.17 Outsourcing

It may be decided by the Executive Director to outsource all or part of the above process, although in all cases the final appointment decision will be made by the Executive Director, where necessary in conjunction with the Board, and taking into consideration the recommendations of the recruitment agency.

3.18 Complaints

Any applicants who feel that they have not been treated fairly in the recruitment and selection process may write to the Chairman of the Board who will investigate the matter and report back to the applicant.

3.19 Appendix 1 - Job Profile

JOB PROFILE			
Job Details:			
Employee Name			
Job Title		Responsible to	
		Date Joined	
Main Purpose of Job			
Organizational Context			

Key Relationships	
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Internal	
-----------------	--

External	
-----------------	--

Key Dimensions	
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Subordinates No. Founders and Patrons No. of members (approx.) No. of events Budget	
--	--

Performance Objectives

Key Results Areas	Principal Accountabilities	Standards

Person Specification

Qualifications, Skills and Knowledge	
---	--

Essential	Desirable

Experience

Approval

Job Holder			
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Name		Job Title	
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Signature		Date	
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Executive Director			
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Name		Job Title	
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Signature		Date	
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4. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The grievance procedure is intended as the tool by which a member of staff may formally have a grievance, regarding any condition of their employment, and may be heard by the management or the board of GCC BDI. The aggrieved employee has the right to representation by a 3rd party or a work colleague.

In the event of a member of staff wishing to raise a grievance, it is preferable for the grievance to be satisfactorily resolved as close to the individual and their manager as possible. It is understood, however, that this is not always possible and that a formal procedure is required to ensure the swift and fair resolution of matters which aggrieve the company's employees.

Time scales have been fixed to ensure that grievances are dealt with quickly, however these may be extended if it is agreed upon by both parties.

This procedure is not intended to deal with dismissal or disciplinary matters which are dealt with in a separate procedure.

4.1 Stage 1

An employee who has a grievance, should raise the matter with the Executive Director immediately either verbally or in writing. If the matter itself concerns the Executive Director, then the grievance should be taken to the Chairman of the Board.

If the Executive Director is unable to resolve the matter at that time then a formal written grievance form should be submitted (see Appendix 1). The Executive Director should then respond within seven working days to the grievance unless an extended period of time is agreed upon by both parties. The response will give a full written explanation of the Executive Director's decision and who to appeal to if still aggrieved.

4.2 Stage 2

In most instances GCC BDI would expect the Executive Director's decision to be final and for the matter to come to a close. However, in some circumstances the employee may remain aggrieved and can appeal against the decision of the Executive Director.

The appeal to the next in line, that is the Chairman of the Board, must be made within ten working days of the original response to the employee's grievance. The appeal must be in writing (see Appendix 2) and contain the original formal Grievance Form. The Chairman of the Board will attempt to resolve the grievance. A formal response and full explanation will be given in writing, as well as the name of the person, to whom they can appeal if still aggrieved, within 10 days.

4.3 Stage 3

If the employee still remains aggrieved there will be a final level of appeal to the full Board via the Chairman. This appeal must be made in writing (see Appendix 3), enclosing a copy of the original Grievance Form, to the Chairman within ten working



days of receipt of the Stage 2 response. The Chairman will arrange for the full Board to hear the appeal and respond formally with a full explanation within 20 working days.

Where a grievance is raised against a Director or Governor then the grievance will be heard by the Chairman as in Stage 3. Where a grievance is raised against the Chairman, the grievance will be heard by the Vice Chairman as in Stage 3.

There is no further right of appeal and the decision of the Board will be final. Where however both parties agree that there would be some merit in referring the matter to a third party for advice, conciliation or mediation, arrangements will then be made to find a mutually acceptable third party.

4.4 Using mediation

An independent third party or mediator can sometimes help resolve grievance issues before it is necessary to invoke the formal procedure. Mediation is a voluntary process where the mediator helps two or more people to solve a conflict before it turns into a dispute in an attempt to reach an agreement. Mediation is not part of BDI's formal grievance procedure. However if both parties agree to mediation, and there is no cost to BDI, then the grievance procedure can be suspended in an attempt to resolve the grievance through that route. If mediation is not successful, then the grievance procedure can be restarted.

4.5 Appendix 1 Grievance Procedure

To: Executive Director

From:

Date:

Dear.....

In line with GCC BDI's Grievance Procedure, I wish to make a formal grievance.

