



MIDDLE TENNESSEE SCHOOL OF ANESTHESIA

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

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# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

## WELCOME!

We are delighted that you have selected MTSA as your place of employment. This institution is known for its excellence in anesthesia education with a unique Christian learning environment. We take great pride in working as a team to provide a quality education for each of our students. As you join our staff and engage in your job responsibilities, please help to identify improvements in our program, facilities, and working environment that will continue to advance MTSA.

The success of MTSA is directly related to our operating as a team. We strive to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all employees and promote open communication. Our goal is to attract, motivate, develop, and retain the best employees possible. Every job is essential to our success.

Please read this handbook carefully, which has been prepared for all employees of MTSA. To show that you have read, understood, and agree to the contents of this handbook, you will be asked to acknowledge your receipt and review of the document.

We wish you every success here at MTSA.

## INTRODUCTION

### ABOUT MTSA

Founded in 1950, Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia (MTSA) provides graduate-level education and training of nurse anesthetists in a Christian environment born of its Seventh-day Adventist heritage. MTSA is the only independent, fully accredited anesthesia institution of its kind in the nation, instilling excellence through innovative and diverse clinical experience. A leader in academic, clinical, and professional distinction, MTSA is responsive to the needs of its constituents, providing affordable graduate education for students from diverse backgrounds.

### MISSION

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia exists to provide a Christian, Seventh-day Adventist learning environment that fosters the pursuit of truth, excellence in and access to graduate nurse anesthesia education, and a life of service.

### VISION

Reviewed: 6/22/2022

Reflect Christ in a culture of service, inclusion, and diversity

Deliver an exceptional student experience that attracts premier applicants, promotes individual achievement, and results in a clinically excellent practitioner

Advance CRNA practice in ultrasound and pain management through education, strategic partnerships, and distinguished scholarship

### OUR VALUES

- Christian, Seventh-day Adventist values-driven curriculum and program
- Academic and clinical excellence that fosters a life of service

- Wholistic approach to administering the program
- Graduate education that prepares nurses to pass the National Certification Examination and enter the workplace with confidence
- Balanced and healthy lifestyle for students, faculty, and staff

MTSA promotes five core values that define our culture:

*RESPECT*  
*ACCOUNTABILITY*  
*INTEGRITY*  
*SERVICE*  
*EXCELLENCE*

## RESPECT

We Value and Respect Everyone. Every member of the MTSA team is critical to our mission. We recognize each other's importance and demonstrate respect for everyone's contribution to our success.

## ACCOUNTABILITY

We Take Ownership and Celebrate Success. We accept full responsibility for our decisions, actions, and results.

## INTEGRITY

We are Honest, Transparent, and Committed. We are committed to doing the right thing, even when no one is watching.

## SERVICE

We Pride Ourselves in Service. We contribute our expertise and time to causes that we care about in communities in which we live and work.

## EXCELLENCE

We Hold High Standards. We strive for and embrace excellence in all that we do.

## ORGANIZATION

MTSA is governed by the Board of Trustees. The President reports to the Board of Trustees. The President has established a leadership team referred to as the President's Council (PRC), which is made up of MTSA's Vice Presidents and Directors.

For additional information, see [Organizational Chart](#).

## REVISIONS TO HANDBOOK

This employee handbook is to keep employees informed of the terms and conditions of employment, including MTSA policies and procedures. MTSA reserves the right to revise, add, or delete from this handbook as the institution sees fit. When changes are made to the policies and guidelines, MTSA will communicate these changes to all employees in a timely manner.

The procedures, policies, practices, and benefits described in this handbook are subject to change or modification at any time at the discretion of the MTSA Administration.

Please contact the Office of Human Resources for more specific information if any questions or concerns arise.

## HIRING & ORIENTATION

### AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT

Employment with MTSA is on an “at-will” basis. This means that employment is for an indefinite period of time, and it is subject to termination, with or without cause, with or without notice, and at any time. Nothing in this policy, or any other policy of MTSA, shall be interpreted to conflict with or to eliminate or modify in any way, the at-will employment status of MTSA employees.

### EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia (MTSA) provides equal opportunities (EEO) to all employees and applicants for employment without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or status as a covered veteran in accordance with applicable state and local laws governing non-discrimination in employment. MTSA complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every college location and facility. This guideline applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfers, leave of absence, compensation, and training.

MTSA expressly prohibits any form of unlawful employee discrimination based on race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status. Improper interference with the ability of MTSA employees to perform their expected job duties is not tolerated.

MTSA encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination. It is the policy of MTSA to investigate such reports promptly and thoroughly. MTSA prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or who participates in an investigation of such reports.

### ANTI-HARASSMENT & COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits unlawful discriminatory practices, including harassment. Therefore, MTSA expects that all relationships among persons in the office will be business-like and free of bias, prejudice, and harassment.

### DEFINITIONS OF HARASSMENT

Harassment based on race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, genetic information constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal and state laws. For the purposes of this policy, sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example, a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for

employment decisions affecting such individual; and/or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment may include a wide range of behaviors and may involve individuals of either gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors; sexual jokes and innuendo; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess, or sexual deficiencies; leering, whistling, or touching; insulting or obscene comments or gestures; display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; and other physical, verbal, or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

Under this policy, harassment may include verbal, written or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of their race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, genetic information or any other characteristic protected by law, including those of their relatives, friends or associates, and that a) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment; b) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; and/or c) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Harassing conduct includes epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; and written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward a protected individual or group or that is placed on walls or elsewhere on the employer's premises or circulated in the workplace, on MTSA time or using MTSA equipment via e-mail, phone (including voice messages), text messages, tweets, blogs, social networking sites, or other means.

## INDIVIDUALS AND CONDUCT COVERED

These policies apply to all applicants and employees, whether related to conduct engaged in by co-workers or someone not directly connected to Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia (e.g., an outside vendor, consultant, or customer).

Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as during business trips, business meetings, and business-related social events.

## DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION CONCERNS

An employee who believes they have been the victim of conduct prohibited by this policy statement or who believes he/she has witnessed such conduct should discuss their concerns with the Director of Human Resources, their immediate supervisor, or any member of management.

When possible, MTSA encourages any employee who believes they are being subjected to such conduct to promptly advise the offender that their behavior is unwelcome and request that it be discontinued. Often this action alone will resolve the problem. MTSA recognizes, however, that an individual may prefer to pursue the matter through a formal complaint procedure.

MTSA encourages the prompt reporting of complaints or concerns so that rapid and constructive action can be taken before relationships become irreparably strained. Therefore, early reporting and intervention have proven to be the most effective method of resolving actual or perceived incidents of harassment.

Any reported allegations of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation will be investigated promptly. The investigation may include individual interviews with the parties involved and, where necessary, with individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge. Misconduct constituting harassment, discrimination, or retaliation will be dealt with appropriately.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent possible, consistent with adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action.

Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment, discrimination, or retaliation for participating in an investigation of a claim of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation is a serious violation of this policy and, like harassment or discrimination itself, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Acts of retaliation should be reported immediately and will be promptly investigated and addressed.

False and malicious complaints of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation may be the subject of appropriate disciplinary action.

Employees are expected to refrain from acts that would constitute sexual harassment as set forth in the aforementioned guidelines. If an employee feels that they have been subjected to sexual harassment, they should discuss the situation with the appropriate department chair or the Director of Human Resources. If a complaint is filed or is made known to the Director of Human Resources or a person in a superior position, it should be documented, and an investigation will be made in a timely manner. All records made or maintained as part of the investigation will remain confidential. If an investigation substantiates the allegations of sexual harassment, appropriate corrective action will be taken. Any attempt to penalize or retaliate against a person for filing a complaint or participating in the investigation of sexual harassment is violation of policy.

If the President is the subject of an alleged violation of policy, then the complaint should be made to the Director of Human Resources, the Board Chair, or Legal Counsel. An investigation will be conducted in a confidential manner and will be documented. In the event such allegation appears to be credible, the Board Chair or Legal Counsel will report such complaint and the results of the investigation to the Board of Trustees, and the Chair will be given the authorization by the Board of Trustees, in consultation with Legal Counsel, to impose such disciplinary measures as deemed appropriate. Employees who detect a wrongdoing or a violation of policies by the President or a superior shall be entitled to Whistleblower Protection.

For additional information, see [Whistleblower Protection](#).

## DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA) are federal laws that require employers with 15 or more employees to not discriminate against applicants and individuals with disabilities and, when needed, to provide reasonable accommodations to applicants and employees who are qualified for a job, with or without reasonable accommodations, so that they may perform the essential job duties of the position.

It is the policy of MTSA to comply with all federal and state laws concerning the employment of persons with disabilities and to act in accordance with regulations and guidance issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Furthermore, it is the company policy not to discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training or other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

MTSA will reasonably accommodate any qualified individual with a disability so that they can perform the essential functions of a job unless doing so causes a direct threat to such individual or others in the workplace and/or if the accommodation creates an undue hardship to MTSA. Contact the Director of Human Resources with any questions or requests for accommodation.



# RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

MTSA respects the religious beliefs and practices of all employees and will make, on request, an accommodation for such observances when a reasonable accommodation is available that does not create an undue hardship on the school's business.

## REQUESTING A RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

An employee whose religious beliefs or practices conflict with his or her job, work schedule, or with MTSA's policy or practice on dress and appearance, or with other aspects of employment, and who seeks a religious accommodation must submit a written request for the accommodation to his or her immediate supervisor. The written request will include the type of religious conflict that exists and the employee's requested accommodation.

## PROVIDING RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION

The Office of Human Resources will evaluate the request considering whether a work conflict exists due to a sincerely held religious belief or practice and whether an accommodation is available that is reasonable and that would not create an undue hardship on MTSA's business. An accommodation may be a change in job, using paid leave or leave without pay, allowing an exception to the dress and appearance code that does not affect safety requirements, or for other aspects of employment. Depending on the type of conflict and suggested accommodation, the Director of Human Resources may confer with Executive Administration.

The supervisor and employee will meet to discuss the request and decision on an accommodation. If the employee accepts the proposed religious accommodation, the immediate supervisor will implement the decision. If the employee rejects the proposed accommodation, they may appeal following the company's general grievance policy and procedure.

# EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATION

All employees are designated as either non-exempt or exempt under state and federal wage and hour laws. The following is intended to help employees understand employment classifications, employment status, and benefit eligibility. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time. The right to terminate the employment-at-will relationship at any time is retained by both the employee and Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia.

**Non-Exempt Employees:** are hourly employees whose work is covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). They are NOT exempt from the law's requirements concerning minimum wage and overtime. Non-exempt employees receive time and one-half regular hourly pay for time worked over forty (40) hours in a seven (7) day work week.

**Exempt Employees:** are salaried employees who are generally managers or professional, administrative, or technical staff who are exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the FLSA. Exempt employees hold jobs that meet the standards and criteria established under the FLSA by the U.S. Department of Labor.

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia has established the following categories for both non-exempt and exempt employees:

**Regular, full-time:** Employees who are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work a full-time schedule. Full-time status is granted to all employees working at least 30 hours of the full-time equivalencies of the position. Generally, these employees are eligible for the full benefits package, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefits program.

**Regular, part-time:** Employees who are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work less than the full-time schedule. Regular, part-time employees are generally ineligible for the benefits offered by MTSA but are eligible for Workers' Compensation and FICA.

**Temporary:** Employees who are hired as interim replacements to temporarily supplement the workforce for a limited duration. Employment beyond any initially stated period does not in any way imply a change in employment status. Temporary workers are only eligible for Workers/ Compensation benefits and FICA.

## CODE OF ETHICS

The success of MTSA is dependent on the trust and confidence earned from our employees, students, and shareholders. MTSA gains credibility by adhering to our commitments, displaying honesty and integrity, and reaching goals solely through honorable conduct.

When considering any action, it is wise to ask: Will this build trust and credibility for MTSA? Will it help create a working environment in which MTSA can succeed over the long term? Is the commitment I am making one I can follow through with? The only way to maximize trust and credibility is by answering "yes" to those questions and by working every day to build trust and credibility.

### RESPECT FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

Everyone deserves to work in an environment where they are treated with dignity and respect. MTSA is committed to creating such an environment because it brings out the full potential in each individual, which, in turn, contributes directly to the organization's success.

MTSA is an equal employment/affirmative action employer and is committed to providing a workplace that is free of discrimination of all types and from abusive, offensive, or harassing behavior. Any employee who feels harassed or discriminated against should report the incident to their supervisor or to the Office of Human Resources.

All MTSA employees are also expected to support an inclusive workplace by adhering to the following conduct standards:

- Treat others with dignity and respect at all times.
- Address and report inappropriate behavior and comments that are discriminatory, harassing, abusive, offensive, or unwelcome.
- Foster teamwork and employee participation, encouraging the representation of different employee perspectives.
- Seek out insights from employees with different experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds.
- Avoid slang or idioms that might not translate across cultures.
- Support flexible work arrangements for co-workers with different needs, abilities, and/or obligations.
- Confront the decisions or behaviors of others that are based on conscious or unconscious biases.
- Be open-minded and listen when given constructive feedback regarding others' perception of employees' conduct.

MTSA will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, or any behavior or language that is abusive, offensive, or unwelcome.

