ATTENDANCE

Dependable and prompt attendance is an essential function of every support staff position at the University. The efficiency of the entire work group is impaired if even one individual is not present when expected. Planned absences such as vacations should be scheduled in advance. Unscheduled absences and tardiness are particularly disruptive and must be kept to an absolute minimum.

Center for Eye Care support staff are expected to be at their work station at the scheduled time and prepared to begin work.

SCHEDULED ABSENCES:

Planned absences and other excused absences with or without pay must be requested and approved at least 2 weeks in advance by the Supervisor (For the purposes of this document the supervisor is your direct supervisor, either the Center Manager, the Patient Accounts Manager or the Clinic Director). It is preferable that these absences be requested prior to the 15th of the prior month so as to be incorporated into the work schedule. Support staff must send all requests by e-mail. An absence report must be submitted before approval. Planned absences with less than 2 weeks advanced notice may be approved at the discretion of the Supervisor. Medical appointments and scheduled surgery must also be approved by the Supervisor. In the case of a medical appointment, the staff member should strive to schedule the appointment so that the effect on the work day is minimal and bring documentation to show the time and departure from the appointment. It is mandated through HR that an employee use any accrued time when asking for vacation, personal, or sick time.

VACATION:

Support staff must receive prior supervisory approval at least 2 weeks in advance to receive paid vacation. Support staff must send all requests by e-mail to the Clinic Manager (or their direct Supervisor). An absence report must be submitted before approval. Vacation requests with less than 2 weeks advanced notice may be approved at the discretion of the Supervisor. Under normal circumstances, vacations should not be requested during the first week of the semester. Absences from work that are not caused by an illness, medical appointment or injury must be charged to accumulated vacation or personal time, except for absences due to death in employee's immediate family; absences for jury duty; leaves of absence of less than 30 days treated as excused absences; absences due to illness or injury which the employee elects to charge to accumulated vacation; and employees who have exhausted vacation time may, with supervisory approval, take leave without pay in increments of whole days or less. Vacation time must be earned before it is taken. Official University holidays occurring during a vacation period are not charged to accumulated vacation time. Payment in lieu of vacation time is not permitted. Upon resignation, termination or interruption of service, payment for all unused, accumulated vacation will be made, provided the employee has satisfactorily completed the probationary period. Please note that vacations which coincide with holiday time will be rotated among employees if more than one employee asks off at the same time, so as to allow everyone a chance to combine their holiday and vacation time.

UNSCHEDULED ABSENCES:
Unplanned absences can be very detrimental to workplace efficiency. In the case of sudden illness or other unexpected circumstances, a support staff member should notify the Supervisor immediately. Employees who have exhausted their sick leave must take vacation, personal days, or leave without pay when the illness qualifies for Family and Medical Leave (FMLA). Support staff must use personal days or vacation days after sick days have been exhausted in non-FMLA situations. Support staff can use vacation time or personal time for doctor’s appointments which have been scheduled and approved by the supervisor ahead of time. The Supervisor has a right under University policy to request a doctor’s note or medical certification any time an employee uses personal sick or family sick leave. An employee will automatically be required to provide a doctor’s note or medical certification to cover each unscheduled absence for illness or injury after the employee has incurred three instances of absence within a six month period or an employee has incurred three consecutive days of absence, scheduled or unscheduled, at any time. Failure to provide a doctor’s note when requested or requested may result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge and the employee may be prohibited from returning to work until a doctor's note has been provided. Staff may not use unused sick leave for vacation or personal time off – sick leave is authorized only for illness, injury or medical care appointments. In the event of any other unscheduled absences, such as car trouble or personal incidents, the employee must provide documentation (such as a bill, receipt for parts, police report etc...) in order for the absence to be excused.

