

Employee Handbook



Virginia Down Syndrome Association

you could send a report **anonymously**. **Anonymously** means that you do not put your name on the report.

D. Acting in Good Faith

VDSA wants the Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, and others to report any action that is illegal or inappropriate. It is safe to make these reports. You will not be fired if you think you saw something illegal and spoke to your direct supervisor about it.

VDSA expects employees to have high standards and ethics. Ethics are what you believe to be right or wrong. Employees must be honest and follow laws and workplace rules. Employees are responsible for reporting wrongful behavior as part of VDSA's Whistleblower Policy.

"Whistleblower" means any VDSA person who makes a report to discuss wrong behavior.

B. Wrongful Conduct

"Wrongful Conduct" means a violation of VDSA's rules, a violation of the law, lying to community partners, or using VDSA's property for non-work purposes (unless you were given permission to use the property). These are a few examples of wrongful conduct and not the full list.

C. Reporting

Any person at VDSA who has a concern and thinks they saw Wrongful Conduct should report it to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director does not do anything, the Whistleblower can report to the Chair of the Board of Directors. You can send a report in writing, talk about it, or

- Follow all VDSA rules
- Do not use alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs

2.04 Drug-Free Workplace

VDSA wants a safe, healthy, and drug-free workplace. VDSA has the following rules in place about **illegal** drugs:

- a. Employees cannot have, sell, buy, trade, or offer to sell or buy illegal drugs while at work or during their working hours.
- b. You are not allowed to come to work while using **illegal** drugs.
- c. You are not allowed to use prescription drugs illegally or come to work using prescription drugs illegally. Illegally means using the prescription drugs in a different way than the doctor **prescribed**.
- d. You are not allowed to be at work when you have had alcohol to drink. You can drink alcohol at official work events where alcohol is provided.
- e. You are not allowed to use or have tobacco products while you are working.

VDSA can ask an employee to leave work if they have broken any of these rules. VDSA can also take disciplinary action, such as firing someone from their job for breaking these rules.

2.05 Ethical Behavior and Conflicts of Interest

A. Purpose

A. Attendance

Employees need to get to work on time. It is hard to work **efficiently** when an employee is absent a lot, or if they are late to the job. Let your supervisor know if you will be late getting to your job. You may receive a talk from your supervisor if you are late and don't let them know beforehand.

B. Teleworking

Working from home or anywhere that isn't the VDSA office can be a helpful work option. **Teleworking** is not available to all employees. The option to telework can be taken away at any time for any reason. VDSA will try to give notice in advance if teleworking is no longer an option.

You cannot telework and provide childcare at the same time. You can change your schedule if you need to provide childcare. Telework is an option as long as you are not distracted from doing your work.

When you telework, you need to do the following:

- Work your full job hours
- Attend all virtual meetings
- Be as productive as you would be in the office
- Be available to talk to your coworkers
- Respond to emails, phone calls, or Teams messages
- Tell people what you are working on

All suspicious people or activities will be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor. Be safe. If you see or hear trouble, do not try to stop it yourself.

VDSA will investigate all reports of threats and act appropriately. VDSA will consider the safety of all employees when responding to reports.

2.02 Discipline

VDSA employs people who are willing and able to do their jobs. VDSA employees follow the rules and spend their time working during their working hours. Employees who don't follow the rules and who show disruptive behavior may need guidance. This section of the handbook covers types of discipline. VDSA is allowed to discipline or fire an employee. What will happen to an employee depends on what rules were broken.

Discipline may include:

- Talking to the employee about breaking the rules
- Writing to the employee to explain which rules were broken
- Not being allowed to go to work for one or more days
- Being fired from the job

VDSA does not have to act in any order. If someone breaks a serious rule, VDSA may fire them from their job.

2.03 Attendance and Getting to Work on Time

B. Dress in business professional clothing when you go to a community event or a meeting. Business professional clothing includes suits, pantsuits, blouses, dresses, button down shirts, or ties.

Ask your supervisor about what to wear. Supervisors may send employees home to change clothes if the clothing isn't appropriate for the workplace.