The details of my grievance are shown below:

Yours sincerely,

4.6 Appendix 2 Grievance Procedure

To: Chairman, GCC BDI Board of Governors

From:

Date:

Dear.....

On (within 10 days of the response to the initial formal grievance) my grievance againstwas heard by.....

I am not satisfied with the outcome of this meeting and would like to appeal to yourself for a further hearing of my grievance, in line with GCC BDI's Grievance Procedure.

I enclose a copy of the original letter regarding this matter and other correspondence and information related to it.

Yours sincerely,

4.7 Appendix 3 Grievance Procedure

To: The Board of Governors

From:

Date:

Dear.....

On (within 10 days of the response to the second stage of the formal grievance) I appealed to.....against the decision made at my initial grievance against.....

I remain dissatisfied with the outcome of this meeting and would like to appeal to you for a further hearing of my grievance, in line with GCC BDI's Grievance Procedure.

I enclose a copy of the original letter regarding this matter and other correspondence and information related to it.

Yours sincerely,

5. COUNSELLING

Counselling is a "without prejudice" attempt to correct a situation and prevent it from getting worse without having to use the disciplinary procedure. Where improvement is required, the employee must be given clear counselling guidelines as to:

- what is expected in terms of improving shortcomings in conduct or performance
- the time scales for improvement
- when this will be reviewed
- the employee must also be told, where appropriate, that failure to improve may result in formal disciplinary action.

A record of the counselling should be given to the employee and a copy retained in their personnel file. It is imperative that any counselling should be followed up and improvements recognised and recorded.

If during counselling it becomes clear that the matter is more serious, then the discussion should be adjourned, and pursued under the current disciplinary procedures.

6. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

6.1 Warnings

Examples of Minor Misconduct:

Below are listed examples of misconduct which may warrant either a Verbal Warning or a First Written Warning. It is stressed however that this list is not exhaustive and that on all occasions a full and proper investigation must take place prior to the issue of a warning.

- Persistent lateness and poor time-keeping
- Regular absences from work
- Smoking within unauthorised areas.
- Failure to work in accordance with prescribed procedures
- Poor quality of work
- Unreasonable standards of dress or personal hygiene.
- Failure to observe company regulations and procedures

Verbal Warning

A Verbal Warning is appropriate when it is necessary for management to take action against an employee for any minor failing or minor misconduct.

First Written Warning

A First Written Warning is appropriate when:

- a verbal warning has not been heeded and the minor misconduct is either repeated or performance has not improved as previously agreed.
- an offence is of a more serious nature for which a written warning is more appropriate.
- the recurrence or accumulation of minor offence/offences, will lead to more severe disciplinary action.

Final Written Warning

A Final Written Warning is appropriate when:

- an employee's offence is of a serious nature falling just short of one justifying dismissal.
- an employee persists in the misconduct which previously warranted a lesser warning.

All letters of warnings should include:

- The nature of the offence and where appropriate notice that if further misconduct occurs, more severe disciplinary action will be taken.
- The period of time given to the employee for improvement
- A copy of the warning and any supporting documentation must be attached to the individuals personnel file.

- The employee must also receive a copy of the warning which in the case of any written warning will be sent to their home address by recorded delivery if not handed to them in person with acknowledgement
- In the case of a final written warning, reference must be made to the fact that any further misconduct may constitute gross misconduct leading to dismissal

6.2 Disciplinary Procedures

Examples of Gross – Misconduct:

Listed below are examples of misconduct which may be considered to be gross misconduct and warrant a final written warning or dismissal. It is stressed however that this list is not exhaustive and that on all occasions a full and proper investigation must take place prior to the issuing of a Final Written Warning or Dismissal.

- Theft, including unauthorised possession of Company property.
- Breaches of confidentiality, prejudicial to the interest of the Company,
- Being unfit for duty because of the misuse/consumption of drugs or alcohol.
- Refusal to carry out a management instruction which is within the individual's capabilities and which would be seen to be in the interests of the company.
- Breach of confidentiality / security procedures.
- Physical assault, breach of the peace or verbal abuse.
- False declaration of qualifications or professional registration.
- Failure to observe Company rules, regulations or procedures.
- Wilful damage of Company property
- Incompetence or failure to apply sound professional judgement.
- Bribing or attempting to bribe another individual, or personally taking or knowingly allowing another person to take a bribe.

