



educational service center  
*Council of Governments*

# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

**2019  
2020**



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## INTRODUCTION

This handbook is intended to provide information regarding the Educational Service Center Council of Governments (“ESC-COG”) Policies and accompanying procedures. **The policies, procedures, and benefits contained within this handbook do not imply, create or constitute a contract of employment, express or implied, between the ESC-COG and you, and are not intended to alter in any way the at-will employment relationship that exists between the ESC-COG and you.**

No employee, agent or representative of the ESC-COG has been authorized in the present, or in the future, to offer an express or implied contract of employment specific to you unless that authorization or employment contract is set forth in writing and signed by the Executive Director of the ESC-COG.

The ESC-COG’s Policies and accompanying procedures may be changed, modified, added to, subtracted from or eliminated altogether at any time that the ESC-COG determines that it is necessary or advisable to do so. It is each employee's responsibility to familiarize himself/herself with any such changes.

If you have any questions regarding an ESC-COG Policy, you should contact a human resource official of the ESC-COG. If you do not contact a human resources official of the ESC-COG, the ESC-COG will conclude that you understand the ESC-COG’s Policies.

The ESC-COG employs personnel to perform administrative, teaching, non-teaching and substitute services for the Educational Service Center of Central Ohio and the ESCCO member school districts. The ESC-COG may also employ personnel to provide services to other political subdivisions and agencies. The ESC-COG, in conjunction with its member school districts or agencies where applicable, provides assignment, reassignment, evaluation, and discipline. The ESC-COG also determines compensation and, where appropriate, fringe benefits for employees.

## AGENCY AND CONTACT INFORMATION

www.escco.org

### CENTRAL OFFICE

2080 Citygate Drive  
Columbus, OH 43219  
p. 614.445.3750

### GLENMONT OFFICE

470 Glenmont Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43214  
p. 614.410.0321

### NORTHERN OFFICE

7840 Graphics Way  
Lewis Center, OH 43035  
p. 740.657.5060

**Accounts Payable** | [accountspayable@escco.org](mailto:accountspayable@escco.org)

**Accounts Receivable** | [david.weaver@escco.org](mailto:david.weaver@escco.org)

**Attendance Services** | [attendance@escco.org](mailto:attendance@escco.org)

**Benefits** | [benefits@escco.org](mailto:benefits@escco.org)

**Center for Achievement & Leadership** | [achievement@escco.org](mailto:achievement@escco.org)

**Center for Student Services** | [studentservices@escco.org](mailto:studentservices@escco.org)

**Help Desk** | [help.desk@escco.org](mailto:help.desk@escco.org)

**Office of Business Services** | f. 614.445.3772 | [Kimberly.kelso@escco.org](mailto:Kimberly.kelso@escco.org)

**Office of Communications** | [communications@escco.org](mailto:communications@escco.org)

**Office of Human Resources** | [humanresources@escco.org](mailto:humanresources@escco.org)

## FINGERPRINTING SERVICES AVAILABLE

Fingerprinting services are available at the Central and Northern Offices during walk-in hours. For more details, visit the [website](#).

## **CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

Employees of the ESC-COG are expected to keep student information confidential as required by federal and state law, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. §1232g, 34 C.F.R. Part 99, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, 20 U.S.C. § 1400, 34 C.F.R. Part 300, and Ohio Revised Code Section 3319.321. Further, employees are reminded that all written, electronic, or recorded communications produced in the course of their employment may constitute public and/or student records that may be subject to release upon request by the appropriate parties.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

It is the policy of the ESC-COG that it does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, military status, ancestry, sexual orientation, age, and genetic information, in its programs and activities, including hire, tenure, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment.

## **SECTION 504/ADA**

The Governing Board prohibits discrimination against any employee or applicant based upon his/her disability. As such, the Board will not engage in employment practices or adopt policies that discriminate on the basis of disability, or otherwise discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to job application procedures, the hiring, advancement or discharge of employees, employee compensation, job training, or other terms, conditions and privileges of employment. The Board further will not limit, segregate or classify applicants or employees in any way that adversely affects their opportunities or status because of disability. Additionally, the Board will not participate in any contractual or other relationships that have the effect of subjecting qualified individuals with disabilities who are applicants or employees to discrimination on the basis of disability.

The Board will provide a reasonable accommodation to a qualified individual who has an actual disability or who has a record of a disability, unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the Council of Government's program and/or activities. A reasonable accommodation is not required for an individual who is merely regarded as having a disability.

## **CENTER COMPLIANCE OFFICER**

The following person is designated as the Center Section 504 Compliance Officer/ADA Coordinator ("Center Compliance Officer"):

Deputy Superintendent  
2080 Citygate Drive  
Columbus, OH 43219  
P: 614.542.4127  
F: 614.445.3767

The Center Compliance Officer is responsible for coordinating the Center's efforts to comply with and fulfill its responsibilities under Section 504 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended ("ADA"). A copy of Section 504 and the ADA, including copies of their implementing regulations, may be obtained from the Center Compliance Officer.

The Center Compliance Officer(s) will oversee the investigation of any complaints of discrimination based on disability, which may be filed pursuant to the Board's adopted internal complaint procedure, and will attempt to resolve such complaints. The Board will provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging violations of Section 504/ADA.

## **LICENSURE**

All staff members who are required to obtain a license or permit for their position are responsible for the timely renewal of these licenses or permit prior to the start of the school year in which the renewal is due.

Notifications may be sent reminding you of this important renewal deadline. Staff will not be permitted to begin their assignment for the year without a valid license or permit.

## **EDUCATIONAL AIDE PERMITS**

Individuals employed in positions requiring an educational aide permit must have a valid permit in order to work. Individuals who do not have a current, valid permit may start providing:

1. The individual has applied to the Ohio Department of Education for a permit as verified by the ODE Office of Teacher Licensure
2. The individual has passed successful BCI and FBI background checks

Individuals starting without a permit in hand who have met the above requirements may start in their position but will be paid at a substitute aide rate until receipt of their educational aide permit.

Once the permit has been received, pay will be retroactive to the first day worked. If an educational aide permit is not received within 60 days from the first day worked, the employee will have to stop working and will receive no pay until they have received their educational aide permit. Failure to obtain proper licensure is grounds for termination.