B. Non-Solicitation & No Distribution

VDSA has a non-solicitation/non-distribution policy.

Solicitation can have several meanings, including: selling items or services; requesting money; trying to get people to sign up for memberships. It is a distraction in the workplace to solicit. The same rule goes for distribution. Distribution means handing out items that are not related to work. It is important to work during work hours. If you want to solicit or distribute anything, you can do it during a meal break or during a time outside of work hours.

C. Safety

VDSA maintains a safe work environment. No weapons or dangerous items are **permitted** at the VDSA office, or anywhere VDSA staff are working. All threats of violence will be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor. If you need to report a threat, be as detailed as you can.

- Destroying anything belonging to VDSA, VDSA's employees, anything belonging to another organization, or anything belonging to someone working with VDSA
- Bullying other employees or anyone interacting with VDSA
- Using inappropriate language
- Not doing your job
- Bringing weapons to work
- Being late or absent from work a lot
- Being late or absent from work without telling anyone you will be late or absent
- Putting incorrect information on your timesheet
- Fighting on VDSA property or anywhere where you are representing VDSA as an employee
- **Accepting** gifts or special treatment from someone who works with VDSA
- Being rude to other employees or community partners
- Doing non-work tasks, such as being on your phone all day

A. Dress Code

VDSA asks that employees dress in a professional manner.

A. Employees should dress in business casual.

Examples of business casual clothing include dress shirts, khaki pants, polo shirts, trousers, blazers, sweaters or vests, dresses, or skirts.

Job descriptions may change. If a job description changes a lot, the new duties will be given to the employee in writing.

C. Records

All employees will need to fill out forms and records so they can get paid. VDSA keeps forms and records in locked files. Only the Finance Director and Executive Director can access the locked files.

D. Authorization

New employees must fill out Section 1 of federal Form I-9 on their first day of employment. New employees must give documents to prove identity and that they can work in the United States of America. These documents should be given to your supervisor before your third day of employment with VDSA. Any employee who does not provide documentation will be fired.

Section 2: Employee Conduct

2.01 Standards of Conduct

Conduct is how someone behaves. In this section, we will talk about conduct in the workplace. VDSA employees should have great work performance and conduct. This is a list of behaviors or misconduct that are not allowed in the workplace:

All employees hired by VDSA will work for 90 days on a trial basis. This means that after 90 days, VDSA will decide if it is best for the employee to stay with the organization. Employees who get a new job at VDSA will also work for 90 days on a trial basis. The trial period may go on for longer.

Employees can decide to stop working for VDSA any time and for any reason. VDSA can end someone's employment at any time. Employment is at-will.

1.06 Hiring Policy

Employment with VDSA is at-will. Employment can stop for any reason. The employee will receive a review from their supervisor after the trial period is done.

A. Skills

Employees will have the skills to do their jobs at VDSA. Employees will be kind to their coworkers and to the public. Employees should want to learn, to grow, and to improve.

B. Offers

Employees will get a letter of employment, which includes:

- The job description
- Salary
- Hiring date
- Information about benefits

addressed. There is a process for an employee to get a fair review.

“Grievance” means a complaint or conflict. Employees will follow this process to solve the problem:

- Conflicts are solved through talking about the problem.
 - Tell your supervisor about the problem as soon as possible.
 - If you have a problem with your supervisor, talk to the Executive Director instead.
- a. Executive Director – if the problem is not solved after talking about it, then talk to the Executive Director. Ask the Executive Director when they are available to talk to you. The Executive Director makes the final decision on what to do unless someone else brings new information about the problem.
 - b. Bring your grievance to the Executive Director in writing and bring it in person. If you want to contact the Board Chair, you have to write that down (or type it) and give it to the Executive Director. Do not talk to other board members about your grievance.

All grievances must be made in writing. A grievance must be solved as quickly as possible.