## CREATE A CULTURE OF OPEN AND HONEST COMMUNICATION

At MTSA everyone should feel comfortable speaking their mind, particularly with respect to ethics concerns. Supervisors have a responsibility to create an open and supportive environment where employees feel comfortable raising such questions. Everyone benefits tremendously when employees exercise their power to prevent mistakes or wrongdoing by asking the right questions at the right times.

MTSA will investigate all reported instances of questionable or unethical behavior. In every instance where improper behavior is found to have occurred, MTSA will take appropriate action. MTSA will not tolerate retaliation against employees who raise genuine ethics concerns in good faith.

Employees are encouraged, in the first instance, to address such issues with their supervisor or the Office of Human Resources, as most problems can be resolved swiftly. If for any reason that is not possible or if an employee is not comfortable raising the issue with their supervisor or the Office of Human Resources, MTSA's Executive Administration operates with an open-door policy.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Employees must avoid any relationship or activity that might impair, or even appear to impair, their ability to make objective and fair decisions when performing their jobs. MTSA's property, information, or business opportunities may not be used for personal gain.

Conflicts of interest could arise in the following circumstances:

- Being employed by, acting as a consultant to, serving as a Board member to, or owning or having an interest in a competitor or potential competitor or vendor, regardless of the nature of the relationship, while employed with MTSA;
- Hiring or supervising family members or closely related persons;
- Accepting gifts, discounts, favors, or services from a customer/patient, potential customer/patient, competitor, or vendor, unless equally available to all MTSA employees.

Employees with a conflict-of-interest question should seek advice from management. Before engaging in any activity, transaction, or relationship that might give rise to a conflict of interest, employees must seek review from their supervisor or the Director of Human Resources.

## NEPOTISM AND ASSIGNMENT

Policy Number: 3.2.103

Reviewed: 3/1/12, 12/13

Revised: Revised: 12/07, 1/10, 1/24/11, 3/11, 2/13, 2/14 11/23 BOT Approval

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia wants to ensure that its practices do not create situations that lead to a conflict of interest or favoritism. This extends to practices that involve employee hiring, promotion, and transfer. Close relatives, partners, those in a dating relationship, or members of the same household are not permitted to be in positions that have a reporting responsibility to each other. Close relatives are defined as spouse, parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, brother-in-law and sister-in-law.

If employees begin a dating relationship or become relatives, partners, or members of the same household, and if one party is in a supervisory or management position, such person is required to immediately inform their supervisor, Executive Administration, and the Director of Human Resources of the relationship.

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia reserves the right to apply this policy to situations where there is a conflict or the potential for conflict because of the relationship between employees, even if there is no direct reporting relationship or authority involved.

The Board of Trustees may review any exceptions to this policy.

## EMPLOYMENT OF MINORS

All new employees must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present original document(s) that establish their identity and employment authorization within three business days of their first date of employment. MTSA abides by all state and federal laws related to the employment of minors.

## JOB DESCRIPTION

MTSA maintains a current job description for each position. Employees may request a copy from their supervisor or the Office of Human Resources. Job descriptions prepared by MTSA serve as an outline only. Due to the needs of the institution, employees may be required to perform job duties not within the written job description. Furthermore, MTSA may have to revise, add to, or delete from job duties according to business needs. On occasion, MTSA may revise job descriptions with or without advance notice to the employee.

Questions regarding job descriptions or the scope of duties should be directed to the immediate supervisor or Human Resources.

## NEW EMPLOYEES & INTRODUCTORY PERIOD

The introductory period of employment at MTSA is for ninety (90) calendar days following the date of hire. This period will be used as a review of performance by the appropriate supervisor. Each supervisor will carefully observe and evaluate the work of the employee during this time and a written evaluation of performance will be conducted prior to the end of the 90-day introductory period. Continued employment beyond the initial, introductory period of employment is not implied or guaranteed.

An introductory period with MTSA can be shortened or lengthened as deemed appropriate by management and the Office of Human Resources. Completion of this introductory period does not imply guaranteed or continued employment. Nothing that occurs during or after this period should be construed to change the nature of the "at-will" employment relationship.

## EMPLOYMENT AUTHORIZATION VERIFICATION

All new hires and current employees are required by federal law to verify their identity and eligibility to work in the United States. Employees are required to complete federal Form I-9 on the first day of employment. If this form and verification of employment eligibility are not completed during the first three days of employment, MTSA is required by law to terminate employment. Employees who have not complied with this requirement or whose status has changed, must inform the Office of Human Resources immediately.

# BACKGROUND & REFERENCE CHECKS

To ensure that individuals who join Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia are well qualified and to ensure that MTSA maintains a safe and productive work environment, MTSA conducts pre-employment background and reference checks on all applicants who accept an offer of employment. Background and reference checks may include verification of any information on the applicant's resume or application form.

All offers of employment are conditioned on receipt of a background check report that is acceptable to Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia. All background checks are conducted in conformity with applicable state and federal laws.

MTSA also reserves the right to conduct a background check for current employees to determine eligibility for promotion or reassignment in the same manner as described above.

# WAGE & HOUR

## INTRODUCTION - WAGE & HOUR

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia's wage and hour policies and procedures were established to meet several important objectives:

- To attract and retain quality employees
- To permit positive reinforcement of superior individual performance
- To provide for fair and equitable treatment of all employees

The Office of Human Resources conducts periodic salary surveys to determine what other organizations in the competitive market pay incumbents in jobs similar to those at MTSA, to stay competitive in the marketplace.

It is the goal of MTSA's job evaluation process to establish a properly designed job evaluation system which will result in non-discriminatory, equitable pay differentials among jobs.

# COMPENSATION

MTSA seeks to pay salaries that are fair to the individual employee, appropriate to the job, and consistent with the marketplace.

The salary level for any particular job is based on a number of factors including the experience, education, and training required to qualify for it, as well as the judgment, level of supervision, scope of responsibility, and the nature of the interpersonal interactions inherent in its performance.

# PERFORMANCE & SALARY REVIEW

Merit increases are impacted by MTSA's performance and are not guaranteed. A performance review does not always result in a salary increase. The employee's overall performance and salary level relative to their position responsibilities are evaluated to determine if a salary increase is warranted.

Budget allocations for merit increases are determined before the start of each fiscal year. The salary increase program is designed to assist management in planning and allocating merit and promotional increases that reward individual performance, that are market competitive, and that are internally equitable.

Salary adjustments are occasionally warranted at times other than the employee's scheduled annual salary reviews. Administration will review all salary increase/adjustment requests to ensure internal equity and compliance with MTSA policies and guidelines. Out-of-cycle salary increases must be approved by the MTSA President.

## PAY RAISES

Depending on the institution's financial status and other factors, efforts will be made to give pay raises consistent with job performance. Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia may also make individual pay raises based on merit or due to a change of job position.

## PAY PERIOD

MTSA pays hourly employees on a biweekly basis. If pay day falls on a federal holiday, payment will be processed on the previous day. Workweeks are from Sunday through Saturday.

MTSA pays salaried employees on a monthly basis, with payment received on the last MTSA business day of the month. If pay day falls on a federal holiday, payment will be processed on the previous day. This pay period begins on the first day of the month and ends on the last day of the month.

For new employees, the date they receive their first payroll deposit depends on their date of hire and the timing for payroll processing. In most cases, new employees receive their first payroll deposit on the pay period following the date of hire.

All checks are distributed by electronic funds transfer. All employees must complete a direct deposit form upon hire. Pay notices are available electronically.

## PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

MTSA is required by federal, state, and certain local laws to withhold certain deductions from employees' paycheck.

Payroll Deductions may include:

**Federal Income Tax:** The amount of federal withholding tax deducted from pay is determined by the amount of each employee's gross salary and the number of exemptions claimed as per the most recent (W-4).

**Social Security (FICA) and Medicare:** The cost of Social Security and Medicare Insurance are set by law. The employee's share is deducted from the pay as prescribed by law and paid by MTSA.

**Garnishments:** Any deduction for a court-ordered garnishment, bankruptcy, or wage earner plan will be followed according to appropriate state and/or federal law.

**Miscellaneous Deductions:** Other possible deductions include: spouse and/or dependent health/dental/vision coverage, contributions to the retirement plan, leave without pay, contributions/ gifts to MTSA, supplemental insurance, and other requested deductions. A Miscellaneous Deductions form must be submitted to the business office prior to the current payroll.

Employee W-2 forms will be provided no later than January 31st each year.

## WORK HOURS

The workday is defined as the 24-hour period starting at 12:01 a.m. The workweek covers seven consecutive days beginning on Sunday and ending on Saturday. The usual number of work hours in a workweek period for full-time employees is between 30 and 40 hours.

Normal operating hours for MTSA are Monday through Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. A workday is defined as a day when MTSA is open for business. The needs of some departments dictate that schedules may vary from the normal operating hours. Employees requesting an adjustment to MTSA's established operating hours must have approval from the Office of Human Resources and Executive Administration. Employees are expected to report to work on time each day and remain on the job throughout the scheduled work period, unless the employee and supervisor have agreed to an alternate schedule in advance. All employees are expected to communicate during MTSA operating hours, except for when an unexpected emergency occurs.

MTSA generally remains open during inclement weather conditions. All classes, programs, and business offices are expected to operate according to regular schedule unless closing is authorized by the President, Program Administrator, or Executive Administration.

## TIMEKEEPING PRACTICES

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia wants to ensure that non-exempt employees are compensated in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws and are compensated for all hours worked. Non-exempt employees are those subject to the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (the "FLSA") and any applicable state law. Because MTSA relies on its employees to record their hours worked accurately and honestly, it is essential that employees record all time worked. Non-exempt employees may not perform any work without compensation. No member of management may request, require, or permit other employees to perform work without compensation.

Non-exempt employees are paid for every hour worked and will be paid overtime compensation if they work over 40 hours in a work week. Non-exempt employees are required to log their own hours worked in MTSA's time and attendance system. Employees must use either their desktop computers, laptop computer, or any MTSA-provided kiosks to access the timekeeping system. Any absences (PTO, LWOP, Jury Duty, etc.) occurring within a pay period must be submitted as a time off request in MTSA's time and attendance system and be approved by the supervisor by the end of the affected pay period.

At the end of each pay period, employees verify their individual timecard and submit them through the timekeeping portal. The Business Office then reviews all timecards and submits reported hours to payroll for processing.

Falsification of time records or recording time for another employee may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

## SAFE HARBOR

It is MTSA's policy and practice to accurately compensate employees and to do so in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws. To ensure that employees are paid properly for all time worked and that no improper deductions are made, employees must correctly record all work time and review their paychecks promptly to identify and to report all errors. Employees also must not engage in off-the-clock or unrecorded work.

## PAY STUB REVIEWAL

MTSA makes every effort to ensure employees are paid correctly. Occasionally, however, inadvertent mistakes can happen. When mistakes do happen and are called to our attention, MTSA will promptly make any correction that is necessary. Pay stubs should be reviewed when received to verify accuracy. If it is believed that a mistake has occurred or if any question arises, please use the reporting procedure outlined below.

### NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES

If an employee is eligible for overtime pay or extra pay, they must maintain a record of the total hours worked each day. These hours must be accurately recorded in the timekeeping system. Each employee must sign off on their timecard to verify that the reported hours worked are complete and accurate (and that there is no unrecorded or "off-the-clock" work). The timecard must accurately reflect all regular and overtime hours worked, any absences, early or late arrivals, early or late departures, etc. At the end of each pay period, the employee must submit their completed timecard for verification and approval. When a paycheck has been received, the employees should verify immediately that they were paid correctly for all regular and overtime hours worked each workweek.

### EXEMPT EMPLOYEES

If an employee is classified as an exempt salaried employee, they will receive a salary which is intended to compensate for all hours that they may work for MTSA. This salary will be established at the time of hire or when the employee becomes classified as an exempt employee. While it may be subject to review and modification from time to time, such as during salary review times, the salary will be a predetermined amount that will not be subject to deductions for variations in the quantity or quality of the work performed.

Employees should receive their full salary for any workweek in which work is performed. However, under federal law, salaries are subject to certain deductions.

## TO REPORT VIOLATIONS OF THIS POLICY, COMMUNICATE CONCERNS, OR OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION

It is a violation of MTSA's policy for any employee to falsify a timecard or to alter another employee's timecard. It is also a serious violation of MTSA's policy for any employee or supervisor to instruct another employee to incorrectly or falsely report hours worked or alter another employee's timecard to under- or over-report hours worked. If any supervisor or employee instructs another employee to (1) incorrectly or falsely under- or over-report their hours worked, (2) alter another employee's time records to inaccurately or falsely report that employee's hours worked, or (3) conceal any falsification of time records or to violate this policy, do not do so. Instead, report it immediately to the Office of Human Resources.

Employees should not work any hours outside of their scheduled workday unless their supervisor has authorized the unscheduled work in advance. Employees are prohibited from performing any "off-the-clock" work. "Off-the-clock" work means work performed but failed to report on timecard. Any employee who fails to report or inaccurately reports any hours worked will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

If any questions arise about deductions from pay, please contact the Office of Human Resources immediately. If it is believed an employee's wages have been subject to any improper deductions or pay does not accurately reflect all hours worked, the employee should report any concerns to a supervisor immediately. If a supervisor is unavailable or if it is believed that it would be inappropriate to contact that person (or if a prompt response and fully acceptable reply has not been received within three business days), the employee should immediately contact the VP, Finance and Administration or the Business Office. If a satisfactory response has not been received within five business days after the concern has been reported and are unsure who to contact to correct the problem, please immediately contact the Office of Human Resources at 615.732.7854.