## **APPLICANT/EMPLOYEE CRIMINAL RECORD AND DISCLOSURE OF CRIMINAL CONVICTION**

To safeguard member district students and staff, the ESC-COG requires a criminal background investigation of every applicant under final consideration for appointment or employment with the ESC- COG, as well as periodic criminal record checks of employees as prescribed by law. These investigations/checks shall be conducted in accordance with the Ohio Revised Code, including Sections 109.572 and 3319.39. The ESC-COG Executive Director or his/her designee shall establish such procedures as he/she deems necessary for obtaining information from the Bureau of Criminal Identification and Investigation, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and through other background investigation services for each applicant, newly employed employee, or existing employee. To facilitate such inquiries, the applicant/employee must furnish required

documentation at his/her own expense.

Conviction of or a plea of guilty to any of the offenses defined as disqualifying offenses by the pertinent statutes and/or regulations shall result in disqualification from or termination of employment. The ESC- COG may employ or continue to employ a person convicted of or who plead guilty to certain offenses defined as disqualifying offenses subject to rehabilitation in the pertinent statutes and in accordance with the rehabilitation standards/regulations adopted by the Ohio Department of Education. Falsification of any information on an employment application shall result in disqualification from or termination of employment.

## **CONDUCT**

Unless otherwise stated in this Handbook, employees of the ESC-COG are required to conform to the same requirements, policies and procedures as employees of those districts or agencies in which they perform their duties, including but not limited to requirements regarding absence reporting, dress code, student disciplinary procedures, distribution of literature, and use of internet and technology. Employees of the ESC-COG are expected to discharge their duties in a professional, responsible, ethical, honest, and legally compliant manner at all times. Employees who fail to comply with law, regulations, directives, policies (including the policies and procedures of those districts or agencies in which they perform their duties), administrative guidelines, rules of professional conduct and/or this Handbook or otherwise fail to appropriately discharge the duties of their position may be subject to discipline, including but not limited to suspension and/or termination from employment.

## **JOB ABANDONMENT**

Failure to report to work as scheduled, and/or call in to report an absence (“no call, no show”) for five (5) consecutive work days shall be deemed Job Abandonment. Job Abandonment is grounds for termination.

## **USE OF RESOURCES**

Employees of the ESC-COG are expected to use resources of the COG, as well as resources of the district or agency for which they perform services, in a responsible manner for professional purposes only and according to any policies, practices, or expectations of the district or agency. Any abuse or misuse of ESC-COG, district or agency resources may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

## **SAFETY COURSES FOR EMPLOYEES WORKING IN A SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**

Online safety training is an important component as we not only want our students to be in a safe environment we also want to make sure our employees have the necessary safety training.

Currently, the Bloodborne Pathogens for School Employees (M-026) course is required initially for all ESC-COG employees, supplemented by a refresher course each year.

The following online safety courses are available to ESC-COG employees through

PublicSchoolWORKS at no additional cost. This includes substitutes who work a total of 60 or more days in the same assignment.

TRAINING	FREQUENCY	DURATION
NEW C-008-ESC-COG Substitute Employee Handbook	Time of hire; annually thereafter	
M-013 Fire Safety   20-Minute Course	Time of hire; annually thereafter	20 Minutes
M-014 Hazard Communication for School Employees	Required for full-time employees; every 5 years thereafter	20 Minutes
M-015 Lock Out/Tag Out	Time of hire	15 Minutes
M-134 Ohio Ethical Use of Tests	Time of hire	10 Minutes
M-135 Ohio Ethics Law	Time of hire	10 Minutes
M-251 Reporting Fraud	Time of hire	5 Minutes
C-005 ESC Electronic Data Security	Time of hire; annually thereafter	

The suite of courses in the chart below meet the requirements in HB276 regarding child abuse detection training, as listed in Ohio Revised Code 3319.073. Each of these courses is required at initial hire, and renewed five years thereafter on a rotating schedule.

TRAINING	DURATION
M-207 HB276 Module 1   Preventing Child Abuse and Human Trafficking	60 Minutes
M-208 HB276 Module 2   Depression and Self-Destructive Behavior	45 Minutes
M-209 HB276 Module 3   School Violence	45 Minutes
M-210 HB276 Module 4   Substance Abuse Prevention	45 Minutes
M-211 HB276 Module 5   Positive Youth Development	45 Minutes

Other requirements:

TRAINING	FREQUENCY
M-380 Discriminatory Harassment   Identification and Response (Title IX)	Time of hire; every 2 years thereafter

**M-059 Hepatitis B Vaccine Consent/Waiver/Request:** You will complete a Hepatitis B vaccine consent/waiver/request form. You may choose to complete and submit electronically, or print the form and complete and submit in person. By taking this training, you will learn 1) the requirements of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) Regulation 29 CFR 1910.1030; 2) whether you're in a high-risk job classification that qualifies you for the vaccine; 3) how to offer your consent to be vaccinated; 4) how to waive your right to be vaccinated; and 5) how to request the vaccine even if your job is not classified as high-risk.

## NETWORK PRIVACY AND ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR EMPLOYEES

It is the intention of the ESC-COG to protect the privacy of employees who use the ESC-COG's computers, computer networks, telephone systems (including wireless phones and VoIP), and electronic messaging systems (collectively, "the systems"), to the maximum extent possible given the operational and security needs of the ESC-COG. The purpose of this Acceptable Use Policy is to identify the limitations on this privacy and the general restrictions applying to the use of the systems of the ESC-COG.

### Acceptable and Unacceptable Uses

The systems of the ESC-COG are intended for educational uses and work-related communications. Incidental use of the systems by employees for personal communications should be limited in number, initiated during non-work periods, not incur a cost to the ESC-COG and not interfere with the primary intended uses of the systems. While not a complete list of unacceptable uses, the following are uses which are unacceptable under any circumstances:

- The transmission of any language or images which are of a graphic sexual nature;
- The transmission of jokes, pictures, or other materials which are obscene, lewd, vulgar, or disparaging of persons based on their race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, disability, military status, ancestry, genetic information or sexual orientation;
- The transmission of messages or any other content which would be perceived by a reasonable person to be offensive, harassing or threatening;
- Uses that constitute defamation (libel or slander);
- Uses that violate copyright laws;
- Uses that attempt to gain unauthorized access to another computer system or to impair the operation of another computer system (for example, the transmission of a computer virus or an excessively large e-mail attachment);
- Any commercial or profit-making activities;
- Any use in contravention of this Handbook, laws, regulations, policies, rules, directives, or rules of professional conduct; or
- Any fundraising activities, unless specifically authorized by the ESC-COG Governing Board.