Support staff must call the Center Manager (or your direct Supervisor) on her cell phone or office phone 314-516-5137 by 7 A.M. if they have an unscheduled absence or delay in arrival to the work site. The Center Manager will begin taking calls at 6:00 A.M. If you cannot reach the Center Manager in person, you should call the Director of Clinical Operations on her office phone (314-516-6532) or cell phone. If you do not reach either of them in person, please call the Assistant Director of Clinical Operations at 314-516-4986 and leave a phone number you can be reached at with her. Voice mail, texts, email, faxes, or any other form of communication are not appropriate substitutes for contacting the Center Manager, Patient Accounts Manager, Director of Clinical Operations or Assistant Director of Clinical Operations in person (unless they are able to respond immediately). If they do not respond in a short time, you must continue to try to contact them personally. If it is not possible for the employee to make the call in person, a family member should alert the Supervisor as soon as possible to explain the situation and indicate the expected date and time of return. As soon as the employee can call, they should check in with the Supervisor.

Support staff must request approval from the Supervisor to leave the work site for any temporary unscheduled reason. If temporary absence has been approved, the support staff must immediately notify the Supervisor of the time of their leaving and their return to the Center. If the Center Manager or Patient Accounts Manager is unavailable, the request must be approved by the Director of Clinical Operations or Assistant Director of Clinical Operations. If support staff has been granted a temporary absence, this time away from the work site must be accurately reflected on the time record.

Support staff that fail to follow the approved departmental guidelines for unscheduled absences are subject to disciplinary procedures.

TARDINESS:

Support staff should notify the Supervisor as soon as possible of any anticipated tardiness. If unforeseen circumstances cause tardiness of 15 minutes or more, an employee should call the Supervisor immediately.

Nonexempt support staff members who are late will have a pay reduction unless arrangements are made with the supervisor to make up time lost as a result of the tardiness within the same work week.

Support staff members who are frequently tardy (more than once a week) are subject to disciplinary procedures.

REPORTING ABSENCES:
All absences from work including vacation, sick leave, personal days, or other excused or unexcused absences must be reported on a Report of Absence (UMUW Form 60), signed by the employee and approved by the Supervisor. Supervisors are responsible for assuring that Reports of Absence are submitted in a timely fashion and that absences are properly recorded and reconciled with official university records. Absences without pay of 30 calendar days or more require an approved Leave of Absence (UMUW Form 108).

REST PERIODS

Whenever possible, all Center for Eye Care support staff shall be permitted two (2) 15 minute rest periods (break times), to be designated by the Center Manager or Patient Accounts Manager during the normal work day.

Rest periods are to be taken in the immediate vicinity of the Center.

Support staff scheduled to work less than a normal full work day shall be permitted, where possible, one (1) 15 minute rest period during any four (4) consecutive hours of work. Support staff are not permitted to relinquish rest periods for the purpose of making up lost time due to tardiness or absences or to permit early departure from work. These breaks are to be scheduled during the midpoint of the workday. For example: if you are scheduled 8-4:30 there could be a 10:00 and 2:00 break. These breaks may not be extended without permission of the Supervisor.

LUNCH/DINNER

Each employee is scheduled a 30-minute lunchtime on a daily basis. Lunch is scheduled to be taken at the midpoint of the workday. For example if you work 8-4:30 lunch should be around noon. If you work 12:30 – 9, lunch (dinner) should be around 4:30.

REPORTING TIME WORKED

The College of Optometry must maintain accurate daily records of work time for all nonexempt employees. Such records must document hours actually worked, rather than hours scheduled to work. It also maintains records of all absences (whether paid or unpaid) on both exempt and nonexempt support staff employees. Clinic staff that must clock in and out with the time clock function on Eyecare, including meal times. Eyecare time becomes your official starting and ending time. If Eyecare is not functioning or slow, the employee should email the Supervisor or call their phone and leave a voice message indicating the issue with clocking in/out. Failure to clock in and out may result in disciplinary action.

When your hours are completed, it is expected that you should leave the center area. There may be times when the all business is concluded earlier than expected, especially in the evening, when the Supervisor may have staff leave at the clinic closure time and not remain beyond that time. In instances such as this, the Supervisor would designate the time for it to be made up.