1.05 Trial Period

- Breaking objects in the office

H. How to Give a Complaint

Talk to your supervisor if you believe you have been harassed or if someone has been violent. If you do not want to talk to your supervisor, then talk to your Executive Director. If the Executive Director is the one who harasses you, then talk to the Board Chair.

I. Investigation and Privacy

VDSA will listen to all complaints and take steps to end problem behaviors. If a problem has occurred, VDSA will give a punishment. Complaints are private. Employees must help if there is an investigation.

J. No Punishment for a Complaint

VDSA will not punish or fire an employee if they make a good faith complaint. Making a complaint “in good faith” means you are trying to give honest information. Talk to your supervisor or the Executive Director if you feel you were punished for making a complaint.

K. Grievance Process

VDSA knows that employees may need to talk about their problems or complaints. Sometimes an employee isn't happy after a decision is made or if their complaint is not

VDSA wants a work environment that is safe and respectful for everyone. We do not allow harassment. Harassment is behavior that can embarrass or hurt someone. VDSA is not okay with harassment. You will not be harassed because of who you are.

Harassment can be:

- Giving someone a nickname they do not like
- Telling jokes about someone
- Touching someone without permission
- Writing something mean about someone
- Drawing a rude picture of someone
- Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is inappropriate behavior, and can be:

- Touching someone – pinching, hugging, kissing, brushing up against someone
- Promising to promote someone at work if they go on a date with you
- Talking to someone inappropriately – for example, saying “Hey sexy!”
- Making comments about someone’s body, how they dress, or their personal life

G. No Violence is Allowed

Bullying or violence is not allowed in the workplace. Violence includes:

- Physical act to someone, like shoving them
- A threat to someone – “I’m going to beat you up!”

have a business with a disabled person, or have any other kind of relationship with a disabled person.

D. Accommodations for Disabilities

VDSA will make sure that qualified employees or anyone applying to become an employee has accommodations. An accommodation is something that makes it easier to do your job, like a screen reader for a computer or parking close to the building. The accommodation cannot make other people in the workplace unsafe. Tell the Executive Director if you need an accommodation to make your job easier. The Executive Director will not share this information with everyone unless you say it is okay to do so. You will not get into trouble if you do not explain that you need accommodations.

E. Accommodations for Religion

VDSA treats its employees with respect. Employees can ask for accommodations for their religious beliefs.

Accommodations for religious beliefs might include:

- Wearing clothing that is not in VDSA's dress code, but the clothing is part of your religious beliefs.
- Changing your work schedule because you have a religious holiday

Talk to the Executive Director if you need accommodation because of religious beliefs.

F. No Harassment is Allowed

C. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

VDSA believes in no discrimination against employees with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Virginia Human Rights Act, and the Virginians with Disabilities Act (VDA) help VDSA make our rules.

The Americans with Disabilities Act prevents discrimination for people with disabilities who are qualified to work. The ADA protects people with disabilities who can perform their jobs. The ADA helps people with disabilities have equal employment opportunities. The Virginia Human Rights Act and the Virginians with Disabilities Act also prevent disability discrimination.

These laws try to stop discrimination in all areas of employment, including:

- Looking for someone to hire for a job
- Hiring someone for a job
- Promoting someone to a new job
- Firing someone from a job
- Taking time off from a job
- Getting money to train for your job
- Social programs
- Anything else having to do with the job

The ADA also stops employers who try to discriminate against someone who knows a disabled person. This includes if you are a family member to a disabled person,

per week will not get extra money. Exempt employees earn a set amount of money each week they work for VDSA.

Non-Exempt employees can earn money if they work more than forty (40) hours per week. Submit your time sheets to your supervisor every other Friday. There is a schedule that will let you know which Fridays end each pay period. Supervisors look at time sheets and approve time sheets. The time sheets will also go to the Executive Director.

None of these employee types mean that an employee will stay employed for a certain amount of time. An employee can be fired at any time for any reason.

1.04 Equal Employment Opportunity

A. ~~Discrimination~~ is not allowed

VDSA is an Equal Opportunity Employer. An Equal Opportunity Employer pledges to give fair treatment to all employees. VDSA does not look at race, color, gender, religion, age, disability or any other type when they make employment decisions.