### Email:

All ESC-COG staff, except substitutes, will be provided an ESC-COG email account to access ESC-COG resources. In addition, ESC-COG staff are responsible for maintaining log-in credentials, and contacting the ESC Help Desk staff if there are any questions about their account. Staff are responsible for checking ESC- COG provided e-mail account.

- For many years, the ESC-COG has not required all staff to regularly monitor their email account. In an effort to improve the human resource and employee benefit services we provide to all employees, and to increase the accuracy of the monitoring we are required to provide to meet our federal and state employment compliance standards, we are reaching out to each ESC-COG employee to provide you information that will allow us as a team to be successful in this effort.

- The ESC-COG Governing Board has approved the administration's recommendations to implement new methods to provide required training, offer benefits and track State and Federal reporting requirements. To accomplish this, we will be utilizing new systems which will provide staff important information via ESC-COG email including the ability to apply for leaves and offer required professional development in a flexible manner.
- If you have not accessed your ESC-COG email account, or need assistance with resetting your password, please call the ESC Help Desk at 614-542-4159. They will be happy to assist you.
- While we understand that in some instances, there may be some duplication based on the employing district's requirements, but please understand the requirements you receive through the ESC-COG, via our email system, are requirements of your employer. You are required to fulfill conditions of your employment through the ESC-COG.

Social Media Guidelines

The ESC-COG recognizes the importance of social media for its employees. However, use of social media by employees may become a problem if:

- It interferes with the employee's work;
- Is used to harass co-workers or clients;
- Creates a hostile work environment; or
- Violates any law, regulation, policy, or terms of this Handbook.

The ESC-COG encourages employees to use social media within the parameters of the following guidelines and in a way that does not produce the adverse consequences mentioned above.

The ESC-COG participates in social media only through official authorized ESC-COG channels. Only employees specifically authorized by ESCCO/ESC-COG may speak on its behalf through these channels. If you are uncertain about the appropriateness of a social media post, check with ESCCO's communications team.

Note: As used in this guideline, "social media" includes, but is not limited to, blogs, forums and social networking sites such as LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, YouTube and Google+.

The following requirements apply to all social media posts by employees:

- All postings on social media must comply with the ESC-COG's privacy policies. If you are unsure about the confidential nature of information you are considering posting, you should first review the ESC-COG privacy policy and then consult ESCCO's communications team.
- Only those designated as content providers are authorized to contribute on behalf of the ESC- COG. Keep in mind you are representing the ESC-COG to a large external audience.

- Comply with copyright laws, and cite or reference sources accurately.
- Do not post or otherwise disclose confidential or proprietary ESC-COG material on a social media site.
- We encourage you to direct complaints or concerns about your job or working environment to your management team, rather than through social media.
- All requests for employment or vendor references or recommendations, even those that are received through social networking, should be directed to the human resources department to handle in accordance with ESC-COG's standard procedure of responding to official reference requests.
- Any social media account established or used by ESC-COG, including login and password information, is ESC-COG property.
- Managers and senior leadership as well as employees must, by virtue of their positions, consider whether personal thoughts they publish may be misunderstood as expressing ESC-COG positions.
- All ESC-COG policies apply to social media activity including, but not limited to, policies related to illegal harassment, code of conduct, ethics, nondisclosure, and protecting confidential and/or proprietary information as defined in the Employee Handbook and the Authorized Usage Policy (AUP).
- Please note that this guideline applies even if your social networking is anonymous or under a pseudonym. If you engage in such social networking, and violate this policy, ESC-COG may take steps to determine your identity.
- Do not refer to clients by name. Remember, there are privacy policies that protect client information from disclosure without their permission.
- Unless you are authorized to speak on behalf of ESC-COG, do not use your ESC-COG email address when registering or posting on personal social media networks.

Violation of this guideline or associated policies may lead to discipline up to and including the immediate termination of employment. At no time will this guideline or associated policies be interpreted or applied in such a way as to interfere with any employee rights or protections under applicable local, state or federal law, including but not limited to, the National Labor Relations Act, nor will any employee be disciplined for engaging in any legally protected activity.

### Security and Integrity

Employees shall not take any action which would compromise the security of any of the systems. This would include the unauthorized release or sharing of passwords and the intentional disabling of any security features of the systems. Employees shall not take any actions which may adversely affect the integrity, functionality, or reliability of any computer (for example, the installation of hardware or software not authorized by the Technology Officer or Executive Director).

Employees shall report to the Technology Officer any actions by staff or students which would

violate the security or integrity of any of the systems whenever such actions become known to them in the normal course of their work duties. This shall not be construed as creating any liability for employees for the computer-related misconduct of students.

#### Right of Access

Although the ESC-COG respects the natural desire of all persons for privacy in their personal communications and will attempt to preserve this privacy whenever possible, the operational and security needs of the ESC-COG's systems require that full access be available at all times. The ESC-COG therefore reserves the right to access and inspect any computer, device, or electronic media within its systems and any data, information, or messages which may be contained therein. All such data, information, and messages are the property of the ESC-COG and employees should have no expectation that any messages sent or received on the ESC-COG's systems will remain private.

#### Compliance

Employees of the ESC-COG are expected to comply with the Network Privacy and Acceptable Use Policy for Employees. Access to the systems is a privilege which may be withdrawn in the event of noncompliance with the above Policy. Disciplinary and/or legal actions may be taken for violation of this Policy.

## **DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT**

The ESC-COG is committed to maintaining an environment that is free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment. This includes unlawful discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, disability, military status, ancestry, sexual orientation, age, or genetic information. All personnel are required to refrain from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment and are expected to discourage and promptly report any form of unlawful discrimination or harassment to human resources and/or administrative personnel.