In most cases where misconduct or serious misconduct is suspected, within 10 days of becoming aware of such misconduct, GCC BDI shall notify the employee(s) concerned and the latter shall have 5 days to furnish any necessary explanations. Should such explanations prove to be unsatisfactory, it will be necessary to immediately launch the disciplinary procedures and convene the employee concerned to a Disciplinary Committee.

The Disciplinary Committee will be held within a reasonable time following a formal investigation and will be chaired by an appropriate person (the Executive Director, the Chairman, a 3rd party) who would be accompanied by another GCC BDI Director or Governor or 3rd party. Witnesses may be called at the hearing by GCC BDI and the employee (or their representative) and both parties may be allowed to question these witnesses. The employee has a right of representation at this hearing.

The investigating chairman would be asked to present his/her findings to the Executive Director or the Board of GC BDI, who will then take any necessary decisions in relation thereto, the Institute not being bound by the recommendation of the Disciplinary Committee.

The final decision must be made to the employee in writing within 7 days of the last meeting of the Disciplinary Committee:

- No further action and employee reinstated
- Warning
- Serious warning
- Final warning
- Dismissal

Should anyone who is subject to disciplinary action resign during the course of it, the action will cease unless there are extenuating circumstances which require its continuance.

6.3 Dismissal

Dismissal is appropriate when a disciplinary committee has concluded that an employee has been guilty of misconduct or persistent misconduct which becomes tantamount to gross misconduct, all other lines of disciplinary procedure have been exhausted and the employer cannot in good faith take any other course.

The letter confirming dismissal will contain the reason for dismissal and any administrative matter arising from the termination of employment.

7. ITC POLICY- COMPUTER, EMAIL, INTERNET AND TELEPHONE USE

Employees who have access to the Company's computers and phones, including email and access to the internet, as part of their job, must not abuse this by using these facilities for purposes unrelated to company business.

Limited personal use of the internet is permitted during formal breaks. Accessing or distributing pornographic or other unsuitable material is strictly prohibited and may constitute serious misconduct.

Only software packages properly authorised and installed by GCC BDI may be used on company equipment. Employees must therefore not load any unauthorised software or data onto company computers.

A company email address is provided for responsible use on company business and should not be used in any other way whatsoever.

Personal phone calls should not interfere with work and be kept to the minimum.

8. ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND SAFETY

8.1 Introduction

GCC BDI is committed to meeting environmental, health and safety standards, maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for all and minimizing the impact of its activities on the environment. GCC BDI recognises and accepts its responsibility as



an employer to maintain, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety and health of its employees, and of other persons who may be affected by its' activities.

It is the duty of employees not to put themselves or others at risk by their acts or omissions. Employees should also ensure that they are familiar with the company health and safety arrangements. Should any employee feel concern over any health and safety aspects of their work, this should be brought to the attention of management immediately.

A list of emergency numbers will be posted in the office in a prominent place. In case of an emergency, the following numbers should be called straight away:

Vital Emergency Numbers in Dubai

Police	999
Fire Department	997
Ambulance	999
Electricity	991
Water	991

8.2 Procedure in the event of an accident

An Accident Book is available on the Shared Drive and it is the responsibility of each individual employee to report and record any accident involving personal injury. Any accident or near miss occurrence (i.e. no one was injured but the incident had the potential to injure or kill) at work should be reported immediately to the Executive Director.

All employees who are absent from work following an accident must produce a doctor's certificate which clearly states the nature and cause of the injury.

8.3. Employees' Medical Data

All employees shall, at their discretion, furnish to the Executive Director a list of any chronic syndromes, weaknesses or diseases from which they suffer, including allergies to enable the best actions to be taken in case of ailment or accident.

8.4 First Aid

A First Aid Kit is available on the premises.

8.5 Fire Safety

Employees should follow these steps to help prevent fires:

- Before you use any electrical appliances carry out a quick check to make sure that the cables, plugs etc are not damaged.

- Do not use any electrical equipment that shows signs of damage, even if you think it is only minor. Report any faults you find to the Executive Director and find an alternative appliance.
- Ensure that you place your rubbish in the proper waste bins. Do not overfill the bins, and ensure that your waste bins are emptied regularly.