Every report will be fully investigated, and corrective action will be taken, up to and including discharge of any employee(s) who violates this policy.

In addition, MTSA will not allow any form of retaliation against individuals who report alleged violations of this policy or who cooperate in MTSA's investigation of such reports. Retaliation is unacceptable. Any form of retaliation in violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

## OVERTIME AUTHORIZATION FOR NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES

Non-exempt employees may qualify for overtime pay. All overtime must be approved in advance by the employee's immediate supervisor. Overtime hours are calculated based on actual hours worked in the work week. Paid leave, such as holiday or PTO, does not apply towards work hours and the calculation of overtime.

Non-exempt employees who are required to work over forty (40) hours in a work week will receive pay at one and one-half (1 1/2) their hourly rate for each hour worked over forty (40).

Exempt employees are exempt from overtime pay.

## ATTENDANCE

Employees are expected to report to work on time and to remain on the job throughout their scheduled work period. Employees should advise their supervisor in advance of any absence from work, whenever practicable.

Patterns of absenteeism or tardiness may result in discipline even if an employee has not exhausted available paid time off. Absences due to illnesses or injuries that qualify under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) will not be counted against an employee's attendance record. Medical documentation within the guidelines of the FMLA will be required in these instances.

### UNEXPECTED ABSENCES

An unexpected absence is defined as an absence which was not requested in advance and is lost time from the job for more than ½ day's duration in any scheduled workday. All references to absences which are illness and injury related are found in the medical leave policy.

If it is not possible to inform the immediate supervisor in advance of an absence, an employee must report their absence as soon as possible to the immediate supervisor and if he/she is not available, to the person designated by the immediate supervisor. Failure to timely report an absence will result in an unauthorized absence noted on the employee's attendance record. Employees should arrange with their supervisor when they expect to return to work.

Excessive unexpected absences may necessitate disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

### TARDY/LEAVE EARLY

Employees are considered tardy if they report to the assigned workstation any time after the beginning of the scheduled work period, the scheduled time for returning from lunch or from the scheduled break period.

At the discretion of the supervisor, employees may make up time within the same pay period as the tardy/leave early occurred. The total time worked in a work week should not exceed 40 hours when time is being made up unless the needs of the department require additional time.

Make-up time must have the approval of the immediate supervisor and is permitted during:

- lunch breaks;

- after a scheduled work period;
- before a scheduled work period.

Excessive tardiness will be noted on the employee attendance record and may necessitate disciplinary action up to and including discharge.

## REMOTE WORK PROCEDURES

### OBJECTIVE

Remote work allows employees to work at home, on the road, or in a satellite location for all or part of their workweek. Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia considers remote work to be a viable, flexible work option when both the employee and the job are suited to such an arrangement. Remote work may be appropriate for some employees and jobs but not for others. Remote work is not a companywide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia.

### PROCEDURES

Remote work can be informal, such as working from home for a short-term project or on the road during business travel, or a formal, set schedule of working away from the office. Other informal, short-term arrangements may be made for employees on family or medical leave to the extent practical for the employee and the organization and with the consent of the employee's health care provider, if appropriate.

Any remote work arrangement made may be discontinued at will and at any time at the request of either the telecommuter or the organization.

### ELIGIBILITY

Individuals requesting formal remote work arrangements must be employed with Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia for a minimum of 12 months of continuous, regular employment and must have a satisfactory performance record. Exceptions to this will be handled on an individual basis under a trial period approved by the supervisor and member of Executive Administration.

Before entering into any remote work agreement, the employee and supervisor, with the assistance of the Office of Human Resources, will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement, reviewing the employee's needs and work habits, the essential functions of the job, equipment needs, scheduling issues, and tax/legal implications. Final approval for remote work eligibility will come from a member of Executive Administration.

### GENERAL GUIDELINES

- The supervisor and telecommuter will communicate at a level consistent with employees working at the office or in a manner and frequency that is appropriate for the job and the individuals involved.
- On a case-by-case basis, the Director of Human Resources and VP of Finance and Administration will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs for each remote work arrangement.
- The employee will establish an appropriate work environment within their home for work purposes. Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's home office, such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the home office space.
- When attending virtual meetings, the employee must abide by the Personal Appearance standards set by MTSA. Please see [Dress Code](#) for additional information.

- Consistent with the organization's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, remote work employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary company and customer information accessible from their home office.
- Employees are expected to maintain their remote workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards. Injuries sustained by the employee in a home office location and in conjunction with their regular work duties are normally covered by the company's workers' compensation policy. Remote work employees are responsible for notifying the employer of such injuries as soon as practicable.
- Remote work is not designed to be a replacement for appropriate childcare. Although an individual employee's schedule may be modified to accommodate childcare needs, the focus of the arrangement must remain on job performance and meeting business demands.
- Remote work employees who are not exempt from the overtime requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act will be required to accurately record all hours worked using MTSA's time-keeping system. Hours worked in excess of those scheduled per day and per workweek require the advance approval of the telecommuter's supervisor.
- Employees are expected to abide by all MTSA policies as if they would when working in the office, with little to no interruptions.

For additional information, please see [Dress Code Policy](#).

## MEAL & REST PERIODS

The scheduling of meal periods at Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia is set by the employee's immediate supervisor with the goal of providing the least possible disruption to MTSA operations.

### MANDATORY MEAL PERIOD

Employee meal periods are important to MTSA productivity and employee health. Employees who work at least six consecutive hours will be provided a meal break.

All MTSA employees are allowed a paid 30 minutes lunch period per workday.

Non-exempt employees are to be completely relieved of all job duties during their meal period. Non-exempt employees that choose to leave campus must log out using the time and attendance system while on meal breaks. If an employee's meal period, while on campus, is interrupted for work purposes, the meal period can be extended the length of time equal to the interruption.

### REST BREAKS

Non-exempt employees may be permitted two breaks of short duration, 10-15 minutes, for each four hours of work. Non-exempt employees on rest breaks are not required to log in and log out because this time is considered "time worked" and is compensable.

## PREGNANCY ACCOMMODATION

If an employee needs a temporary change to how, when, or where to work due to pregnancy or related conditions, the employee may request an accommodation. MTSA will approve such a request so long as the accommodation requested is reasonable and will not create an undue hardship for the organization. MTSA will determine on a case-

by-case basis whether a requested accommodation is reasonable or would create an undue hardship after considering the nature of the accommodation, MTSA's needs, the needs of other employees, daily operations, and resources.

A request for an accommodation can be made in writing to a supervisor or the Office of Human Resources.

## ACCOMMODATION FOR NURSING MOTHERS

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia provides nursing mothers reasonable break time to express milk for their infant children for up to one year following the child's birth.

To ensure privacy, nursing mothers are able to use their individual, private office, to express their milk. If the employee does not have a private office, a private room will be provided.

Nursing mothers will also be provided a refrigerator to store their breast milk. Employees are responsible for labeling their milk with their names. Nursing mothers are encouraged to discuss the length and frequency of breastfeeding breaks with their supervisor.

Employees with any questions or concerns regarding this accommodation should contact Human Resources.

## PERFORMANCE & CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

### PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia will periodically review all employees' work performance. The formal performance review process will take place on an annual basis, midyear, or as business needs dictate. The performance evaluation process is a means for documenting the quality and value of an employee's work performance. The quality of work, dependability, efficiency, job knowledge, and other factors will be addressed. A positive job performance review does not guarantee a pay raise or continued employment. Pay raises and promotions are based on numerous factors, only one of which is job performance.

### PROMOTIONS

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia offers employees promotions to higher level positions when appropriate. MTSA prefers to promote from within and may first consider current employees with the necessary qualifications and skills to fill vacancies above the entry level, unless outside recruitment is considered to be in MTSA's best interest.

To be considered, employees must have held their current position for at least 6 months, have a satisfactory performance record, and have no disciplinary actions during the last 6 months. Management retains the discretion to make exceptions to this policy.

All employees promoted into new job positions will undergo a 90-day introductory period as described in [New Employees and Introductory Periods](#).

### TRANSFERS

MTSA reserves the right to and may initiate transfers of employees within the same or different departments and facilities to meet specified work requirements and reassignment of work requirements.

# JOB POSTINGS

Job vacancies will be posted internally as deemed necessary by MTSA. Eligible employees may apply for other jobs as vacancies become available and will be considered along with other applicants. To be eligible for a job change, employees must have held their current position for at least 6 months, have a satisfactory performance record and have no disciplinary actions during the last 6 months. Management retains the discretion to make exceptions to this policy.

# CORRECTIVE ACTION

Every employee has the duty and the responsibility to be aware of and abide by existing rules and policies. Employees also have the responsibility to perform their duties to the best of their ability and to the standards as set forth in their job descriptions or as otherwise established.

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia supports the use of progressive discipline to address issues such as poor work performance or misconduct. Our corrective action policy provides a process to improve and prevent a recurrence of undesirable behavior and/or performance issues. The corrective action policy is consistent with MTSA organizational values, HR best practices, and employment laws.

Outlined below are the steps of the corrective policy and procedure. MTSA reserves the right to combine or skip steps in this process depending on the facts of each situation and the nature of the offense. The level of disciplinary intervention may also vary. Some factors that will be considered are whether the offense is repeated despite coaching, counseling, and/or training; the employee's work record; and the impact the conduct and performance issues have on MTSA.

Nothing in this policy provides any contractual rights regarding employee discipline or counseling, nor should anything in this policy be read or construed as modifying or altering the employment-at-will relationship between MTSA and its employees.

## PROCEDURE

### **Step 1: Counseling and Verbal Warning**

Step 1 creates an opportunity for the immediate supervisor to bring attention to the existing performance, conduct, or attendance issue. The supervisor should discuss with the employee the nature of the problem or the violation of company policies and procedures. The supervisor is expected to clearly describe expectations and steps the employee must take to improve their performance or resolve the problem.

Within four business days, the supervisor will prepare written documentation of the verbal counseling. The employee will be asked to sign this document to demonstrate their understanding of the issues and the corrective action.

### **Step 2: Written Warning**

The Step 2 written warning involves more-formal documentation of the performance, conduct, or attendance issues and consequences.

During Step 2, the immediate supervisor and the administrative supervisor will meet with the employee to review any additional incidents or information about the performance, conduct, or attendance issues as well as any prior relevant corrective action plans. Management will outline the consequences for the employee of their continued failure to meet performance or conduct expectations.

A formal performance improvement plan (PIP) requiring the employee's immediate and sustained corrective action will be issued within four business days of a Step 2 meeting. The written warning may also include a statement indicating that the employee may be subject to additional discipline, up to and including termination, if immediate and sustained corrective action is not taken.

### **Step 3: Suspension and Final Written Warning**

Some performance, conduct, or safety incidents are so problematic and harmful that the most effective action may be the temporary removal of the employee from the workplace. When immediate action is necessary to ensure the safety of the employee or others, the immediate supervisor may suspend the employee pending the results of an investigation.

Suspensions that are recommended as part of the normal sequence of the progressive discipline policy and procedures are subject to approval from a member of the Executive Administration and the Office of Human Resources (HR).

Depending on the seriousness of the infraction, the employee may be suspended without pay in full day increments consistent with federal, state, and local wage and hour employment laws. Nonexempt/hourly employees may not substitute or use any accrued paid time off in lieu of the unpaid suspension. In compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), unpaid suspension of salaried/exempt employees is reserved for serious workplace safety or conduct issues. HR will provide guidance to ensure that the discipline is administered without jeopardizing the FLSA exemption status.

Pay may be restored to the employee if an investigation of the incident or infraction absolves the employee of wrongdoing.

### **Step 4: Recommendation for Termination of Employment**

The last and most serious step in the progressive discipline process is a recommendation to terminate employment. Generally, MTSA will try to exercise the progressive nature of this policy by first providing warnings, issuing a final written warning, or suspending the employee from the workplace before proceeding to a recommendation to terminate employment. However, MTSA reserves the right to combine and skip steps depending on the circumstances of each situation and the nature of the offense. Furthermore, employees may be terminated without prior notice or disciplinary action.

Management's recommendation to terminate employment must be approved by the Office of Human Resources (HR) and a member of Executive Administration. Final approval may be required from the MTSA President.

## **APPEALS PROCESS**

Employees will have the opportunity to present information to dispute information management has used to issue disciplinary action. The purpose of this process is to provide insight into extenuating circumstances that may have contributed to the employee's performance or conduct issues while allowing for an equitable solution.

If the employee does not present this information during any of the step meetings, he or she will have four business days after each of those meetings to present such information.

## **PERFORMANCE AND CONDUCT ISSUES NOT SUBJECT TO PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE**

Behavior that is illegal is not subject to progressive discipline and may result in immediate termination. Such behavior may be reported to local law enforcement authorities.

Similarly, theft, substance abuse, intoxication, fighting, and other acts of violence at work are also not subject to progressive discipline and may be grounds for immediate termination.

## DOCUMENTATION

The employee will be provided with copies of all progressive discipline documentation, including all PIPs. The employee will be asked to sign copies of this documentation attesting to their receipt and understanding of the corrective action outlined in these documents.

Copies of these documents will be placed in the employee's official personnel file.

## CODE OF CONDUCT

MTSA expects employees to maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct, cooperation, responsibility, efficiency, and integrity; and to adhere to current MTSA policies and rules. Conduct that is in conflict with such expectations may be deemed unacceptable. Violation of policy and/or rules may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment for just cause.