### **Sexual Harassment**

The ESC-COG recognizes an employee's right to freedom from employment discrimination which includes the opportunity to work in an environment free from sexual harassment. Sexually offensive speech and conduct are inappropriate and will not be tolerated within the workplace. ESC-COG employees represent the ESC-COG and must refrain from offensive speech and conduct.

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, all unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, display of sexually offensive materials, and verbal or physical contacts of a sexual nature whenever submission to such conduct is made a condition of employment, or a basis for an employment decision, or when such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

### Investigation and Complaint Procedure

Harassment, including sexual harassment, of an ESC-COG employee or member district employee is strictly forbidden. Any employee or agent of the ESC-COG who is found to have engaged in unlawful harassment of an employee of the ESC-COG, the ESC of Central Ohio, or a member district will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Any person who has been subjected to or exposed to unlawful harassment by any employee or agent of the ESC-COG shall promptly report the harassment to the appropriate supervisor or the human resources official of the ESC-COG. The human resources official of the ESC-COG or designee will conduct an impartial investigation of the situation (including the interviewing of witnesses identified by the parties to the incident) to determine whether the incident in question constitutes unlawful harassment and, if so, what action should be taken.

This policy has been established to ensure ESC-COG employees that the issue of harassment will be dealt with in a prompt and efficient manner. Harassment investigations will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law. Employees will not be penalized or suffer any retaliation for reporting an incident of harassment or participating in the investigation.

The ESC-COG will vigorously enforce its prohibition against discrimination and harassment based on sex, race, color, national origin, religion, disability, or any other unlawful basis, and encourages third parties who feel aggrieved to seek assistance to rectify the problems. The ESC-COG will investigate all allegations of discrimination and harassment and in those cases where unlawful discrimination or harassment is substantiated, the ESC-COG will take immediate steps to end the discrimination and/or harassment. Individuals who are found to have engaged in unlawful discrimination or harassment will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Legitimate complaints made in good faith are strongly encouraged. The ESC-COG will not tolerate false complaints and complaints made in bad faith. Failure to substantiate allegations of harassment or discrimination will not constitute a false complaint without evidence of bad faith. False complaints are a violation of this policy. Any individual who submits a false complaint or a complaint in bad faith will subject to discipline up to and including termination.

Unlawful discrimination or harassment that affects an individual's employment may extend beyond the confines of the workplace. Conduct that occurs off duty and off premises may also be subject to this policy.

### **WEAPONS/THREATS OF VIOLENCE**

Staff members shall report any information concerning weapons and/or threats of violence by students, staff members, or visitors to the appropriate administrator. Failure to report such information may subject the staff member to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The Governing Board prohibits professional staff members from possessing, storing, making, or using a weapon, including a concealed weapon, in a school safety zone and any setting that is under the control and supervision of the Board for the purpose of school activities approved and authorized by the Board including, but not limited to, property leased, owned, or contracted for by the Board, a school-sponsored event, or in a Board-owned vehicle.

The Superintendent shall refer a staff member who violates this policy to law enforcement officials, regardless of whether such staff member possesses a valid concealed weapon license. The staff member will also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, as permitted by applicable Board policy.

## **DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE**

It is the Policy of the ESC-COG to provide a drug-free workplace. Drug or alcohol abuse in the workplace is dangerous and can lead to harm not only for the person abusing drugs or alcohol but also for fellow employees and the public. It is especially important that employees not use drugs or alcohol in their workplace. A violation of this prohibition by employees of the ESC- COG can be harmful and erode the public confidence.

For these reasons, the ESC-COG is committed to maintaining a drug-free workplace, and will enforce a policy requiring all employees to refrain from the manufacture, distribution, use, sale, purchase, possession, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the workplace. Workplace means on the job, on member district, partner agency, or ESC of Central Ohio premises during working hours, or while using member district, partner agency or ESC of Central Ohio equipment and/or systems. Employees who fail to comply with this policy will be subject to disciplinary procedures which may include termination from employment.

Any employee convicted of an offense under a criminal drug statute for an offense occurring within the workplace must report his/her conviction to the employer no later than five (5) working days after the conviction. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary actions which could include termination.

The ESC-COG is concerned about any employee who suffers from alcohol or drug addiction, and will facilitate the process by which he/she receives help through programs and services available in the community. An employee should contact his/her supervisor or the human resources official of the ESC- COG whenever such assistance is needed. The fact that an employee may or does suffer from addiction issues will not excuse the employee from complying with the Drug-Free Workplace rules.

## **UNIFORMED SERVICES EMPLOYMENT AND RE-EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT**

The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA) protects the job rights of individuals who voluntarily or involuntarily leave employment positions to undertake military service or certain types of service in the National Disaster Medical System. USERRA also prohibits employers from discriminating against past and present members of the uniformed services, and applicants to the uniformed services.

The ESC-COG adheres to the rights outlined in the USERRA and Ohio law.

## **ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES**

“Electronic signature” means an electronic sound, symbol or process attached to or logically associated with a record, and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record.

Through your signature of the Handbook Acknowledgement Form, you acknowledge and agree that electronic signatures are governed by the Uniform Electronic Transactions Act, and that you and the ESC-COG both intend that the Act apply to the fullest extent possible to validate the ability of you and the ESC-COG to conduct business with you by electronic means. Pursuant to the Act, a record or signature may not be denied legal effect or enforceability solely because it is in electronic form.

## **AUTHORIZATION TO ACCEPT AND DISTRIBUTE ELECTRONIC RECORDS AND USE ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES**

Unless a provision of law enacted after September 14, 2000, specifically prohibits the use of an electronic record for the specified purpose, the ESC-COG Board authorizes the acceptance and distribution/transmission of electronic records and electronic signatures to and from the ESC of Central Ohio staff and other persons, as well as between ESC staff members. The ESC-COG Board further authorizes ESC staff to create, generate, send, communicate, receive, store, process, use and rely upon electronic records and electronic signatures.

Ohio Revised Code: Chapter 1306, adoption November 16, 2012.