In the event of an unscheduled tardy or a partial day absence, it is at the discretion of the Supervisor to approve making up the time missed.

The actual hours worked should be entered and submitted daily for the Supervisor's approval. Failure to enter times within 24 hours of the time worked are subject to disciplinary procedures.

REQUIRED FORMS:

For nonexempt support staff members paid bi-weekly, daily attendance and job time records must be maintained on the Bi-Weekly Payroll Time Record in Peoplesoft. The Supervisor will compare the time
report in EyeCare with the Peoplesoft time record. The College of Optometry is responsible for ensuring that all records are current and accurate.

CERTIFYING TIME RECORDS:

Each time record entered by the employee should certify correctness of the work time reported. Entries on each time record must be as the events occur (meals) and the actual times for arrival and departure. At the end of the applicable pay period, all records must be reviewed by the Supervisor and retained for a specified period of retention. An employee who falsifies a time record is subject to disciplinary action including immediate termination of employment.

OVERTIME:

Overtime and overtime pay must be approved in advance by the Supervisor. Work adjustments to complete a 40 hour workweek must be coordinated with, and approved by, the Supervisor.

Nonexempt support staff members are paid 1.5 times their regular rate of pay for all hours over forty (40) in a designated University workweek. "Hours paid" includes all authorized hours worked, plus all time off with pay with the exception of compensatory time. Support staff members in exempt job classifications are not entitled to overtime compensation.

TELEPHONE CALLS AND CELL PHONE USAGE

The support staff plays an important role as the first patient contact with the Center for Eye Care. Telephones must be answered in a professional and courteous manner. Thank the caller for calling the Center for Eye Care, identify yourself, ask how you can assist the caller and attempt to schedule an appointment. Emergency personal calls are permitted. Any other personal calls must be received or placed during break times and away from the front desk. Texting and personal internet use should also be done during break times and away from the front desk. No personal long distance calls should be placed on Center telephones. Cell phones should be kept in a secure area, invisible and away from the employee work space at all times.

VISITORS DURING WORK HOURS

The College of Optometry values its employees and strives to support them through the employment policies and benefits that it adopts. While the college seeks to focus on providing an environment open to work and family issues, it also believes that the workplace is not an appropriate place to have extended visits with friends or family members.

Further, the college believes that it is inappropriate for minor children/grandchildren of employees to be in work areas during work hours for several reasons: the potential liability to the college, risk of harm to the children, and decreased employee productivity due to distractions and disruptions.

It is the college’s policy that visitors of employees not be present at the work site for more than 15 minutes at any given time unless it is during the employee’s lunch break. In that event, the employee and visitors must remain in an approved break/lunch area away from the clinic for the duration of their time. At times other than unpaid lunches and breaks, it is not appropriate for visitors to stay inside the clinic and they cannot remain in any clinic room unattended due to liability and HIPAA compliance.

FOOD AND DRINK

Food and drink is prohibited at the front desk and the dispensing areas.

ATTIRE
The Center for Eye Care will provide each front desk staff and dispensary staff with uniforms. Once uniforms are purchased, they will be the required dress for the Center for Eye Care. Female staff will wear the uniform pants and top with jacket if chilly. For male staff, their uniform will consist of a lab jacket to be worn with black pants and white shirt with tie. Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

First impressions are very important. Research studies reveal that many people make initial first impressions solely on looks alone. Before you even say “hello” to the patients, faculty or staff they have evaluated you and made a first impression based upon how you look. If you look shoddy, the impression will be that you and your serviced will also be shoddy. So we need to “Dress For Success.”

The Center for Eye Care support staff must dress in a professional manner. All uniforms must be clean, wrinkle-free and in good condition, e.g. no holes, missing buttons, etc. Belts should be worn if slacks have a belt loop. Shoes must be polished or brushed, no tennis type shoes are allowed. The exception is all black shoes may be worn with the uniform. These should not have bulky soles or heels. Open toed shoes and sandals are not allowed. For females a heel of 2 inches or less is acceptable.