It is expected that all employees be respectful of students, guests, and other employees of MTSA. When incompatibility affects professional effectiveness or judgment to a significant degree, a violation of policy and/or rules has probably occurred.

## ANTI-BULLYING

MTSA will not *in any instance* tolerate bullying behavior. Employees found in violation of this policy will be disciplined, up to and including termination.

### DEFINITION

MTSA defines bullying as repeated, health-harming mistreatment of one or more people by one or more perpetrators. It is abusive conduct that includes:

- Threatening, humiliating, or intimidating behaviors.
- Work interference/sabotage that prevents work from getting done.
- Verbal abuse.

Such behavior violates MTSA's Code of Ethics, which clearly states that all employees will be treated with dignity and respect.

### EXAMPLES

MTSA considers the following types of behavior examples of bullying:

- **Verbal bullying.** Slandering, ridiculing, or maligning a person or their family; persistent name-calling that is hurtful, insulting, or humiliating; using a person as the butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.
- **Physical bullying.** Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault or threat of physical assault, damage to a person's work area or property.
- **Gesture bullying.** Nonverbal gestures that can convey threatening messages.
- **Exclusion.** Socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work-related activities.

In addition, the following examples may constitute or contribute to evidence of bullying in the workplace:

- Persistent singling out of one person.

- Shouting or raising one's voice at an individual in public or in private.
- Using obscene or intimidating gestures.
- Not allowing the person to speak or express themselves (i.e., ignoring or interrupting).
- Personal insults and use of offensive nicknames.
- Public humiliation in any form.
- Constant criticism on matters unrelated or minimally related to the person's job performance or description.
- Public reprimands.
- Repeatedly accusing someone of errors that cannot be documented.
- Deliberately interfering with mail and other communications.
- Spreading rumors and gossip regarding individuals.
- Encouraging others to disregard a supervisor's instructions.
- Manipulating the ability of someone to do their work (e.g., overloading, underloading, withholding information, setting deadlines that cannot be met, giving deliberately ambiguous instructions).
- Assigning menial tasks not in keeping with the normal responsibilities of the job.
- Taking credit for another person's ideas.
- Refusing reasonable requests for leave in the absence of work-related reasons not to grant leave.
- Deliberately excluding an individual or isolating them from work-related activities, such as meetings.
- Unwanted physical contact, physical abuse, or threats of abuse to an individual or an individual's property (defacing or marking up property).

Individuals who feel they have experienced bullying should report this to their supervisor or to Human Resources before the conduct becomes severe or pervasive. All employees are strongly encouraged to report any bullying conduct they experience or witness as soon as possible to allow MTSA to take appropriate action.

## GROSS MISCONDUCT

It is the goal of MTSA that termination is only utilized after other forms of disciplinary action have been unsuccessful, or when, in the sole discretion of MTSA, other forms of disciplinary action are inappropriate given the severity of the actions.

There are certain offenses which MTSA believes are so serious that progressive discipline is not appropriate. This latter type of conduct would be considered gross misconduct and would normally result in termination or other severe disciplinary measures for a first offense.

Examples of Gross Misconduct include but are not limited to the following:

- Insubordination
- Absence from work without notice (i.e., no show, no call)
- Being inattentive while on duty, including sleeping on the job
- Consumption of alcoholic beverages while on duty
- Use, sale, possession, or being under the influence of a controlled substance on campus
- Falsification of college records, documents, patient records
- Physical, verbal abuse, or threat of assault to MTSA employees, students, or visitors
- Theft, destruction, unauthorized use of MTSA equipment/property
- Inappropriate computer usage, including but not limited to access of pornographic materials
- Possession of a weapon.
- Unauthorized or inappropriate use of MTSA funds or credit cards
- Unauthorized disclosure and/or use of confidential or proprietary MTSA information
- Conviction of a felony



Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia reserves the right to determine the appropriate level of discipline for any inappropriate conduct, including oral and written warnings, suspension with or without pay, and demotion or discharge.

## AMOROUS RELATIONSHIPS

MTSA prohibits any amorous relationships between faculty/employees/administration and their subordinates or with any enrolled student. Such relationships could lead to undue favoritism or the perception of undue favoritism. Such relationships are improper when they influence or could reasonably be expected to influence decisions or actions in college-related matters.

For additional information, please see [Nepotism & Assignment Policy](#).

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Students, alumni, and other parties with whom MTSA does business entrust MTSA with important information relating to their personal information and businesses. It is MTSA's policy that confidential information will not be disclosed to external parties or to other employees without a "need to know." If an employee questions whether certain information is confidential, they should first check with their immediate supervisor.

This policy is intended to always alert employees to the need for discretion regarding such information and is not intended to inhibit normal business communications.

## OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees are permitted to engage in outside work or to hold other jobs, subject to certain restrictions as outlined below.

Activities and conduct away from the job must not compete with, conflict with, or compromise MTSA's interests or adversely affect job performance and the ability to fulfill all job responsibilities. In addition, employees are not to solicit or conduct any outside business during paid working time.

Employees are cautioned to carefully consider the demands that additional work activity will create before accepting outside employment. Outside employment will not be considered an excuse for poor job performance, absenteeism, tardiness, leaving early, refusal to travel, or refusal to work overtime or different hours. If MTSA determines that an employee's outside work interferes with performance, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment. Violation of this rule will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## SEPARATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Separation of employment with MTSA can occur for several reasons:

**Resignation:** To facilitate a smooth transition, non-exempt employees who are resigning should provide a minimum notice of eight (8) working days, in writing, and exempt employees who are resigning should provide a minimum notice of ninety (90) working days, in writing. Faculty should provide notice as outlined in their letter of intent and consistent with the Faculty Addendum. The notice should be given to the employee's supervisor or area vice president, who will forward the original notice immediately to the Director of Human Resources. Accrued paid time off may not be used to satisfy notice requirements. MTSA reserves the right to provide an employee with pay in lieu of notice in situations where such action is warranted. If an employee provides less notice than requested, MTSA may deem the individual to be ineligible for rehire depending on the circumstances.

**Retirement:** Employees should notify their supervisor and the Office of Human Resource in writing at least thirty (30) calendar days for non-exempt and ninety (90) days for exempt personnel before their planned retirement date.

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**Job Abandonment:** Employees who fail to report to work or contact their supervisor for two (2) consecutive days shall be considered to have abandoned the job without notice. The supervisor should notify the Office of Human Resource and initiate the paperwork to terminate the employee. Employees who are separated due to job abandonment are not eligible for rehire or to receive accrued benefits, unless otherwise required by law.

**Death:** In termination of employment due to death of the employee, MTSA will pay any accrued wages and benefits to the employee's executor, administrator, or estate representative. MTSA may require evidence of authority for release of such benefits and wages.

**Termination:** Employees of Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia are employed on an at-will basis, and MTSA retains the right to terminate an employee at any time. All discharges for cause will be reviewed by the Director of Human Resources, area vice president, and the President of MTSA.

## EXIT PROCESS

All terminating employees should contact the Human Resources department as soon as notice is given to schedule an exit interview to review benefits, last pay, and other information regarding employment termination.

Health insurance terminates the last day of employment. Information for Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) continued health coverage will be provided at the exit interview.

## FINAL PAY

The final payroll deposit is normally available no later than the next regular payday following the date of separation. A Separation Notice will be completed by the Office of Human Resources and provided to the employee in a timely manner.

## LEAVE PAY OUT

Employees voluntarily terminating their employment by meeting the notice requirements outlined under "Resignation" are entitled to pay out of unused accrued paid time off up to a maximum of 160 hours or 4 weeks' pay for non-exempt employees and pay out of unused accrued paid time off up to a maximum of 320 hours or 8 weeks' pay for exempt employees.

For additional information, please see [Paid Time Off \(PTO\)](#).

## COBRA

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) provides the opportunity for eligible employees and their dependents to continue health insurance coverage under the school's health plan when a "qualifying event" could result in the loss of eligibility. Qualifying events include resignation, termination of employment, death of an employee, reduction in hours, a leave of absence, divorce or legal separation, entitlement to Medicare, or where a dependent child no longer meets eligibility requirements. Please contact Human Resources to learn more about COBRA rights.

## RETURN OF MTSA PROPERTY

Any separating employee must return all MTSA property at the time of separation, including MTSA engraved clothing, cell phones, keys, PCs, documentation, identification cards, corporate credit cards, and any other MTSA property. Failure to return school property may result in deductions from the final payroll deposit or paycheck. Employees will be required to sign the Wage Deduction Authorization Agreement to deduct the costs of such items from the final payroll deposit or paycheck.

## REHIRE

Former employees who left Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia in good standing and were classified as eligible for rehire may be considered for reemployment. An application must be submitted to the Office of Human Resource, and the applicant must meet all minimum qualifications and requirements of the position. An employee who is terminated for violating policy or who resigned in lieu of termination from employment due to a policy violation is ineligible for rehire.

## CRIMINAL ACTIVITY / ARREST

Involvement in criminal activity, whether on or off MTSA property, during employment may result in disciplinary action including suspension or termination of employment. Disciplinary action depends upon a review of all factors involved, including whether the employee's action was work-related, the nature of the act, or circumstances which adversely affect attendance or performance. Any disciplinary action is not dependent upon the disposition of any case in court.

Employees are expected to be on the job ready to work when scheduled. Inability to report to work as scheduled as a result of an arrest may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, for violation of an attendance policy or job abandonment.

Any disciplinary action taken will be based on information reasonably available. This information may come from witnesses, police, or any other source if management has reason to view the source as credible.

## DRUG & ALCOHOL STATEMENT

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia has a longstanding commitment to provide a safe and productive work environment. Alcohol and drug abuse pose a threat to the health and safety of employees, students, and to the security of our equipment and facilities. For these reasons, MTSA is committed to the elimination of drug and/or alcohol use and abuse in the workplace and complies with The Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988 and The Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989.

This policy outlines the practice and procedure designed to correct instances of identified alcohol and/or drug use in the workplace. This policy applies to all employees and all applicants for employment to MTSA. The Director of Human Resources is responsible for policy administration.

Illegal drug use and alcohol misuse have a number of adverse health and safety consequences. Information about those consequences and sources of help for drug/alcohol problems is available from the Office of Human Resources.

When possible, Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia will assist and support any employee who voluntarily seeks help for such problems before becoming subject to discipline and/or termination under this or other policies. Employees may be allowed to use accrued paid time off, placed on a leave of absence, referred to treatment providers, and otherwise accommodated as required by law. Employees may be required to document that they are successfully following prescribed treatment and to take and pass follow-up tests if they hold jobs that are safety sensitive or that require driving or if they have violated this policy previously.

Employees should report to work fit for duty and free of any adverse effects of illegal drugs or alcohol. This policy does not prohibit employees from the lawful use and possession of prescribed medications and alcohol. Employees must, however, consult with their doctors about any medication's effect on their fitness for duty and ability to work safely, and must promptly disclose any work restrictions to their supervisors. Employees should not, however, disclose underlying medical conditions unless directed to do so.

The prohibited use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace includes but is not limited to:

- Using, possessing, buying, selling, manufacturing, or dispensing an illegal drug (to include possession of drug paraphernalia);
- Being under the influence of alcohol while on duty or an illegal drug as defined in this policy;
- The presence of any detectable amount of any illegal drug or illegal controlled substance in an employee's body while performing school business or while in an MTSA facility is prohibited;
- MTSA will not allow employees to perform their duties while taking prescribed drugs that are adversely affecting their ability to perform their job duties safely and effectively. Employees taking a prescribed medication must carry it in the container labeled by a licensed pharmacist or be prepared to produce it if asked.

Any illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia will be turned over to an appropriate law enforcement agency and may result in criminal prosecution.

## CONSEQUENCES

Applicants who refuse to cooperate in a drug test or who test positive will not be hired. Employees who refuse to cooperate in required tests or who use, possess, buy, sell, manufacture, or dispense an illegal drug in violation of this policy will be terminated. The first time an employee tests positive for alcohol or illegal drug use under this policy, the employee will be subject discipline up to and including termination. Whether such employee is offered a last-chance basis to maintain their job is dependent on the circumstances and the employee's work history/record.

Employees will be paid for reasonable time spent in alcohol/ drug testing and then suspended pending the results of the drug/alcohol test. After the results of the test are received, a date/time will be scheduled to discuss the results of the test; this meeting will include a member of management and one from Human Resources. If the results prove to be negative, the employee will receive back pay for the work hours/days of suspension.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Information and records relating to test results, drug and alcohol dependencies, and legitimate medical explanations will be kept confidential to the extent required by law and maintained in secure files separate from normal personnel files.

For additional information on drug laws with a list of controlled substances defined by federal and state law, substance abuse resources, and legal and institution sanctions see [Drug Free Work Place](#) and [Suspected Substance Abuse Protocol](#), which are annually disclosed to personnel.

## REQUIRED TESTING

MTSA retains the right to require the following drug and alcohol tests. Employees are forewarned that these tests may detect improper conduct committed away from the workplace and during non-working time:

**Reasonable Suspicion:** Employees are subject to testing based on observations by a supervisor or member of management of apparent workplace use, possession, or impairment of a drug or alcohol. The Director of Human Resources must be consulted before sending employees for reasonable suspicion testing.