## **AUDITOR OF STATE: FRAUD REPORTING SYSTEM INFORMATION**

### **Fraud Reporting - General Provisions:**

If an employee of a public office becomes aware in the course of employment of a violation of state or federal statutes, rules, or regulations or the misuse of public resources, and the employee’s supervisor or appointing authority has authority to correct the violation or misuse, the employee may file a written report identifying the violation or misuse with the supervisor or appointing authority. In addition to or instead of filing a written report with the supervisor or appointing authority, the employee may file a written report with the office of internal auditing created under section 126.45 of the Revised Code. ORC 124.341(A)

### **Whistleblower Protection:**

No officer or employee of the public office shall take any disciplinary action against an employee for making any report authorized by division (A) of ORC 124.341. ORC 124.341(B)

### **Reporting False Information:**

An employee is subject to disciplinary action, including suspension or removal, as determined

by the employee's appointing authority, for purposely, knowingly, or recklessly reporting false information under division (A) ORC 124.341. ORC 124.341(C)

### Reporting Methods:

**SEND** a written complaint via  
U.S. Postal Service:

Ohio Auditor of State's Office  
Special Investigations Unit 88  
East Broad Street  
P.O. Box 1140 Columbus,  
OH 43215

**CALL** the SIU  
Fraud Hotline:

1-866-FRAUD OH  
(1-866-372-8364)

**SUBMIT** online:

<http://www.auditor.state.oh.us/fraud/default.html>

### REPORTING STAFF INJURIES OR ACCIDENT

The ESC-COG has selected **3-hab** as the Managed Care Organization (MCO) to handle medical management for any worker's compensation claims. In the event of a work-related injury, the following steps should be taken:

- Notify your supervisor immediately.
- Complete and submit the FROI form within 24 hours of incident.
- You (or your supervisor) must call 3-hab at 1.800.869.1872 to report the injury and for physician referral.
- See an MCO doctor or clinic for treatment.

All injuries or accidents involving ESC-COG employees must be reported to the employee's supervisor immediately by phone or in person, and followed up the same day with a written report using the ESC-COG Employee's First Report of Injury or Accident form.

If you experience a work-related injury, please complete the first report of injury (FROI) form and submit to the Office of Business Services within 24 hours of the incident. Instructions are available on our website at [www.escco.org](http://www.escco.org). (Click on "For Staff" and select "Forms and Files" from the left-side navigation menu. The Injury Report can be found under Business Services.)

The physician is required to call the MCO within 24 hours of treatment to report the injury. If an employee sustains a workplace injury while under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance not prescribed by a physician, the employee may be disqualified for compensation and benefits under the Workers Compensation Act. If the employee tests positive or refuses to submit a test for alcohol and/or other drugs after sustaining a workplace injury, the employee may dispute or prove untrue the presumption or belief that alcohol and/or drugs are the proximate cause of the injury (i.e. rebuttable presumption).

In an emergency, always seek immediate medical attention.

## **CREDIT UNIONS**

Employees of the ESC-COG may participate in the SMART Federal Credit Union, the CME (Columbus Municipal Employees) Federal Credit Union, or the Education First Credit Union:

Education First Credit Union | 614.221.9376 | [www.educu.org](http://www.educu.org)

SMART Federal Credit Union | 614.261.0650 | [smartfedcu.com](http://smartfedcu.com)

CME (Columbus Municipal Employees) Federal Credit Union | 614.224.8890 | [www.cmefcu.org](http://www.cmefcu.org)

## **COMPENSATORY TIME & OVERTIME**

### **NON-TEACHING, NON-ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES**

Note: Both Compensatory Time and Overtime are available solely to those staff members who are Non- Exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Although often closely aligned with job title and job classification, determination of Exempt/Non-Exempt status may require individual analysis. As a general rule, Administrators are considered to be Exempt employees.

### **COMPENSATORY (COMP) TIME**

Compensatory time, or comp. time, refers to an arrangement that allows non-exempt employees to take time off for hours worked beyond forty (40) hours in a work week as articulated by federal law. Non-Exempt staff may accrue and utilize comp time only when requested in advance and approved by their immediate supervisor. Those individuals who may approve comp time include: Superintendent; Treasurer/CFO, Deputy Superintendent, center directors, program directors, and others as authorized by the Superintendent and/or Treasurer/CFO.

Upon request and approval, employees may coordinate with their immediate supervisor to take paid time off for any hours worked beyond forty (40) hours in a given work week. Comp time will be earned at a ratio of one and one-half (1-1/2) the number of hours worked beyond forty (40). Comp time must be used within 30 days of accrual (or before the end of the current contract year if less than 30 days remain in the current contract year), or be paid out.

### **OVERTIME**

Overtime is earned at a ratio of one and one-half (1-1/2) the employee's regular rate of hourly pay for any hours worked beyond the regular forty (40) hour week. The calculation of hours worked shall exclude all forms of official leave. Overtime hours are not to be worked without prior approval from an immediate supervisor.

## **PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS**

The ESC-COG is permitted to act on behalf of individual employees to deduct a certain amount from the employee's paycheck and remit to an agent designated by the employee. It is the

purpose of this policy to designate those purposes not otherwise mandated by law for which the ESC-COG is willing to act in behalf of an employee and to specify the fee for so doing.

The ESC-COG is required by law to make deductions from the wages of employees for Federal and State income tax, municipal income tax, school income tax (R.C. 9.42), School Employees Retirement System (R.C. 3309.47, 3309.56), Social Security and State Teachers Retirement System (R.C. 3307.51, 3307.62) without prior authorization. Any other deduction requires prior ESC-COG Governing Board authorization.

The ESC-COG authorizes in accordance with the provisions of law cited herein that deductions be made from an employee's paycheck upon proper authorization.

*It is the employee's responsibility to notify [payroll@escoco.org](mailto:payroll@escoco.org) of any changes in building assignment and/or home address.*

## **RETIREMENT CONTRIBUTIONS**

All ESC-COG employees are required to contribute to the appropriate public retirement system based on the nature of their qualifications, duties and work assignment. All certified/licensed employees contribute to the State Teachers Retirement System. All non-certificated employees performing school-related duties contribute to the School Employees Retirement System. Other employees may be required to contribute to the Public Employees Retirement System. There is no provision for any employee to waive retirement system participation. Contribution rates are set by law.

## **SEVERANCE PAY (IF APPLICABLE)**

Severance pay for an ESC-COG employee is only applicable if the employee has the benefit of having sick leave accumulate from year to year and the employee has met the statutory requirements as outlined in ORC 3319.141.