Action to take when the fire alarm goes off:

- Immediately stop what you are doing and walk (do not run) to the nearest available safe fire exit. If your nearest exit/route is obstructed, choose another route. Make sure that you are aware of the fire exits and routes in your area.
- Follow the instructions of your designated Fire Warden.
- Direction signs should indicate the route to your fire exit.
- Do not use a lift to leave the building - always use designated stairs.
- Make your way to the appropriate assembly point.
- Once you are at the assembly point you should report to the Fire Warden, so that they can account for the people in their designated area.
- Do not leave the designated assembly point, or attempt to re-enter the building, until you have been instructed to do so by the Fire Warden.

Action to take if you discover a fire:

- The alarm must be raised for every occurrence of a fire, no matter how small it appears to be. This will ensure that people in the building have adequate notice to evacuate should it begin to spread quickly. In addition, modern furnishings may allow the fire to develop unnoticed, so time is of the essence if everyone is to get out safely.
- Call the fire department at the earliest available, and safe, opportunity and do not attempt to tackle the fire unless you have been appropriately trained and can safely do so e.g. a small fire in a waste paper basket. Unless you have been trained you could be putting yourself or somebody else at risk.

Employees should be familiar with the GCC BDI Crisis Management Plan and Business Continuity Plan.

8.6 Environment

GCC BDI tries to ensure that all its procedures are environmentally responsible and prevent pollution wherever and whenever possible. GCC BDI also strives to conserve natural resources and to improve energy efficiency wherever possible.

Playing of music in the office should be limited, appropriate and discreet and should not disturb or distract employees from their work. Nor should it muffle sounds that need to be heard (eg phones, alarms, etc.), or shut employees off from others which defeats the collaboration that an open office is intended to achieve.

9. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

9.1 Training and Development Policy

GCC BDI recognises the need to develop its employees so that they are fully equipped to deliver GCC BDI's professional objectives. It is GCC BDI's policy to ensure that its employees have the appropriate knowledge, skills and behaviours to meet the needs of its members and the organisation and to encourage its employees to achieve their full potential.

GCC BDI aims to:

- To equip its employees with the appropriate knowledge, skills and behaviours required for the job
- To provide leadership and management development
- To identify the development needs of GCC BDI and those of individuals and balance the two
- To ensure that development needs are identified as part of the business planning process and reviewed regularly.
- To promote the use of the full range of development opportunities, ensuring that where a formal course is chosen it is the most appropriate solution.
- To ensure equality of access to all development opportunities
- To provide effective induction for all new appointees
- To provide a progressive training and development scheme to enable staff to develop relevant skills and acquire knowledge to underpin their current role as related to the goals of GCC BDI

9.2 Personal Development Planning

Personal Development Planning is undertaken through the Annual Performance Appraisal and is aimed at:

- enabling management and employees to make effective arrangements to identify and meet learning needs
- developing the skills, knowledge, values and behaviour that employees need to do their current jobs well

9.3 Attendance of Training Courses

Employees are expected to attend GCC BDI workshops as well as other training and development courses and activities whenever required to do so and report back on the usefulness of the course and their ensuing action plan.

10. POSITIVE WORKPLACE CULTURE

GCC BDI recognises that a positive workplace culture leads to increased productivity, better employee morale and the ability to keep skilled workers. GCC BDI works towards the creation of a positive workplace by:

- having a clear statement of our company, vision, mission, objectives and values
- setting clear goals
- ensuring fair and equal treatment of all employees
- promoting open and honest communication



- providing an open door policy and encouraging interaction with employees
- promoting a positive attitude, friendly atmosphere and upbeat environment
- handling conflict quickly and fairly and promoting dialogue
- encouraging employees in their daily work and keeping them informed about company progress and new developments.
- valuing the work done, giving regular feedback and rewarding our employees for their achievements through the performance bonus scheme
- regular training and development opportunities
- ensuring equal opportunities for all employees

It is also the responsibility of each and every employee to contribute to a healthy and positive work culture.

11. CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (CSR)

Although GCC BDI is a not for profit organisation, the company is a firm believer in CSR and plays its role as a good corporate citizen by:

- Implementing and encouraging green practices
- Fostering a culture of social responsibility
- Sharing and communicating the value of corporate social responsibility to employees and the community

GCC BDI does this by:

- promoting and encouraging stewardship, better corporate ethics and long-lasting practices that promote both personal and corporate accountability.
- encouraging each employee's personal contribution to social responsibility
- reducing each employee's carbon footprint by:
 - Recycling paper in the office.
 - Encouraging reduced energy consumption-including staggered staffing to allow after rush hour transit and permit telecommuting to the degree possible
 - Encouraging shutting off lights, computers and printers after work hours and on weekends for further energy reductions
 - Switching to laptops over desktop computers where possible (laptops consume up to 90% less power.)