**Follow-up:** Employees who have tested positive or otherwise in violation are subject to discipline up to and including discharge. Depending on the circumstances and the employee's work history/record, MTSA may offer an employee who violates this procedural guideline or tests positive the opportunity to return to work on a last-chance basis pursuant to mutually agreeable terms, which could include follow-up drug testing on a random basis for a minimum of one (1) year but not more than two (2) years. Also, if an employee either does not complete their rehabilitation program or tests positive after completing the rehabilitation program, they will be subject to immediate termination of employment.

## CONSEQUENCES

Employees who refuse to cooperate in required tests or who use, possess, buy, sell, manufacture, or dispense an illegal drug in violation of this guideline will be terminated. The first time an employee tests positive for alcohol or illegal drug use under this guideline, the employee will be subject discipline up to and including termination. Whether such employee is offered a last-chance basis to maintain their job is dependent on the circumstances and the employee's work history/record.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Information and records relating to test results, drug and alcohol dependencies, and legitimate medical explanations will be kept confidential to the extent required by law and maintained in secure files separate from normal personnel files.

## POST-EMPLOYMENT REFERENCE

MTSA's policy is to confirm dates of employment, eligibility for rehire, and job title only. With written authorization, MTSA will confirm compensation. All official employment verification requests and communications must be submitted through the Office of Human Resources.

## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

MTSA has established a step-by-step grievance procedure to assure that any employee with a grievance has a mechanism to be heard. Most grievances can be resolved in an informal manner to ensure institutional harmony and a spirit of collegiality among faculty, students, supportive personnel, and administration. However, to be considered by a Grievance Committee, a grievance is defined as a claim of inappropriate or improper application of policy or practice.

The Director of Human Resources has the responsibility for coordinating the grievance procedure and must be notified as soon as a formal complaint is initiated. If any employee believes that at any step of this procedure the response received is not fair and equitable or if management fails to respond, the employee may proceed to the next step in the grievance process. The steps for filing a grievance may be found in Administrative Manual.

For additional information, please see [Grievance Procedure for MTSA Employees Policy](#).

## MISREPRESENTATION POLICY

**Policy Number: 3.3.117**

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia (MTSA) operates with integrity in all matters. Any representative of MTSA is responsible for assuring that the actions and activities conducted on behalf of the School promote such an environment.

Any representative of MTSA is prohibited under Federal regulations from making any false, erroneous, or misleading statements with respect to the:

- Nature of the educational program
- Nature of financial charges
- Employability of graduates

This Misrepresentation Policy addresses the U.S Department of Education regulations, 34 CFR § 668.71 through 668.75, regarding the prohibition of misrepresentation to students and others about the Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia. Violations of the regulations may result in fines up to \$25,000 per occurrence (20 USC § 1094(c) (3)).

The below definitions outline the scope of the regulations:

- Misrepresentation is defined as any false, erroneous or misleading statement made by the school, or one of its representatives, either directly or indirectly to a student, prospective student, family of either, any member of the public, accrediting agency, state agency, or US Department of Education. This includes dissemination of a student endorsement or testimonial made under duress or because the school required the student to provide the endorsement to participate in the program,
- Misleading statements are those that have the likelihood or a tendency to deceive or confuse the person to whom they are made. A statement is any communication whether it is made in writing, visually, orally, or through any other means of communication,
- Substantial misrepresentation is misrepresentation on which a person could reasonably be expected to rely, or has reasonably relied, to that person's detriment.

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## PROCEDURE

MTSA strives to provide accurate, honest and clear information in print, online, broadcast media or oral presentations. The School will make every effort to avoid misrepresentation to students and others in any form of dissemination. The website and other published information are reviewed, at least annually and any updates are approved through School committees. This policy is reviewed annually with MTSA representatives.

**Reporting:** Concerns about possible misrepresentation are to be reported to MTSA's Human Resources.

**Enforcement:** Any violation of this directive is a serious offense. Administration will work with the Human Resources Department to take appropriate disciplinary action based on the totality of circumstances, including but not limited to the nature and extent of any violation, to ensure that violations are not repeated.

## STAKEHOLDERS' RIGHTS

**Policy Number:** 3.3.112

**Reviewed:** 3/12, 7/13

**Revised:** 7/12, 8/17

## ACCREDITING AGENCIES' RIGHTS

Each accrediting agency with which MTSA has interaction shall expect that MTSA will be open and honest in its presentation of the School. It is expected that the administration will operate the School with the highest level of integrity, performance, and quality, so the accrediting agency and the public which the School serves shall have confidence in its operations.

## AFFILIATING INSTITUTIONS' RIGHTS

MTSA maintains many clinical affiliations. Each affiliate site should expect that MTSA will solicit and maintain licensure information, and a pertinent health history on each student such as current TB skin tests and relevant immunizations. Affiliates shall expect that MTSA will instruct its students as to maintaining the privacy of health information of its patients. They shall expect that MTSA will provide basic safety instruction and an orientation related to anesthesia practice, and that MTSA will provide information regarding the outcomes expectations of students at each level.

## FACULTY AND STAFF MEMBERS' RIGHTS

Members of the MTSA administration, staff and faculty shall have academic freedom in teaching. This group shall be able to speak, write or act as citizens without institutional censorship or discipline, providing such actions are in harmony with the MTSA Mission, Vision, Values and Goals as found in the *MTSA Administrative Manual*.

Additionally, administration, staff and faculty must understand that as persons of learning and educational representatives of MTSA, they must remember the public may judge their professions and the institution by their words and acts.

While off campus, yet representing the School (i.e., conventions, seminars, etc.), at all times, administration, staff and faculty should be accurate and show respect for the opinions of others, while abiding by MTSA standards and policies. Special care should be given when personal opinion is shared that may conflict with MTSA standards and/or policies and procedures.

MTSA faculty and staff have the right to be treated with respect by each student, and the student will be held accountable for doing so. Digressions may be reported to, with possible hearing by, the Progressions Committee and/or the President's Council.

Faculty and staff have a right to the grievance and due process protocol, as listed in the

*MTSA Administrative Manual and Faculty Handbook*.

## PATIENTS' RIGHTS

Patients have a right to be cared for with the utmost respect by nurse anesthesia students as they are specializing in anesthesia. They should expect that the quality of care will reflect the scope and standards for nurse anesthesia practice, and abide by HIPAA regulations.

Doctoral students that are utilizing any patients or subjects in the course of their scholarly projects must have their project approved by the institutional review board (IRB).

## APPLICANTS' RIGHTS

Applicants have a right to expect that MTSA will follow the most current edition of the *MTSA Student Handbook* related to admission requirements and processes for the program in which they are interested, with the understanding that there will be updates and revisions at least annually.

## STUDENTS' RIGHTS

Students have a right to expect that MTSA will treat them with respect and will abide by the standards set forth in the most current edition of the *MTSA Student Handbook* applicable to their program of study. Students have the right to a grievance process as described in policy 5.1.102: Students' Rights: Complaints/Grievances.

## GENERAL EMPLOYMENT

### SABBATH OBSERVANCE

Due to MTSA being founded on Seventh-day Adventist Church principles, the school recognizes and observes the Sabbath. From sunset Friday to sunset Saturday, employees are discouraged from working on behalf of the school. Only those services and activities essential to a comprehensive educational program are permitted.

For additional information, please see [Christian Seventh-day Adventist Legacy](#).

### PERSONNEL RECORDS

Employee files are maintained by the Office of Human Resources and are considered confidential. Supervisors may have access to personnel file information on a need-to-know basis.

A supervisor considering the hire of a former employee or transfer of a current employee may be granted access to the file, or limited parts of it, in accordance with applicable laws and MTSA policy.

Personnel file access by current employees upon request will generally be permitted within three days of the request unless more time is needed. Requests by former employees will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Personnel files will be reviewed in the Office of Human Resources and may not be taken outside the office or copied without the express permission of the Director of Human Resources or the President of MTSA.

### PERSONAL DATA CHANGES

It is the obligation of each employee to provide MTSA with current contact information, including current mailing address and telephone number. Employees can submit the appropriate updated forms if any personal data changes are made. Failure to do so may result in loss of benefits or delayed receipt of W-2 and other mailings.

### ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION & INTERNET USE

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia computing, telecommunications, and networking resources are provided to students, faculty, and staff for the support of instruction, administration, and research activities of the institution. These resources are operated under a variety of security systems, procedures, and protocols. Use of these resources is a privilege granted by MTSA. Users of these resources are expected to conduct their activities within the restrictions and overall policies of Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia, the laws of the State of Tennessee, and Federal statutes.

Misuse or improper use of MTSA computing facilities, resources, and equipment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Theft or destruction, unauthorized access or use, reproduction without proper authorization, unapproved sharing access codes or security-related procedures, or violation of the copyright laws.



- Viewing and/or transmitting abusive, obscene, harassing, or threatening materials that interfere with the job performance or work atmosphere of others.
- Use for commercial, personal, or business purposes that conflict with MTSA's mission, policies, or procedures.

Email messages sent via the MTSA Internet will be viewed by recipients as originating with and as being authorized by Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia. Accordingly, each employee using the MTSA Internet is responsible for the accuracy of all communications, compliance with this policy, and obtaining management approval.

MTSA reserves the right to access and disclose, without notice at any time for any reason, all messages sent or received via the Internet.

The e-mail system and the messages transmitted over it are MTSA's exclusive property and may or may not be treated as private or confidential as determined solely by MTSA.

Group accounts have been set up to aid in communication between faculty, staff, and students. Sending chain letters, junk mail, or messages containing large files to groups is not acceptable.

**Please note that failure to respond to emails within two MTSA business days is considered unprofessional conduct.**

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia will take appropriate action against any user who misuses computer resources. Such actions include but are not limited to, canceling the user's account, revoking the user's operation privileges, revoking access to resources, assessing penalties as provided by MTSA policies, disciplinary measures, and seeking any other legally available remedies.

For additional information, please see [Computer & Network Use](#), [Sensitive Data Protection](#), and [Standards of Conduct](#) policies.

## COPYRIGHT

The ownership of any materials, processes, or inventions developed solely at individual effort, time, and expenses shall vest in the employee and may be copyrighted or patented in their name. Any previously developed materials, processes, or inventions that the employee wishes to retain ownership of and rights to, and meets the criteria listed above, must be disclosed prior to any use on MTSA's behalf.

Materials, processes, or inventions created or produced on behalf of MTSA as part of your paid employment will be considered Work for Hire and shall vest in MTSA and may be copyrighted or patented in MTSA's name.

In those instances where materials, processes, or inventions are produced by an employee, MTSA support (including but not limited to time, facilities, or resources) shall be negotiated between the employee and MTSA prior to commencement. Ownership, vesting, and copyright rights shall be specified and agreed upon by both parties in writing. In the event no such written agreement is established, the ownership and all rights shall vest in MTSA.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Guidelines for functioning in an electronic world follow the same values, ethics, and confidentiality/conflict of interest policies that employees are expected to abide by each day, regardless of the social media involved in the discussion.

This policy applies to all Internet- and mobile-based tools involving user-generated content and interaction, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. These standards also apply to blogs, podcasts, newsgroups, email distribution lists, and similar social networking sites.

MTSA encourages open, transparent communication that reflects the professional standards necessary to secure and keep the trust of the communities we serve. MTSA expects that social media and online behavior will not violate the school's policies.

Only MTSA employees acting within their official capacities as authorized by the school may use social media to portray themselves as representing the institution or to conduct business in the name of the school. Use of any social media to represent MTSA in this way by employees must be approved Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia by appropriate members of the school's Executive Administration. This includes usage of MTSA logos that construe sanctioning by the school when used with online posts or groups. Any site or page claiming to be MTSA-affiliated must obtain prior authorization through Executive Administration and are subject to review or amendment.

If a post is brought to the attention of administration, MTSA will review posts that appear to violate relevant law or school policies and will take appropriate action.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Student record information is similarly protected by FERPA (Federal Education Records Protection Act).
- Secured communication policies are in place elsewhere to maintain confidentiality of student records, meaning these records are always off limits to social media discussions.
- Likewise, confidential information about faculty and staff members may not be posted without an employee's consent.
- Certain publicity or marketing purposes involving employee or student identities must follow the proper permissions process overseen by the Marketing Department to obtain authorization to release information.
- Employees may participate in social media in ways that do not violate other standards of conduct or policies, including violating privacy involving individuals' protected information.
- Financial, confidential, or proprietary information may not be shared via social media. When posting on social media sites about MTSA-related news reported by the school or news media sources, employees must use the following disclaimer when discussing job-related matters: *"The opinions expressed on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent the views of Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia."*
- False information about MTSA's products and services or maliciously untrue statements presented as fact are prohibited. While obscenities, slurs, or other derogatory comments may be protected as free speech, it is generally advisable to avoid such conduct when directed at damaging the reputation of MTSA, its students, employees, or applicants.
- MTSA's logo or name cannot be modified or used by employees for personal endorsements, and MTSA's logo and name cannot be used by employees to promote a product, cause, political party, or candidate.

For additional information, please see [Computer and Network Use](#) policy.

## THIRD PARTY DISCLOSURES

From time to time, MTSA may become involved in news stories or potential or actual legal proceedings. If that happens, lawyers, former employees, newspapers, law enforcement agencies, and other outside persons may contact MTSA employees to obtain information about the incident or the actual or potential lawsuit.

Employees should never speak on behalf of MTSA. All inquiries from the media must be referred to Executive Administration.