In order for the employee to qualify for severance pay, they must first "retire" and enter into service retirement under a state or municipal retirement system in Ohio. The employee is also required to submit written notification to the Board of his/her intent to retire at least three (3) months prior to the last day of service, and the Board shall formally accept notification before proceeding with severance pay.

At the time of retirement from active service with the ESC-COG after ten or more years of service with the state, including political subdivisions or any combination thereof, payment for one-fourth the value of the employee's accrued unused sick leave credit will be made upon receipt of proof that the employee has indeed entered into a state or municipal retirement system in Ohio. The payment shall be based on the employee's rate of pay at the time of retirement and eliminates all sick leave credit accrued but unused by the employee at the time payment is made. The aggregate value of accrued but unused sick leave credit that is paid shall not exceed the value of thirty (30) days of accrued but unused sick leave.

## **DIRECT DEPOSIT**

Direct deposit of payroll is mandatory for all employees. Payroll funds can be deposited to any qualified banking institution or credit union. Funds may be distributed among up to four (4) accounts. Information and forms will be included in the new hire packet. It is the employee's responsibility to notify [payroll@escoco.org](mailto:payroll@escoco.org) of any changes to one's account or banking facility. Contact [payroll@escoco.org](mailto:payroll@escoco.org) to request a new form.

## **EVALUATION OF REGULAR PERSONNEL**

The member school district, partner agency, or other governmental entity to which the ESC-COG employee is assigned is responsible for evaluating ESC-COG employees, unless otherwise determined by the ESC-COG.

- All employees of the ESC-COG are to be evaluated at least once per school year.
- Agencies and districts may use either their own forms for goals, observations, improvement plans, summaries, etc. or ESC forms.
- Copies of evaluation forms, as they are completed, are to be sent to the ESC Human Resources Coordinator for personnel files. Copies need to be in the possession of the ESC-COG by April 1.
- Agencies and districts evaluators may choose to evaluate an employee more times than the minimum prescribed.
- Evaluators must follow the schedule and timelines for teachers and principals that are evaluated under OTES and OPES as prescribed the Ohio Department of Education.

## **BENEFITS**

Eligible ESC-COG employees will receive the benefits delineated in the ESC-COG Policies and/or referenced within this Handbook. Eligibility is determined by the contracting member school district or partner agency.

Unless specifically requested by the contracting member school district or partner agency, ESC-COG employees are not entitled to paid leave (sick, personal, vacation) or health insurance benefits. Any provided leave which may be provided may be used in quarter-day increments (.25, .5, .75, full day). All ESC-COG employees are covered by liability insurance.

For questions, contact either your immediate supervisor or the human resource official of the ESC-COG.

## **UNAUTHORIZED LEAVE WITHOUT PAY**

For ESC-COG employees that have paid leave benefits, unauthorized leave without pay may result from the following situations:

- Failure to follow call in procedure to report an absence or tardiness

- Failure to submit medical documentation when requested
- Where the employee's tardiness is not justified or approved by the supervisor for paid leave
- Failure to report to work as scheduled, and/or call in to report their absence ("No call no show")

## **FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE AND MILITARY FAMILY LEAVE**

### **Qualifying Reasons for FMLA and Military Family Leave**

*\*\*To the extent the FMLA laws and/or regulations are amended, the amended laws/regulations supersede any conflicting provisions set forth in this Handbook.*

In accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993, as amended, eligible employees may qualify for up to twelve (12) or twenty-six (26) work weeks (depending on the reason) of unpaid leave for the reasons specified below.

#### **Reasons for FMLA leave:**

1. Eligible employees may qualify for up to twelve (12) work weeks of job-protected, unpaid leave, or substitute appropriate paid leave if the employee has earned or accrued it, for the following reasons:
  - A. the birth and/or care of a newborn child of the employee and to care for the newborn child, within one (1) year of the child's birth ("Birth Leave");
  - B. the placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care, within one (1) year of the child's placement ("Placement Leave");
  - C. the employee is needed to provide physical and/or psychological care for a spouse or child with a serious health condition ("Family Health Leave");
  - D. to care for the employee's parent with a serious health condition ("Parent Health Leave");
  - E. because the employee's own serious health condition makes him/her unable to perform the functions of his/her position ("Employee Health Leave"); or
  - F. for any qualifying exigency (as defined in applicable Federal regulations) while the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent (the military member) is on covered active duty or Call to Covered Active Duty status (or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty. ("Qualifying Exigency Leave").
2. An eligible employee who is a spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin of a covered service member may take up to a total of twenty-six (26) work weeks of job-protected, unpaid leave, or substitute appropriate paid leave if the employee has earned or accrued it, during a "single twelve (12) month period" to care for the covered service member with a serious illness or injury ("Military Caregiver Leave").

#### Definitions:

- Covered Active Duty or Call to Covered Active Duty Status: In the case of a member of the Regular Armed Forces, this means duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country. In the case of a member of the Reserve components of the Armed Forces, this means duty during the deployment of the member with the Armed Forces to a foreign country under a Federal call or order to active duty in support of a contingency operation.

- Covered Service Member is defined as (1) a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves) who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise in outpatient status, or is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list, for a serious injury or illness incurred by the member in the line of duty in covered active duty in the Armed Forces (or that existed before the beginning of the member's active duty and was aggravated by service in the line of duty on active duty in the Armed Forces) that may render the member medically unfit to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank or rating; or (2) a veteran of the Armed Forces who is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation or therapy, for a serious injury or illness covered by the FMLA. The veteran must have been a member of the Armed Forces (including a member of the National Guard or Reserves) at any time during the period of five (5) years preceding the date on which the veteran undergoes that medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy and must have been honorably discharged or released.
- Next of Kin of a Covered Service Member means nearest blood relative or the relative identified in writing by the service member.
- Parent means the biological, foster or adoptive parent, a stepparent, or any person who stood in *loco parentis*.
- Qualifying Exigency: Qualifying exigencies may include things such as attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.
- "Single twelve (12) month period" for leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness begins the first day the employee takes leave for this reason and ends twelve (12) months later, regardless of the twelve (12) month period established below for general FMLA leave. During the "single twelve (12) month period", an eligible employee is limited to a combined total of twenty-six (26) work weeks of unpaid leave for any FMLA-qualifying reason. (Only twelve (12) of the twenty-six (26) work weeks total may be for a FMLA-qualifying reason other than to care for a covered service member.)
- Son or Daughter: means a biological, adopted or foster child, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child of a person standing in *loco parentis*. For all leaves except Exigency Leave and Military Caregiver Leave, the Son or Daughter must also be either under 18 years old or age 18 or older and incapable of self-care because of a disability as determined under the ADA.