12. CODE OF CONDUCT

12.1 Standards of Behaviour

GCC BDI's Code of Conduct outlines standards of behaviour expected of all employees of GCC BDI so that:

- all employees conduct themselves in a professional manner
- all employees understand their responsibilities and obligations, and have guidance when faced with an ethical dilemma or conflict of interest
- all employees respect the rights, beliefs and property of others



Employees are required to be familiar with the Code of Conduct and ensure adherence to its guidelines. All employees should appreciate that departure from the provisions of this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action.

12.2 Legal Conformance

The highest legal, moral and ethical standards of honesty, integrity and fairness are to be practiced in the conduct of GCC BDI's affairs. In order to meet this standard, GCC BDI expects all employees to operate and act in full compliance of all applicable laws and regulations and the spirit in which those laws and regulations were written.

12.3 Personal and Professional Behaviour

All employees shall follow GCC BDI's Code of Conduct, all relevant Government Regulations and Legislation and appropriate professional standards.

12.4 Behaviour outside Hours of Duty

Employees shall conduct their personal affairs in a manner that does not affect their professional duties. Employees shall be aware that their activity or behaviour outside of working hours could bring the integrity and reputation of GCC BDI into disrepute.

12.5 Interaction with Colleagues

All employees shall work cooperatively with colleagues, support and learn from each other and accept differences in personal style. Employees shall respect, and seek when necessary, the professional opinions of colleagues in their area of competence, and acknowledge their contribution.

12.6 Ethical behaviour

All employees shall behave ethically in a manner consistent with the values and vision of GCC BDI. If in doubt, employees should seek advice from management.

Employees are encouraged to report to a manager any behaviour by another employee they consider to be unethical. This may include behaviour that you believe violates any law, rule or regulation or represents corrupt conduct, substantial mismanagement of company resources, or is a danger to public health or safety or to the environment. Reports of such behaviour shall be protected against reprisals providing the claim is based on a reasonable belief, is reported to an appropriate person and is not malicious.

12.7 Use of Company Resources

Employees shall ensure that all company resources are used effectively, economically and responsibly in the course of their duties. Employees shall use company facilities and equipment for official purposes only, unless given explicit permission for limited



private use. This private use may be granted to enable employees to better manage the balance between work and private commitments.

Material that is fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, sexually explicit, profane, obscene, intimidating, defamatory or otherwise unlawful or inappropriate must not be sent by e-mail or other forms of electronic communication, including Facebook or other social networking sites from company computers, or displayed or stored on company computers (Refer to IT Policy regarding internet usage).

12.8 Intellectual Property and Copyright

Employees shall acknowledge that GCC BDI shall have sole ownership of the intellectual property, including copyright, of all materials and data used and/or produced during the course of their duties and shall not copy or make use of such materials outside the course of their normal duties without the written permission of GCC BDI.

12.9 Use and Release of Information-Public Comment

Whilst it is recognised that employees have the right as an individual to make public comment, employees shall not reveal confidential information in public. Information of a confidential nature shall not be used by any employee in any public comment without the prior approval of the Executive Director. Approval from the Executive Director shall be required before employees approach the media, or respond to media approaches on any issues.

12.10 Confidentiality and Privacy

Members and member-related information, and all company information, is confidential. Any information regarding GCC BDI or its members shall not be conveyed to another person, without management authorisation. All employees shall comply with legislative requirements in respect to Confidentiality and Privacy, especially all Data Protection Laws and best practices and GCC BDI's Data Protection Policy and GCC BDI's Privacy Policy.

Employees shall not, except in the performance of their duties, in any way disclose to any person, entity or company whatsoever, either directly or indirectly, any dealings, transactions or affairs that are confidential to GCC BDI, which may come to their knowledge in the course of their employment.

Employees shall not use for their own benefit or the benefit of any other person, or divulge or communicate to any other person (except authorised officials of GCC BDI) any confidential information or data made available to them during their employment with GCC BDI or any other information which they may obtain or receive, in relation to GCC BDI's or its members' affairs.



Employees shall use their best endeavours to prevent any such disclosures or publications during and after their employment with GCC BDI. Once an employee has left GCC BDI, confidential information obtained during employment shall not be used.