## USE OF MTSA EQUIPMENT

Equipment assigned to a department is available for use for official business by authorized personnel of that department and other authorized employees of other departments. Use of MTSA owned equipment for off-campus personal business is prohibited without departmental or area head approval and full personal liability for equipment being assumed by the employee(s) involved.

## COPY MACHINES

Within reason, employees are allowed to use the copying machines to make copies of personal materials. Copying materials for resale or in large quantities for a group, club, or business is strictly prohibited.

## TELEPHONE USE

MTSA understands that employees will place or receive personal phone calls, texts, or use other electronic devices from time to time. However, excessive usage of personal devices will not be permitted and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

## NON-SOLICITATION / NON-DISTRIBUTION

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia prohibits the solicitation, distribution, and posting of materials on or at MTSA property by any employee or non-employee, except as may be permitted by this guideline. The exceptions to this guideline are charitable and community activities supported by MTSA management and MTSA-sponsored programs related to MTSA's products and services.

- Non-employees may not solicit employees or distribute literature of any kind on MTSA premises at any time.
- Employees may not solicit other employees during work times, except in connection with an MTSA-approved or sponsored event.
- Employees may not distribute literature of any kind during work times or in any work area at any time, except in connection with an MTSA-sponsored event.
- Employees may admit nonemployees to work areas only with management approval or as part of an MTSA-sponsored program. These visits should not disrupt workflow. An employee must always accompany the nonemployee. Former employees are not permitted onto MTSA property except for official school business or with prior approval.
- The posting of materials or electronic announcements are permitted with approval from the Director for Human Resources.

## OPEN-DOOR COMMUNICATION

MTSA encourages open, honest, and accurate communication between employees, co-workers, and management. MTSA wants to hear suggestions and concerns and wants employees to know of their importance to the school's success. MTSA is also committed to open communications with all employees. MTSA is committed to keep employees informed and will provide information regarding issues that are important to employees.

If an employee has discussed an issue with their supervisor and is not completely satisfied with the response, they can address their concerns with the Office of Human Resources.

For additional information, please see [Anonymous Communication](#).

## DRESS CODE

**Policy Number: 3.2.305**

Reviewed: 3/12, 3/14, 10/2020, 7/2021

Revised: 6/21/10, 5/11/22

As a representative of MTSA, you are required to always present a good appearance to the public and to our guests. Attire will be “professional dress.” For the purposes of this policy, “professional dress” is defined as clean, neat, and appropriate for the type of work performed. If an employee’s dress is determined inappropriate (i.e. too casual, provocative, unsafe, or solicitous), supervisors should contact the Office of Human Resources for further direction.

All employees are expected to practice good hygiene. Hair must be clean and neat, and if colored, a natural hair color is acceptable. Mustaches and beards are to be kept neat and in a professional manner. No more than two earrings may be worn on each ear while on duty. Facial piercings are prohibited, with the exception of 1 stud nose ring (no larger than 1.5 mm). In all campus areas, offices, classrooms or in professional meetings, employees will not have visible offensive tattoos. Any visible tattooing must be moderate in amount and nature. Repeated violations will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

## VISITORS

An occasional brief visit by guests to offices of MTSA employees is permissible if these visits are approved by the supervisor and do not detract from the business or academic atmosphere in all departments. Long or frequent visits of guests are not permitted.

## COMPANY VEHICLES USAGE

All employees authorized to drive MTSA-owned or leased vehicles or to rent vehicles for use in conducting school business, must possess a current, valid state driver’s license and an acceptable driving record and be eligible for coverage by our insurance company.

Any change in license status or driving record must be reported to management immediately. From time to time, MTSA or school’s insurance carrier may request reports from the Department of Motor Vehicles regarding the license status and driving record of employees whose job responsibilities include driving. If the license status or driving record of any employee whose job responsibilities include driving becomes unacceptable to management or MTSA’s insurance carrier, that employee may be restricted from driving, reassigned, suspended, or terminated, at management’s discretion.

A valid state driver’s license must be in the employees’ possession while operating a vehicle during school business on or off MTSA property. It is the responsibility of every employee to drive safely and obey all traffic, vehicle safety, parking laws, and/or regulations. Drivers should always demonstrate safe-driving habits.

If an employee must drive their own vehicle, rather than the MTSA vehicle, the employee must provide proof of adequate automobile insurance.

These requirements apply to employees who routinely drive as a part of their job, but these requirements do not apply to normal commuting to and from work.

For additional information, please see [Vehicle Usage \(School-owned Vehicles\)](#) policy.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER

Generally, MTSA does not provide any days off for inclement weather. Employees are expected to use their judgment regarding travel to and from campus when there is inclement weather. Should an employee elect not to report to campus when MTSA is open, and do not have the capability to work remotely, the employee must use PTO for the day. If MTSA decides to close during regular business hours due to inclement weather, PTO will not be used.

An Emergency Response Plan has been developed which identifies individual and corporate responses to natural and man-made disasters and emergencies.

## SUPPORTING OUR COLLEAGUES

With an interest of creating and building a spirit of caring and concern, MTSA sends forms of recognition when there has been a death in an employee's family. For purposes of this procedure, family includes the following relationships: spouse, domestic partner, child, parent, grandparent, brother, sister, mother-in-law, and father-in-law.

If an employee experiences the loss of a family member, please notify the Office of Human Resources to make the contact so arrangements can be made on a timely basis.

When an employee has had a hospital stay or medical procedure and is out of work recuperating or if an employee has added to their family through the birth of a child or the adoption of a child, MTSA will send a gift basket to the employee's home. Please notify the Office of Human Resources to make the contact so arrangements can be made on a timely basis.

For additional information, please see [Memorial & Get-Well Gifts](#) policy.

## FOOD & ENTERTAINMENT

Consistent with its Seventh-day Adventist heritage, MTSA prohibits the serving of any alcoholic beverages or unclean meats as described in Leviticus (i.e., pork, shellfish, shrimp, etc.). Employees are prohibited from consuming alcoholic beverages and/or controlled substances while attending MTSA-sponsored events or publicly representing MTSA at professional meetings, conferences, or other activities interfacing with the public or professional peers.

For additional information, please see [Food & Entertainment](#) policy.

## COMPANY CREDIT CARD

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia may provide employees with credit cards that can be used for business-related expenses. Having these cards helps keep track and process expenses, prevent fraud, and make payments more efficiently. MTSA wants to ensure employees who hold company credit cards will use them properly and will know their limitations and responsibilities.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of these credit card guidelines is to (a) outline the eligibility and authorization procedures, (b) state the terms and conditions of the company credit card, (c) define the limitations and exceptions, and (d) explain the card violations and disciplinary action process.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all MTSA employees that are authorized to use the company credit card.

## AUTHORIZATION

The MTSA credit card is only available to authorized personnel, namely the executive administration, administration, and managers. The VP of Finance & Administration or other member of executive administration reserves the right to release the company credit card to any MTSA employee(s), depending on the circumstances, necessary documentation, and company-related expenses.

## CONDITIONS OF USE

- MTSA reserves the right to release and withdraw the company credit card any time, with or without cause.
- The MTSA credit card should only be used for company-related expenses and for purposes relating to the employee's job commitments.
- The company credit card cannot be used to receive cash advances, bank checks, traveler's checks, and/or electronic cash transfers.
- An employee in possession of the company credit card must take full responsibility for all purchases made on the card.
- An employee in possession of the company credit card is prohibited from giving the card to unauthorized individuals and/or employees, including fellow MTSA employees.
- Employees that are required to attend business trips are allowed to use the company credit card for accommodation, transportation, and/or meals, as long as each purchase adheres to all MTSA policies.
- The MTSA credit card cannot be used for personal expenses.
- MTSA Finance and/or Business Office reserves the right to view monthly credit card statements, with or without cause.
- Each transaction made with the company credit card, including purchase receipts, must be reported to the finance department within 8 days of receipt of the monthly credit card statement.
- Violation of this policy can lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

For additional information, please see [Credit Card Purchases](#).

## CORONAVIRUS COVID-19 GUIDELINES

This MTSA guideline includes the measures currently being taken to mitigate the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). Employees are kindly requested to follow all these rules diligently, to sustain a healthy and safe workplace. It is important that all employees respond responsibly and transparently to these health precautions. MTSA will always treat employee's private health and personal data with high confidentiality and sensitivity.

This coronavirus (COVID-19) guideline is susceptible to changes with the introduction of additional governmental guidelines. If so, employees will be updated as soon as possible via email. All employees are responsible for implementing these policies.

## EMPLOYEE EXHIBITING COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

If an employee exhibits COVID-19 symptoms (fever/chills, cough, sore throat, runny nose, shortness of breath, diarrhea, etc.), the employee must notify their supervisor and leave the campus. MTSA encourages all employees exhibiting symptoms to get tested for COVID-19.

*Under no circumstances should an employee with a fever report for duty on campus.*

Employees who have tested negative for COVID-19 should take a PCR test for confirmation. If the employee has a fever, the employee must stay home until no fever for 24 hours without taking fever-reducing medicine. If an employee is having respiratory symptoms, employee is allowed to return to work if symptoms are improving and **MUST** wear a surgical mask until symptoms resolve.

Employees who have tested POSITIVE for COVID-19 must isolate themselves at home and review the *Employee Return to Work After COVID-19* guidelines.

## EMPLOYEE EXPOSED TO COVID-19

Employees who are fully vaccinated and were exposed outside of work may continue to work with the following conditions: must wear a surgical/procedure mask while in contact with others.

Employees who are not fully vaccinated and were exposed outside of work may continue to work if employee has received a negative result. If pending results and exhibiting no symptoms, employee may continue to work but must wear a surgical/procedure mask while in contact with others.

If COVID-19 symptoms develop, refer to the section Employee Exhibiting COVID-19 Symptoms for steps to follow.

## EMPLOYEE TESTS POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

Employees who test positive for COVID-19 must notify their supervisor and the Office of Human Resources and will be directed to self-quarantine away from campus. Please see *Employee Return to Work After COVID-19* guidelines.

## EMPLOYEE RETURN TO WORK AFTER COVID-19

### NEGATIVE FOLLOW-UP TEST RESULTS

Regardless of vaccination status if follow-up test is **negative**, and employee is:

- **NOT immunosuppressed**, follow-up test must be collected on day 5 or later. Employee cannot return to work until after day 6 at the earliest.
- **immunosuppressed**, follow-up test must be collected on day 10 or later. Employee cannot return to work until after day 11 at the earliest.

### POSITIVE FOLLOW-UP TEST RESULTS

- If an employee's **follow-up test is positive**, the employee cannot return to work, and can test daily until the test is negative **OR** meets the criteria below.

### IF EMPLOYEE DID NOT GET A FOLLOW-UP TEST:

- If employee is **vaccinated and not immunosuppressed**, employee cannot return to work until after day 7 at the earliest.
- If employee is **unvaccinated and not immunosuppressed**, employee cannot return to work until after day 10 at the earliest.
- Regardless vaccination status, if employee is **immunosuppressed**, employee cannot return to work until after day 20 at the earliest.

## CHILDREN IN THE WORKPLACE

In order to maintain a professional work environment and ensure the health and safety of our Campus, employees are discouraged from bringing children to the workplace. Frequent, regular, or extended visits by children during work hours are not allowed. Brief, infrequent visits by children may occur in the workplace; however, children are not allowed inside classrooms, simulation labs, or controlled access areas.

When brief, infrequent visits by children are permitted, parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring that the visits comply with all designated safety protocols and MTSA guidelines, including, but not limited to, the following:

- At all times, children remain the sole responsibility of the parents/guardians.
- At all times, parents/guardians must accompany their children.
- The presence of the child cannot disrupt the work environment or negatively affect the productivity of employees and/or students.
- At any time, if the employee's supervisor determines that health or safety risks are too great, or that the children's presence is disruptive, the supervisor may ask the employee to remove their children from the workplace.
- Bringing children to the workplace on a recurrent basis during their school breaks, closures, or before/after school care, or lack of childcare is not appropriate.
- Children who have an illness that prevents acceptance by a regular day care provider or prevents attendance at school, particularly any children with an infectious disease, should not be brought to the workplace under any circumstances.

## EXCLUSIONS OR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Children cannot be brought to campus during periods of emergency (e.g., natural and/or man-made disasters, disaster recovery, health pandemics) either on an intermittent or reoccurring basis. Employees should contact their supervisor in such cases to determine alternate solutions to balance work activities and childcare needs.

## ANIMALS ON MTSA PROPERTY

**Policy Number: 5.1.305**

*Revised: New - 9/19/2023, 12/11/2023 BOT approved*

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 ("ADA"), Service Animals are permitted on campus for individuals with disabilities. As a non-residential day-use higher educational campus, MTSA does not allow emotional support animals or pets on campus. These guidelines address animals utilized for disability purposes.

### **Service Animals**

In Tennessee, only dogs are considered to be Service Animals. A Service Animal is a dog individually trained to do work or perform work tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. The work or work tasks performed by a Service Animal must be directly related to the individual's disability. Providing emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship does not constitute work or work tasks for this definition. A Handler is a person with a Service Animal.