### **Eligible Employees**

Employees are "eligible" if they have worked for the ESC-COG for at least twelve (12) months, **and** have worked for at least 1,250 hours over the twelve (12) months prior to the leave request, and are employed at a work site where fifty (50) or more employees are employed by the ESC-COG within seventy-five (75) miles of that work site. All full-time instructional employees will be considered to have met the 1,250 hour requirement unless the ESC-COG can clearly demonstrate that the instructional employee did not meet this hour requirement. Months and hours that members of the National Guard or Reserve would have worked if they had not been called up for military service counts towards the employee's eligibility for FMLA

leave. While the twelve (12) months of employment need not be consecutive, employment periods prior to a break in service of seven (7) years or more will not be counted unless the break is occasioned by the employee's fulfillment of his/her National Guard or Reserve military obligation, or a written agreement exists concerning the ESC-COG's intention to rehire the employee after the break in service.

### **Twelve (12) Month Period**

Twelve (12) month period is defined as a rolling twelve (12) month period measured backward from the date the employee's first FMLA leave begins (i.e. the "leave year" is specific to each individual employee).

### **Serious Health Condition**

Serious health condition is defined as an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves inpatient care or continuing treatment by a health care provider. As utilized in this policy, the term "incapacity" means an inability to work, attend school or perform other regular daily activities due to the serious health condition, treatment, therefore, or recovery therefrom. The term "treatment" includes (but is not limited to) examinations to determine if a serious health condition exists and evaluations of the condition. (Treatment does not include routine physical examinations, eye examinations, or dental examinations.)

- A. Inpatient care means an overnight stay in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical-care facility, including any period of incapacity or subsequent treatment in connection with such inpatient care.
- B. Continuing treatment by a health care provider, includes any one or more of the following: 1.) "incapacity and treatment"; 2.) any incapacity related to pregnancy, or for prenatal care; 3.) any incapacity or treatment for such incapacity due to a chronic serious health condition; 4.) a period of incapacity that is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective (Alzheimer's, a severe stroke, terminal stages of a disease); or 5.) any period of absence to receive multiple treatments (including any period of recovery therefrom) by a health care provider or by a provider of health care services under orders of, or on referral by, a health care provider for a.) restorative surgery after an accident, or b.) other injury or a condition that would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than three (3) consecutive, full calendar days in the absence of medical intervention or treatment, such as cancer (chemotherapy, radiation, etc.), severe arthritis (physical therapy), or kidney disease (dialysis).
  - 1. "Incapacity and treatment" involves a period of incapacity of more than three (3) consecutive, full calendar days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition, that also involves a.) treatment two (2) or more times, within thirty (30) days of the first day of incapacity, unless extenuating circumstances exist, by a health care provider, by a nurse under direct supervision of a health care provider, or by a provider of health care services (e.g. physical therapist) under orders of, or on referral by, a health care provider, or b.) treatment by a health care provider on at least one (1) occasion that results in a regimen of continuing treatment under the supervision of the health care provider.

- a. Treatment by a health care provider as referenced above involves an in-person visit to a health care provider. The first (or only) in-person treatment visit must take place within seven (7) days of the first day of incapacity. The health care provider is responsible for determining whether additional treatment visits or a regimen of continuing treatment is necessary within the thirty (30) day period.
  - b. Regimen of continuing treatment includes a course of prescription medication (e.g. antibiotics), or therapy requiring special equipment to resolve or alleviate the health condition (e.g. oxygen).
  - c. A regimen of continuing treatment that includes the taking of over-the-counter medications such as aspirin, antihistamines, or salves; or bed-rest, drinking fluids, exercise, and other similar activities that can be initiated without a visit to a health care provider, is not, by itself, sufficient to constitute a regimen of continuing treatment for purposes of FMLA leave.
2. A period of incapacity related to pregnancy need not involve a visit to the health care provider for each absence, and the absence need not last more than three (3) consecutive, full calendar days.
3. A chronic serious health condition is one that: a.) requires periodic visits (i.e. at least twice a year) for treatment by a health care provider, or by a nurse under direct supervision of a health care provider; b.) continues over an extended period of time (including recurring episodes of a single underlying condition); and c.) may cause episodic rather than a continuing period of incapacity (e.g. asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, etc.). A visit to a health care provider is not necessary for each absence, and each absence need not last more than three (3) consecutive, full calendar days.
4. With regard to permanent or long-term conditions, the employee or family member must be under the continuing supervision of, but need not be receiving active treatment by, a health care provider.
5. Conditions for which cosmetic treatment are administered (e.g. most treatments for acne or plastic surgery) are not "serious health conditions" unless inpatient hospital care is required or complications develop. Ordinarily, unless complications arise, the common cold, the flu, ear aches, upset stomachs, minor ulcers, headaches other than migraines, routine dental or orthodontia problems, periodontal disease, etc., are conditions that do not meet the definition of a serious health condition and do not qualify for FMLA leave.