Hair must be neat, trimmed and styled. Hair must be worn or controlled in a manner so as not to present a safety hazard. Beards and mustaches must be neatly trimmed. Good personal hygiene must be observed, to include clean hair, body, hands, clean and well-groomed fingernails, and breath.

For staff not wearing uniforms: Male support staff must wear a business shirt and tie, neat sweaters with shirt and tie are allowed. Sweaters are not to be worn alone. The neck of the sweater must cover the top button of the shirt if no tie is worn. Female support staff must wear professional clothing with hosiery and professional footwear.

Acceptable jewelry: wedding bands, no more than 2 fingers of rings on each hand, conservative necklaces, 2 ear rings per ear and are able to see the lobe. No visible body piercing or tattoos is allowed (eyebrow, tongue, nose studs, nose and lip rings etc.).

Support staff failing to comply with the dress code policy may be sent home without pay to correct the infraction and must return to the Center in a timely fashion.

RECEPTION DESK

The reception area must not be left unattended. The front desk support staff must not leave the area unless assigned to work in a different area or for rest periods.

The cash drawer must be locked between transactions. Cash bags must be verified at the beginning and end of each business day, and kept in a secured drawer throughout the work day.

SAFES

With the exception of a site that has only one staff member, one staff member is responsible for deposits and the safe. The other staff member should not have access to the safe combination, the deposit or cash bags until the cash bag is issued to them in the morning. There will be documentation in the petty cash bag and the cash bag which documents the amount of cash in each bag. These amounts should always remain at the designated amount. When verifying the amount, the date and the staff member’s initials should be written on the sheet. Failure to report a shortage of cash or an issue with the safe &/or its contents may result in disciplinary action including termination.

SCHEDULES AND ASSIGNMENTS
Weekly work schedules and assignments will be made and approved by the Center Manager or other Supervisor. Work schedules and assignments are subject to change according to personnel needs at the Center for Eye Care locations.

CALL-IN/CALL-BACK

A support staff member called in to work on a day not scheduled and that is not on standby, will be given a minimum of three (3) hours' work or a minimum of three (3) hours' pay if given less than three (3) hours' work.

PAYMENT:

A support staff member, who is not on standby but who has completed the work schedule and has left the campus and is then called back to work, will be given a minimum of three (3) hours' work or a minimum of three (3) hours' pay.

A support staff member called to work before his/her normal shift time and who continues working into his/her regular shift, will not be considered to be either called in or called back and will be paid only for all hours worked. If there is a reasonably brief period between the time of completing the work for which he/she is called in early and his/her normal starting time, this time will be considered also as time worked.

EXPECTATIONS:

Each support staff member is expected to work when called in unless excused for good and sufficient reason, which is to be administered by reasonableness and fairness by a supervisor. An employee called in may be expected to do whatever work is necessary even though not part of his/her regular duties providing he/she has the necessary knowledge to perform the work safely and without risk to the equipment or the operation. Common sense and good judgment will need to be exercised by the individual in each case.

OVERTIME:

The hours paid for call-in and call-back will be credited toward hours worked in the week for overtime purposes; however, an employee will not be paid overtime or premium pay twice for the same hours worked nor is there to be pyramiding of pay for call-in or call-back time.

STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT:

To provide support for work-related success, the University offers a broad range of training and development programs. These include courses and seminars, Adult Education and Self Instruction. All campus offerings stress institutional improvement and personal growth and are facilitated by the expertise of the University's faculty and staff. Many programs are scheduled during work hours while others are held during off-duty hours. Participation requires approval of the Supervisor. The link to the University Human Resource Development benefit can be found at:

https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/hr/myhr

In addition the College of Optometry supports other training opportunities; e.g. online training opportunities available through Eyecare, state sponsored Medicaid programs, College of Optometry continuing education, commercial seminars, etc. Staff may search for available training opportunities or suggest a program or Center management may have suggestions for your attendance. Participation in the development program is contingent on supervisory approval, workload, scheduling and other departmental considerations.