Service Animals are permitted on campus when both of the following conditions are met:

- The Handler has a disability as defined by the ADA
- The accompanying Service Animal is trained to do a specific task for the Handler



MTSA has a right to request the Handler to request the following:

- Affirmation that the Service Animal is required due to disability
- A description of the specific tasks or work the Service Animal has been trained to perform
- Proof of the Service Animal's current vaccination and registration (to be updated annually)

#### Handler Responsibility for Service Animals

- Handler is responsible for attending to and being in complete control of the Service Animal at all times.
- A Service Animal must wear a leash, harness, or cape that identifies the animal as a Service Animal when on duty anywhere on campus, unless the Handler is able to use a harness, leash, or tether; or using a harness, leash, or tether will interfere with the animal's ability to safely and effectively perform its duties.
- Costs of care necessary for the well-being of the Service Animal
- Arrangements and sole responsibility for the care of the Service Animal at all times, such as including regular bathing and grooming, as needed
- Independently removing or arranging for the removal of the Service Animal's waste
- Complying with local and state licensing laws, the Service Animal should be current with immunizations and wear a rabies vaccination tag.
- Paying for any damage to MTSA property caused by the Service Animal.

## BENEFITS

### ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFITS

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia maintains a Benefits Plan which provides eligible employees access to a range of plans to help them, and their qualified dependents deal with many financial challenges, such as the high cost of healthcare, loss of income due to death or disability, and the out-of-pocket costs for dependent care or healthcare. All benefits are administered according to applicable plan documents. Benefits are subject to change at any time. For more details, plan documents are available from the Office of Human Resources. Benefit plans are reviewed annually, and open enrollment is held annually. All full-time employees (FTEs) are eligible to participate in the comprehensive MTSA benefits program.

### MEDICAL PLAN

All full-time employees are eligible for group medical insurance on the first date of employment.

### HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNT

All full-time employees are eligible to participate in the partially funded health savings account (HSA) by the institution. The HSA funds can be used for IRS approved medical, dental, vision, or other health related expenses. These funds are deposited into the designated accounts in January and July of each year.

If a new employee is hired in between the listed deposited months, the prorated amount from the date of hire to the next deposit date will be added to the employee's HSA account. Funds will be deposited once employee has completed a successful 90 day probationary period.

## DENTAL INSURANCE

All full-time employees are eligible for dental insurance on the first date of employment.

## VISION CARE INSURANCE

All full-time employees are eligible for vision insurance on the first date of employment.

## DISABILITY INSURANCE

### SHORT TERM DISABILITY

MTSA recognizes that financial security is necessary during a short-term absence from work because of illness or injury. Therefore, MTSA provides, at no cost to the employee, a short-term total disability plan to provide income benefits during the waiting period for long-term total disability benefits and prior to eligibility for Social Security Disability benefits.

All regular full-time employees are automatically eligible for this benefit.

### LONG TERM DISABILITY PLAN

Full-time employees are eligible for the long-term disability insurance coverage. Long-term disability insurance coverage is provided at no cost to the employee.

Paid Time Off accruals are suspended when an employee is approved for either short or long-term disability.

## LIFE INSURANCE

### GROUP LIFE INSURANCE

Employees are eligible for group life insurance coverage. The premiums are paid by MTSA. Plan details may be viewed by reviewing the Benefits Enrollment Form or by appointment with the Office of Human Resources.

### ACCIDENTAL DEATH AND DISMEMBERMENT PLAN

An accidental death and dismemberment plan is provided with benefits equal to the full amount of the group life insurance, at no cost to the benefit eligible employee.

## RETIREMENT PLAN

Full-time employees are eligible for the Retirement Plan (403b) through voluntary salary deferral at the date of hire. On the first day of the month following the employee's 90-day waiting period, MTSA will start contributing up to 6% of the employee's salary with an additional 2% match option.

## WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE

MTSA provides insurance coverage as mandated by the State of Tennessee to protect all employees should any injury or accident occur while at work.

Employees should report immediately to the Office of Human Resources and their Supervisors any on-the-job accident or illness. The appropriate accident report must be completed within the required time limit.

## EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PLAN

MTSA cares about the health and well-being of its employees and recognizes that a variety of personal problems can disrupt their personal and work lives. Although many employees solve their problems either on their own or with the help of family and friends, sometimes employees need professional assistance and advice.

MTSA provides an employee assistance plan for all employees and their families. Ability Assist Counseling Services, offered by ComPsych, provides compassionate solutions for common challenges from everyday issues like job pressures, relationships and retirement planning to highly impactful issues like grief, loss, or disability. For access over the phone, call 800-96-HELPS (3577) or visit [guidanceresources.com](http://guidanceresources.com).

For immediate assistance contact the TN Mental Health Crisis Hotline at 1-855-274-7471 or the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

## EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

MTSA encourages and supports job-related training that can enhance an employee's value to MTSA and keep the employee up to date in knowledge, technologies, and skills such that the individual improves their job skills for a higher level of performance.

All full-time employees in good standing at MTSA (not under any disciplinary or probationary plan) are eligible to apply for educational assistance on or after the first anniversary of the individual's full-time employment date at MTSA. Temporary and part-time employees are not eligible for the educational assistance program.

To qualify for educational assistance consideration, the course(s) must be job-related and must be offered by a college or university that is accredited by an accrediting agency that is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. The courses must earn degree credits toward an associate's, bachelor's, master's, doctoral, or technical degree unless otherwise approved by Executive Administration and the Office of Human Resources.

To apply for educational assistance consideration, the employee must meet the eligibility requirement and the course must begin after the employee has met the eligibility requirements, including the one (1) year service requirement and while the employee is actively employed by MTSA.

The course must be pre-approved in writing by the employee's supervisor and by the Office of Human Resources.

MTSA does not pay for the time that the employee spends attending classes, performing homework, or pursuing specific courses. It does not cover books and supplies, lab fees, transportation, or any expenses other than pre-approved educational assistance for professional training development.

MTSA will reimburse employees at the conclusion of a successfully completed course, pursuant to the following schedule:

- Maximum reimbursement, regardless of the institution providing the credit, will be no greater than the average tuition charged at a state institution in Tennessee.
- For a 3.5 or higher-grade point average, MTSA will reimburse 100% of the tuition cost.
- For a 3.0 to 3.49 grade point average, MTSA will reimburse 75% of the tuition cost.

To receive educational assistance, the employee must earn at a minimum a grade of "C"; or if the course is a "pass/fail" grading system, the employee must earn a "pass" grade.

After completing an approved course, application and supporting documentation for educational assistance should be submitted in a timely basis through the employee's supervisor. Educational assistance documentation must be submitted no later than forty-five (45) days after a course is completed.

## APPLICATION FOR PRE-APPROVAL

Employees must obtain pre-approval for tuition reimbursement using the Educational Coursework Request form. This approval must be in writing from the employee and approved by executive administration.

## APPLICATION FOR REIMBURSEMENT UPON COMPLETION OF COURSE

Upon completion of the pre-approved course, the employee must submit a copy of the official transcript of grades and proof of payment (where applicable).

## DOCTORAL EDUCATION TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

Employees receiving educational assistance from MTSA for doctoral studies will sign a formal agreement to work for the school for one (1) year for every year of tuition sponsorship (1:1 ratio). If the employee ceases to work for MTSA prior to the completion of the agreed upon time, and the cessation of employment is initiated by the employee, then the employee agrees to personally repay the pro-rata amount unamortized.

To apply for Educational Assistance, please complete [Educational Assistance Application](#).

## PROFESSIONAL FEES & DUES REIMBURSEMENT

Policy Number: 3.2.203

Reviewed: 3/1/12, 5/2020

Revised: Revised: 3/1/12, 5/2020, 9/2023

Employee personal association/professional dues, certification fees, and/or professional licenses are covered expenses provided they meet the following requirements:

### A. Association/Professional Dues

1. Memberships in professional associations related to one's position and job responsibilities at MTSA are covered expenses. Membership is reasonable, justifiable and necessary to benefit the School.
2. Approval for payment is required as follows:
  - Administrators – Approved by the President
  - Faculty – Approved by the Executive Vice President, or authorized designee  
*NOTE: for regularly scheduled faculty who work at least half time at MTSA and who do not have their fees and/or dues paid by their place of full-time employment.*
  - Staff – Approved by the administrative supervisor

### B. Personal Certification Fees/Professional Licenses

1. Personal certification and/or professional licenses that are reasonable, justifiable and necessary to benefit the School. Some valid reasons may be: to maintain appropriate benefit to MTSA, to preserve the health and safety of the School community, or to maintain the functioning of the School as required by directives.
2. Approval for payment is required as follows:
  - Administrators – Approved by the President
  - Faculty – Approved by the Executive Vice President or authorized designee  
*NOTE: for regularly scheduled faculty who work at least half time at MTSA and who do not have their fees and/or dues paid by their place of full-time employment*
  - Staff – Approved by the administrative supervisor

## PROCEDURE:

Requests for reimbursement of employee association/professional dues, certifications, or licensing fees should be submitted on an Employee Expense & Mileage Report with required documentation and turned into the Business Office for processing. When using an MTSA credit card, it is essential that all required documentation and approvals are in place prior to making the charge. Transaction receipts must be submitted with the appropriate credit card statement.

## TIME OFF

### HOLIDAY PAY

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia recognizes the following paid holidays for full-time employees working over 30 hours per week:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

Note: Employees may use their PTO for any holiday not observed by the school upon advance approval by their supervisor.

### PAID TIME OFF (PTO)

**Policy Number: 3.2.204**

All full-time employees working over 30 hours per week are eligible for Paid Time Off (PTO). Part-time employees, working 30 hours or less, are not eligible to receive PTO benefits. PTO may be used for vacation, personal time, illness, holidays not observed by MTSA, or time from work while caring for dependents. PTO is in addition to regularly scheduled MTSA holidays.

Accrual begins the employee's date of hire. Although paid time off is accrued during the first thirty (30) days of employment, employees are not eligible to take leave during this time except due to an emergency situation such as sudden illness or death in the family. Unpaid time within the first thirty (30) days of employment may be negotiated as part of the hiring process.

PTO accrual for full-time employees working over 30 hours per week is as follows:

<i>Years of Service</i>	<i>Hours Earned Per Month</i>	<i>Max Allowable Hours</i>
0-5 Years	18	350
5-10 Years	21.25	415
10-20 Years	23.75	480
20+ Years	26.25	545

## NON-EXEMPT (HOURLY) EMPLOYEES:

- Full-time employees will be required to work a minimum of 38 hours each week, if these hours are not met then PTO must be used to fulfill this requirement.
- Employees working greater than 0.75 FTE are required to work a minimum of 28 hours each week, if these hours are not met then PTO must be used to fulfill this requirement.

## EXEMPT (SALARIED) EMPLOYEES:

- Salaried employees earn 25 hours of PTO per month, with 600 maximum allowable hours.
- At fiscal year end, the maximum number of hours to be carried over is 320. Any hours over 320 will be paid out to the employee up to maximum of 60 hours. Hours over 380 will be forfeited.

## APPROVAL

PTO must be requested and approved in advance, except for emergency situations and/or sudden illness. Employees should submit a request to their supervisor with as much notice as possible. In the event of an unexpected school closure, such as inclement weather, employees who are already scheduled and approved for PTO during a closure will be charged for the corresponding PTO time.

In the event of an unscheduled absence, employees must notify their supervisors no later than their scheduled time of arrival. If an employee is unable to reach their supervisor prior to or by the expected start time, the employee may leave a message for their supervisor. However, employees are required to personally speak to their supervisor as soon as possible that same day.

## LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

Leave without pay (LWOP) may be approved by the Director of Human Resources when the operations of MTSA would not be unduly compromised and is requested in advance.

All PTO must be exhausted before taking leave without pay. Any leave taken more than accrued PTO must be taken without pay. Holidays are not paid when leave without pay is taken the day before or after published holidays. PTO accruals are paused when LWOP is requested and approved.

Leave without pay is deducted in the pay period in which it is taken.

## PTO PAY OUT

Upon termination of employment, accrued but unused PTO up to a maximum of 160 hours or 4 weeks' pay for non-exempt employees and 320 hours or 8 weeks' pay for exempt employees, will be paid at the employee's current rate of pay, provided the employee has not abandoned their job nor committed an act of gross misconduct.

To receive full PTO pay out, employees must report to work on their final day of employment.

## OFFICIAL BUSINESS

Official business is that business related to MTSA that is assigned and/or requested by the institution. Official business leave for faculty must be approved by the Executive Vice President or Program Administrator (DNAP-PD, DNAP-C, or ASPMF). Official business for staff must be approved by the area vice president.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Employees who require time off in addition to Paid Time Off (PTO) may request a personal leave of absence without pay for up to a maximum of 30 days. An extension may be approved in limited circumstances on a case-by-case basis.

All regular employees employed for a minimum of 90 days are eligible to apply for an unpaid personal leave of absence. Job performance, absenteeism, departmental requirements, and nature of request will all be taken into consideration before a request is approved.

The employee must return to work on the scheduled return date or be considered to have voluntarily resigned from their employment.

## POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide employees with a general description of their rights. In the event of any conflict between these guidelines and the applicable law, employees will be afforded all rights required by law.

Eligibility for leave will be determined in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. Depending on eligibility, employees may qualify for leave for a reasonable period of time as may be appropriate as a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act. PTO and/or short-term disability benefits may be available to eligible employees for non-work-related disabilities. Additionally, unused PTO may be used for all or part of the employee leave period at the Company's discretion. Paid leave will be counted toward the leave period.

When foreseeable, employees are required to give at least a 30-day written advance notice prior to taking a leave.