### **Intermittent and Reduced Schedule Leave**

The Executive Director may allow an employee to take FMLA leave intermittently (i.e. leave in separate blocks of time for a single qualifying reason) or on a reduced schedule leave (i.e. reducing the employee's usual weekly or daily work schedule) for Qualifying Exigency Leave and for Birth or Placement Leave. An employee is entitled to take FMLA leave on an intermittent or reduced schedule leave when medically necessary for Employee Health, Family Health, Parent Health or Military Caregiver Leave. Regardless, the taking of FMLA leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule leave results in the total reduction of the twelve (12) or twenty-six weeks only by the amount of leave actually taken. Except in the case of Qualified

Exigency Leave, the Executive Director may require the employee taking scheduled leave intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule that is foreseeable based on planned medical treatments to transfer temporarily, during the period the intermittent or reduced schedule leave is required, to an available alternative position for which the employee is qualified and which better accommodates recurring periods of leave than the employee's regular position. The alternative position shall have equivalent pay and benefits but not necessarily equivalent duties. The Executive Director may also transfer the employee to a part-time job with the same hourly rate of pay and benefits, provided the employee is not required to take more leave than is medically necessary. Instructional employees (i.e. individuals whose principal function is to teach and instruct students in a class, a small group, or an individual setting) who request intermittent leave or a reduced schedule leave because of Family, Employee or Parental Health Leave or pursuant to Military Caregiver Leave and the leave would exceed twenty percent (20%) of the total number of working days over the period of anticipated leave must elect either to:

- A. take leave for a period or periods of a particular duration, not greater than the duration of the planned treatment; or
- B. transfer temporarily to an available alternative position offered by the Executive Director for which the instructional employee is qualified, and that has equivalent pay and benefits and that better accommodates the recurring periods of leave than the employee's regular position.

When leave is needed for planned medical treatment, the employee must make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment so as not to unduly disrupt the Center's operations, subject to the approval of the health care provider.

If the Executive Director agrees to permit FMLA leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule leave for Birth or Placement Leave, the Board may also require the employee to transfer temporarily, during the period the intermittent or reduced schedule leave is required, to an available alternative position for which the employee is qualified and which better accommodates recurring periods of leave than does the employee's regular position.

### **Employee Notice Requirements** (Forms available at the U.S. Department of Labor Website)

Employees seeking to use FMLA leave (including Military Caregiver Leave) are required to provide thirty (30) days' advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable and such notice is practicable. If leave is foreseeable less than thirty (30) days in advance, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable - generally, either the same or next business day. When the need for leave is not foreseeable, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable under the facts and circumstances of the particular case. Absent unusual circumstances, employees must comply with the Board's usual and customary notice and procedural requirements for requesting leave. Failure to provide timely notice may result in the leave being delayed or denied, and/or possible disciplinary action.

Employees must provide "sufficient information" for the Executive Director to determine whether the FMLA may apply to the leave request. Depending on the situation, such information may include that the employee is incapacitated due to pregnancy, has been hospitalized overnight, is unable to perform the functions of the job, that the employee or his/her qualifying family member is under the continuing care of a health care provider, that

the requested leave is for a particular qualifying exigency related to a qualifying family member's covered active duty or call to covered active duty status, or that the leave is due to a qualifying family member who is a covered service member with a serious injury or illness. The information may also include the anticipated timing and duration of the leave.

When an employee seeks leave for a FMLA-qualifying reason for the first time, the employee need not expressly assert FMLA rights or even mention the FMLA. When an employee seeks leave, however, due to a FMLA-qualifying reason for which the Center has previously provided the employee FMLA protected leave, the employee must specifically reference either the qualifying reason for leave or the need for FMLA leave.

***Notice to employees regarding genetic information:***

The Genetic Information Non-discrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits employers and other entities covered by GINA Title II from requesting or requiring genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically allowed by this law. To comply with this law, the Board is asking that employees not provide any genetic information when responding to any request for medical information by the Center, except as noted below and/or as may be noted in any specific forms regarding employee requests for leave due to the health condition of a family member.

“Genetic information” as defined by GINA, includes an individual’s family medical history, the results of an individual’s or family member’s genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual’s family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual’s family member or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

Exception: GINA allows employers to request family medical history, defined as information about the manifestation of disease or disorder in family members of an individual, to substantiate an individual’s need for leave. In cases where this exception applies, the Board is asking employees not to provide any other genetic information when responding to a request for medical information, including the results of an individual’s or family member’s genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual’s family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual’s family member or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

**Lactation Breaks**

Employees who have recently given birth will be allowed a reasonable break time in order to nurse or express breast milk, for up to one year after the child’s birth. The employee will be provided appropriate space, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from employees and members of the public. Lactation breaks under this policy should, to the extent possible, run concurrently with any other break time available to the employee.

*Additional information and FMLA forms may be obtained by contacting the Human Resources Office of the ESC-COG at [leavesofabsence@escco.org](mailto:leavesofabsence@escco.org).*

**REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

The ESC-COG is concerned with the physical and mental well-being of the children we serve and will cooperate in the identification and reporting of cases of suspected child abuse and/or neglect in accordance with the law. Section 2151.421 of the Revised Code requires that school teachers, employees and/or authorities, which includes ESC-COG employees, who know or have reasonable cause to suspect that a child under 18 years of age or a mentally retarded, developmentally disabled, or physically impaired child under 21 years of age has suffered or faces a threat of suffering any physical or mental wound, injury, disability or condition of a nature that reasonably indicates abuse or neglect of the child shall immediately report that knowledge or suspicion to Children's Services Intake for Franklin County: (614) 229-7000; Delaware County: (740) 833-2300; or Union County (937) 644-1010 or a municipal or county peace officer in the county in which the child resides or in which the abuse and/or neglect is occurring or has occurred. Employees should also report such information to their supervisor.

A quality reporting/referral usually includes: the names and addresses of the child and parent(s) or person(s) having custody of the child; the child's age and birth date; the observable/factual information regarding the nature and extent of the suspected abuse and/or neglect; and any other first-hand/factual information that may be helpful.

## **BULLYING AND OTHER FORMS OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR**

Harassment, intimidation, or bullying toward a student, whether by other students, staff, or third parties is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes aggressive behavior, physical, verbal, and psychological abuse and violence within a dating relationship. The Board will not tolerate any gestures, comments, threats, or actions which cause or threaten to cause bodily harm or personal degradation. This policy applies to all activities in the Educational Service Center, including activities on school property, on a school bus, while en route to or from school, and those occurring off school property if the student or employee is at any school-sponsored, school-approved or school-related activity or function, such as field trips or athletic events where students are under the school's control, in a school vehicle, or where an employee is engaged in school business.

This policy has been developed in consultation with parents, ESC-COG employees, volunteers, students, and community members as prescribed in R.C. 3313.666 and the State Governing Board's Model Policy.