B. ~~Affirmative~~ Action

VDSA tries to have different types of people in the workplace. Supervisors provide equal employment opportunities and equal treatment in their hiring decisions.

be updated as soon as anything new is added or changed in the handbook.

1.02 At Will Employment

Every employee at VDSA is at will. You can quit your job at VDSA any time. VDSA can fire you from your job at any time. You are always at will and cannot change that. This handbook is not your contract for your job. You will receive a contract that includes your job duties and the pay you will receive, and you will sign this contract so you can start work with VDSA. The handbook cannot promise employment for any length of time.

1.03 Employee Types

VDSA employees are one of these types:

Full-time – A full-time employee works forty (40) hours per week. A full-time employee can get benefits.

Part-time – A part-time employee works fewer than forty (40) hours per week. A part-time employee may not get benefits.

VDSA employees are either exempt or non-exempt.

Exempt employees are not part of certain parts of federal and state laws. These laws have to do with the number of hours you work and the money you receive for working. Exempt employees who work more than ~~forty~~ (40) hours

VDSA can change or take away rules. VDSA will try to make sure the handbook is up to date with new rules.

This handbook is not your contract for your job. You will receive a contract that includes your job duties and the pay you will receive, and you will sign this contract so you can start work with VDSA.

Every employee at VDSA is called an at-will employee. At-will means that an employee can be fired at any time.

Thank you for reading this handbook. You will need to sign the form at the end of this handbook. Sign the form after you finish reading this handbook.

A. Leadership

VDSA has a Board of Directors. The Board of Directors are a group of people who watch over the activities of VDSA to make sure we are giving the best help that we can. The Board of Directors select the Executive Director. The Executive Director is responsible for the employee handbook. They make sure that employees follow the rules in the handbook. The Executive Director also hires employees and supervises them.

B. Review

The Executive Director and the Board of Directors can suggest changes to the handbook. The handbook should



Section 1: The Beginning

This handbook will give you the rules and responsibilities of the Virginia Down Syndrome Association (VDSA). The handbook will also explain benefits you get as an employee.

This handbook will not have all the information you need. Sometimes you may get more information from emails, phone calls, or talking with VDSA staff. VDSA will let you know if there are new rules and guidelines. Make sure you understand the rules and guidelines.

Talk to the Executive Director if you have questions. The Executive Director makes sure that everyone follows the rules and guidelines. The Executive Director may ask someone else to help make sure other employees are following the rules.

We welcome your professional skills and abilities.

Mission and Values

Mission

Our mission is to help individuals with Down syndrome and their families. We give support, education, community awareness, and advocacy.

Our Values

We want people with Down syndrome and their families to be themselves. It is brave to be your true self. We celebrate and love the differences that make each of us special in our own way.

We know that people with Down syndrome and their families have different challenges, opportunities, and beliefs. We want to celebrate differences with the work that we do. Every person is different! We will listen to our community so we can offer different types of programs.

We learn and grow together as a group. It is important that everyone feels welcome. We want you to feel like you belong.

Welcome to the Virginia Down Syndrome Association!

The Virginia Down Syndrome Association employees are so happy you are part of our organization. We do important work all over Virginia for people with Down syndrome and their families. We believe that you will like our group – we are professional, honest, and kind. We love our work!

This employee handbook will let you know about your job duties as a VDSA employee. The handbook covers rules and guidelines we follow in the workplace. The handbook will also explain benefits you receive, like when you get days off from work. The rules make sure everyone is treated fairly and help us do great work.

Employees are welcome to ask for changes to this handbook. Talk to your supervisor if you read anything confusing in the handbook. Tell your supervisor if you have any questions about the handbook or your job.

This handbook is not your contract for your job. You will receive a contract that includes your job duties and the pay you will receive, and you will sign this contract so you can start work with VDSA.

VDSA employees help keep this handbook up to date. Rules and guidelines may be changed or taken away. You will be notified if this handbook is updated.

Thank you for joining us!