Unforeseeable circumstances do not require 30 days advance notice. In such case, employee must give notice as soon as practicable. Failure to give timely notice may affect their ability to take leave as requested.

Employee must notify their supervisor as soon as possible of when the employee is expected return to work. Generally, employees returning within three (3) months will be returned to their same position or an equivalent position with the same rights, benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions that existed prior to the leave. Modified duty may be available with a physician's written release stating physical limitation. If the medical leave extends beyond three (3) months, the employee's return to work following disability will be limited to availability.

During the unpaid leave, employees retain the same medical and dental coverage and still contribute the same amount toward medical benefits as paid before the leave began. If the premiums are not received by the due date, coverage may be terminated consistent with applicable law.

Any questions, concerns or disputes with this policy should be directed to the Director of Human Resources in writing.

## JURY DUTY & WITNESS LEAVE

Upon receipt of notification from the state or federal courts of an obligation to serve on a jury, employees must notify their supervisor and provide them with a copy of the jury summons.

Employees required to perform jury duty may do so without charge to PTO and without loss of pay or benefits. If an employee reports for jury duty and is released, the employee is expected to return to work for the remainder of the day if there are four or more hours left in the scheduled workday.

## VOTING LEAVE

If an employee's work schedule prevents them from voting on Election Day, MTSA will allow employees up to three (3) hours of time off to vote without loss of pay. The time when employee can go to vote will be at the discretion of their supervisor, consistent with applicable legal requirements.

## BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

MTSA provides a maximum of four (4) working days leave with pay during each fiscal year to full-time employees, working over 30 hours per week, in the event of the death of an employee's mother, father, brother, sister, spouse, life partner, child, mother-in-law, father-in-law, stepson, stepdaughter, stepmother, stepfather, son in-law, daughter in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, spouse's grandparents, parents, and grandchildren. Bereavement time is provided to allow paid time away from work to prepare for and attend the services associated with the said loss. Bereavement requests should have prior approval, to the extent practical, of the appropriate supervisor. MTSA reserves the right to request documentation to support any request for bereavement leave.

## PAID PARENTAL LEAVE

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia is committed to providing a work environment that is supportive of employees' work and personal life obligations. In demonstration of this commitment, short-term disability, leave, and accrued PTO is available for eligible employees following the birth or adoption of a child.

## MATERNITY LEAVE

In addition to short-term disability benefits, accrued PTO may also be used to assist in supplementing income while on parental leave. If an employee has exhausted accrued PTO balance and has received approval from administration, up to 120 hours of additional PTO may be advanced to employee. Any advanced PTO time must be repaid within one (1) year.

## PATERNITY LEAVE

Employees are provided four (4) days of paid leave following the birth of a child or adoption of a child. If an employee has exhausted accrued PTO balance and has received approval from administration, additional PTO may be advanced to employee. Any advanced PTO time must be repaid within one (1) year.

## MILITARY LEAVE (USERRA)

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia is committed to protecting the job rights of employees absent on military leave. In accordance with federal and state law, no employee or prospective employee will be subjected to any form of discrimination based on that person's membership in, obligation to perform or actual performance of service or training for any of the Uniformed Services of the United States. Specifically, no person will be denied employment, reemployment, promotion, or other benefit of employment based on such membership or service. Furthermore, no person will be subjected to retaliation or adverse employment action because such person has exercised their rights under applicable law. If any employee believes that they have been subjected to discrimination in violation of MTSA policy, the employee should immediately contact the Director of Human Resources.

Employees taking part in military duties are eligible for benefits under this guideline. Such military duties include leaves of absence taken by members of the uniformed services, including Reservists and National Guard members,



for training, periods of active military service, and funeral honors duty, as well as time spent being examined to determine fitness to perform such service. Subject to certain exceptions under the applicable laws, these benefits are generally limited to employees who return to MTSA within five years of beginning their military leave of absence.

Employees requesting leave for military duty should contact Human Resources to request leave as soon as they are aware of the need for leave.

## VOLUNTEER TIME OFF

MTSA encourages employees to become involved in their communities, lending their voluntary support to programs that positively impact the quality of life within these communities.

The following guidelines are for MTSA's employees who serve as volunteers in non-profit community programs that are either of personal interest or are corporate-sponsored initiatives.

### AMOUNT OF TIME

Employees are required to participate in 3 volunteer efforts per calendar year. Employees are allowed to take up to 5 hours of paid time off each month to participate in their specific volunteer program during normal MTSA work hours, Monday through Thursday, 8:00 am – 6:00 pm.

Volunteer time must be requested in advance to help with the coordination of other work-related responsibilities. Volunteer time should not conflict with the peak work schedule and other work-related responsibilities, create need for overtime, or cause conflicts with other employees' schedules.

### ELIGIBILITY

All full-time employees are eligible.

Interested employees should have expected performance or above.

Interested employees should meet with their managers to discuss their volunteer choice, schedule, and to receive approval.

### RECORDING VTO TIME

All volunteer hours must be recorded on the Volunteer tab in BambooHR. To access this form, log into BambooHR, select "Volunteer" to fill out all required questions.

## SAFETY & LOSS PREVENTION

### GENERAL SAFETY

MTSA employees are responsible for security in their areas during operational hours. MTSA is not responsible for personal items of individuals left in their offices or in automobiles, although the loss of such items should be reported immediately in writing to a member of executive administration.

In compliance with The Clery Act, MTSA will:

- maintain a public log of all reported crimes;
- publish and distribute its Annual Campus Security Report to current and prospective students and employees;
- give timely warnings of crimes that represent a threat to the safety of students or employees; and,

- maintain the most recent seven years of crime statistics.

For additional information, please see [Annual Security Report Availability](#).

## EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURES

### STOP YOUR WORK

In all emergency or drills, when the alarm sounds, all employees should immediately stop whatever they are doing and quickly, yet safely, exit the building using the nearest safe stairwell. All doors should be closed behind employees, but not locked. **Do not use elevators.**

### LEAVE THE BUILDING

Exit the building on the ground floor and quickly proceed away from the building. Review [Emergency Response Plan](#) for further instruction. Please remember, the street must be kept clear at all times, so as not to hamper the movement of emergency vehicles into the area.

### WAIT FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTION

Administrator on Call (AOC) is responsible for calling 911 and will act as the designated contact for emergency responders on-site.

The designated person should report any missing persons to administration or emergency responders.

Staff members trained in CPR and rescue breathing should survey the individuals outside to determine if anyone needs first aid. Appropriate aid should then be given.

Employees may not re-enter the building until it is declared safe by the fire department and AOC has authorized re-entry.

For additional information, see [Emergency Response Plan](#).

## IDENTIFICATION BADGE

Security procedures are established to protect employees and their personal property as well as safeguard the property of MTSA and its visitors. Employees are issued one identification badge by the Office of Human Resources. Identification badges should be visible and worn while on MTSA property and during school sponsored events. All visitors, consultants, vendors, and construction workers are issued temporary identification badges.

Any lost or non-recovered badge should be reported to the Office of Human Resources.

## SMOKE FREE CAMPUS

MTSA prohibits smoking on the MTSA campus and on all MTSA premises including sidewalks and areas surrounding MTSA property. Smoking is defined as the "act of lighting, smoking, or carrying a lighted or smoldering cigar, cigarette, e-cigarette, or pipe of any kind." Employees who are in violation may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate discharge.

# VIOLENCE NONTOLERANCE

All employees, business associates, and other guests must be always treated with courtesy and respect. Employees are expected to refrain from conduct that may be dangerous to others. The unauthorized possession or carrying of firearms or dangerous weapons on MTSA property for any reason is prohibited.

*Note: Possession of a firearm is only permitted if it is secondarily secured in the employee's locked vehicle.*

Conduct that threatens, intimidates, coerces, or injures another employee, business associate, or guest, will not be tolerated. Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia resources may not be used to threaten or injure anyone at the workplace or outside the workplace. MTSA treats threats coming from an abusive personal relationship as it does other forms of violence.

Indirect or direct threats of violence, incidents of actual violence, and individuals or activities that may result in violence should be reported as soon as possible to executive administration, or anyone in management. When reporting, the employee should be as specific and detailed as possible. Employees should not place themselves in peril, nor attempt to intercede during an incident of violence. No employee will be retaliated against for making good-faith reports.

Employees should promptly inform the Office of Human Resources of any protective or restraining order that they have obtained that lists the workplace as a protected area. MTSA is committed to supporting victims of violence by providing referrals to MTSA's community resources and providing time off.

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of violence or incidents of actual violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected to the extent possible under applicable laws. MTSA may suspend employees suspected of workplace violence or threats of violence, either with or without pay, pending investigation.

Any employee found to be responsible for misconduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to prompt disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

It is a requirement that employees report to their supervisor or the Office of Human Resources, in accordance with this procedure, any behavior that compromises MTSA's ability to maintain a safe work environment. All reports will be investigated immediately and kept confidential, except where there is a legitimate need to know.

For additional information, please see [Firearms & Weapons Policy](#).

# SEXUAL MISCONDUCT / ASSAULT

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia is committed to providing a working, educational, and social environment for all members of the MTSA community, including students, faculty, staff, and visitors to campus that is free from any form of sexual misconduct including harassment and assault. Sexual misconduct is defined as any sexual activity that does not involve the knowing consent of each individual. Consent is informed, freely and actively given, mutually understandable words or actions which indicate a willingness to engage or participate in mutually agreed upon sexual activity. Past consent does not imply future consent, and consent may be withdrawn at any given time.

Sexual assault is defined as an involuntary act in which a person is threatened, coerced, or forced to engage in against their will, or any non-consensual sexual touching of a person. Such acts are against college policy and may also be punishable by civil and criminal legal action.

When possible, MTSA encourages individuals who believe they are being subjected to such conduct to promptly advise the offender that their behavior is unwelcome and request that it be discontinued.

## COMPLAINT PROCESS

Employees who believe they have been subjected to either sexual harassment or sexual assault/misconduct may file a complaint with the Title IX Coordinator at 615.732.7854 or in person in the Office of Human Resources. Other resources available for victims of assault/misconduct include the 24-hour hotline of the Nashville Sexual Assault Resource Center (615.259.9055) or the Metro Police Department Madison Precinct (911). Other assistance is available through Behavioral Health Case Management through BCBS (800.818.8581, Option 6), the confidential counseling service provided to employees at no cost.

The complaint will be investigated promptly and in as confidential manner as possible. The investigation will include discussions with both the complainant and the alleged offender. Inquiries may also be made of other persons who may have knowledge about or related to the alleged incident. The investigator will outline to the complainant the investigative actions that will be taken and the anticipated timeframe for completing the investigation.

## WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS

Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia requires its employees and Board of Trustees to observe high standards of professionalism and personal ethics. It is the policy of MTSA to encourage and enable employees to report any action or suspected action taken within MTSA that is or reasonably appears to be illegal, fraudulent or in violation of any substantive policy.

MTSA will investigate any suspected illegal, fraudulent, dishonest, or inappropriate activity or conduct by its Board of Trustees, Officers, or employees. MTSA provides protections to safeguard anyone who reports such violations from retaliation. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace the policies and prohibitions against unlawful harassment and discrimination, and any applicable federal, state, or local laws.

Anyone with concerns about fraudulent or dishonest or inappropriate activity should report concerns to their immediate supervisor. If there is a conflict with the supervisor, then report concerns to the Director of Human Resources or the President of MTSA.

Any concerns pertaining to activities of the President should be reported to the Director of Human Resources and either the Chair of the Board or legal counsel.

## CLOSING STATEMENT

Thank you for reading your employee handbook. We hope it has provided you with an understanding of the school's mission, history, and structure as well as our current policies and guidelines. We look forward to working with you to create a safe, productive, and pleasant workplace.

Chris Hulin, DNP, MBA, CRNA  
MTSA President

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT & REVIEW

The employee handbook describes important information about Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia (MTSA), and I understand that I should consult my Supervisor, Executive Administration, or Human Resources regarding any questions not answered in the handbook. I have entered into my employment relationship with MTSA voluntarily and acknowledge that there is no specified length of employment. **Accordingly, either I or Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia can terminate the relationship at will, with or without cause, at any time, so long as there is not violation of applicable federal or state law.**

I understand and agree that other than the President of MTSA, no member of administration of MTSA has any authority to enter into any agreement for employment other than at will; and only the President of the MTSA has the authority to make any such agreement and then only in writing signed by the MTSA President.

This handbook and the policies and procedures contained herein supersede any and all prior practices, oral or written representations, or statements regarding the terms and conditions of my employment with Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia. By distributing this handbook, MTSA expressly revokes any and all previous policies and procedures that are inconsistent with those contained herein.

I understand that, except for employment-at-will status, any and all policies and practices may be changed at any time by MTSA and MTSA reserves the right to change my hours, wages, and working conditions at any time. All such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies.

**I understand and agree that nothing in the Employee Handbook creates, or is intended to create, a promise or representation of continued employment and that employment at Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia is employment at will, which may be terminated at the will of either MTSA or myself. Furthermore, I acknowledge that this handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I understand and agree that employment and compensation may be terminated with or without cause and with or without notice at any time by Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia or myself.**

I have received electronic version of the employee handbook, and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it.

By clicking on the Acknowledgement of Receipt and Review button below to digitally sign the acknowledgement, I confirm that I understand my responsibility to read, understand, and comply with all policies listed.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT AND REVIEW