Employees shall, however, be permitted to use information obtained in the course of their employment with the Company which:

- (a) is in or has become part of the public domain other than by reason of a publication or disclosure made in breach of these presents;
- (b) is information which the employee had acquired prior to the disclosure of such information by GC BDI and which was not subject to any obligations or restrictions regarding confidentiality;
- (c) is or has been obtained by the employee free of restriction from any third party duly entitled to disclose the same;
- (d) is required by law, regulation, order of a court of competent jurisdiction or other legal process to be disclosed; or
- (e) is otherwise required by law to be disclosed.

Employees may disclose official information that is normally given to members of the public seeking that information. No advice on professional matters should be given by employees.

Employees shall take all reasonable steps to protect personal information from misuse and loss, and from unauthorised access, modification or disclosure. Members have a right to access their personal information and seek corrections to it.

Employees must not appropriate business files of any kind belonging to the company or make copies or extracts of these for private or other purposes. Company files or documents may not be removed from the premises of the company or accessed externally without prior permission.

Upon termination of employment, you are required to return all company documents and data of any kind which belong to the company.

Employees are reminded that their duty of confidentiality is an explicit part of their contract of employment and that breach of it may result in summary dismissal and legal action. Such legal action may be taken against the employee after they have left the company.

Employees should be very clear as to what constitutes a potential indiscretion and should seek guidance as necessary.

These confidentiality requirements continue to exist even when you have left the employment of the company.

12.11 Data Protection

To comply with the requirements of applicable data protection laws, including General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (“**GDPR**”) and DIFC Data Protection Law No. 5



of 2020 (“**DIFC Data Protection Law**”), as well as internal policies and best practices, employees are required to comply with GCC BDI’s data protection policies and procedures at all times. See Staff Data Protection Policy and other related data protection policies for more information.

12.12 Conflict of Interest

Employees shall comply with GCC BDI’s Conflicts of Interest Policy and always act in the company’s interest and not in any manner designed to gain unfair advantage for themselves or for other individuals, family, friends or business acquaintances.

12.13 Gifts and Benefits

Employees shall not seek to accept favours or gifts for services performed in connection with official duties. Staff shall not use their position to encourage or obtain a private benefit (See Conflicts of Interest and Procurement Policies)

12.14 Financial Probity and Accountability

Employees shall ensure that in financial matters, including the handling of monies, there is full accountability in relation to any advice or transaction in which they may be involved. Employees with responsibilities of a financial nature shall act in accordance with GCC BDI’s financial policies and shall observe the relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.

12.15 Criminal Offences

New employees must obtain a police clearance certificate before their contract of employment can be validated.

GCC BDI reserves the right to conduct criminal background checks for employees if necessary.

Employees shall immediately inform the Executive Director if charged with a criminal offence punishable by imprisonment or, if found guilty, of an offence which would significantly affect his/her ability to perform normal duties. Employees shall inform the Executive Director of any such criminal offence of which they have been found guilty before or during their public employment.

12.16 Outside Employment

Employees are expected to devote their whole time, attention and abilities to the business and interests of the company. Employees may not engage or be interested, directly or indirectly, in any trade or business or outside employment, or conduct a business, trade or profession, outside GCC BDI, while employed by the Institute, without written authority from the Executive Director. If approval is granted, it is the employee’s responsibility to ensure that at all times the additional employment does not interfere with work performance and that there is no conflict of interest.



Should an employee be approached or apply for a position with a competitor or a client or supplier of GCC BDI, whilst in the Company's employment, he/she must not divulge any information relating to GCC BDI and must ensure that he/she informs the Executive Director as soon as he/she is offered a position by another company so that GCC BDI may protect its interest and its relationships.

For a period of two years after the employee leaves GCC BDI, he/she may not solicit any work directly or indirectly from any GCC BDI client nor may he/she approach any member of GCC BDI's staff to entice them to leave the company.

12.17 Expenses

GCC BDI will reimburse all reasonable expenses that employees properly incur in the discharge of your duties and subject to any other rules that GCC BDI issues from time to time. As a pre-condition of payment, GCC BDI requires receipts for all items of expenditure.

12.18 Modifications

Any modifications to employees' terms and conditions of employment will be discussed with employees and when agreed, confirmed in writing. Should the company decide to change its Employment or HR policies, employees will be notified in reasonable time and following appropriate consultation.

Reviewed and approved by the Board

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