

MINISTRY OF FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT PLANNING



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

OCTOBER 2014

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WELCOME NOTE

Dear colleague,

On behalf of the Executive Team of the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning (MFDP), I congratulate you on being selected to form part of a new corps of professionals at the center of Liberia's development apparatus, charged with transforming our nation through sound, innovative fiscal and economic management, and results focused budgeting and planning.

The MFDP is a new ministry, established in 2013 by an Act of the Legislature to manage public finances, the economy and development planning for the Republic of Liberia. Your selection to form part in this Ministry affords you a unique opportunity to serve your country, unleashing your passion and creativity to foster sustainable development and position Liberia among the few African nations that have achieved Middle Income Country status, and transitioned from poverty reduction to wealth creation. It also provides you the opportunity to pioneer in the formation of a new ministry characterized by a culture of meritocracy, professionalism, efficiency, optimal performance and impact.

At MFDP, we believe that each employee contributes directly to the operational efficiency and success of the ministry, and we look forward to your contribution to that success, as you take pride in being a member of our team.

This handbook sets expectations for employees' performance and conduct, and outlines the policies, programs, and benefits available to you. Familiarity with the contents of Employee Handbook is compulsory for all employees, as it addresses all of the issues concerning employment with the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning.

We believe that professional relationships are more constructive when all employees are aware of the culture and values of their organization. This guide will help you to better understand our vision for the future of the ministry in meeting the challenges that lie ahead.

We hope that you will share our vision, and that your experience here will be both challenging and rewarding. We welcome you, and wish you every success at MFDP.

Sincerely,

Amara M. Konneh
M I N I S T E R

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

This handbook is designed to acquaint employees with the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning and provide them with information about working conditions, employee benefits, and some of the policies affecting their employment. All employees are required to read, understand, and comply with all provisions of the handbook. It describes responsibilities for employees and outlines the programs developed by the MFDP to benefit employees. One of our objectives is to provide a work environment that is conducive for accountability, personal and professional growth.

No employee handbook can anticipate every circumstance or question about policy. As the MFDP continues to grow, the need may arise and the Ministry reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portion of the handbook from time to time as it deems appropriate, in its sole and absolute discretion. Employees will be notified of such changes to the handbook, as they occur. Additionally there are other manuals (MFDP Administrative Manual, Human Resources Policy Manual and ICT Policy Manual, etc.) in which operational procedures and protocols are outlined and detailed along with other national policies and regulations that are co-referenced. This manual coheres with all of the above manuals and the policies, laws and statutes of the Republic of Liberia.

1.2 ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

1.2.1 SERVICES PROVIDED

The Ministry of Finance & Development Planning (MFDP) is the official government functionary responsible for formulating, institutionalizing and administering economic development, fiscal and tax policies for the promotion of sound and efficient management of financial resources of the government.

You will find more information about our services by visiting the MFDP website at www.mfdp.gov.lr.

1.2.2 LOCATION

Head Office:
BROAD & MECHLIN SREETS
MONROVIA, LIBERIA

1.2.3 THE HISTORY OF MFDP

The Ministry of Finance & Development Planning was created by an Act of the National Legislature in September 2013, and was signed into Law on September 18, 2013 by the President of the Republic of Liberia, H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. The official name of the new ministry is MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING (MFDP).

The Act creating the MFDP also effectively repealed the Acts creating the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (MPEA). Concurrent with the creation of the MFDP was the establishment of the Liberian Revenue Authority (LRA), which took over the revenue administration functions (collections, audits, and enforcement) of the former Ministry of Finance.

1.2.4 MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY

Ministry of Finance & Development Planning's management philosophy is based on the principles of responsibility and mutual respect. The MFDP wishes to maintain a work environment that fosters personal and professional growth for all employees, while delivering on its core mandate of formulating, institutionalizing and administering economic development, fiscal and tax policies for the promotion of sound and efficient management of government's financial resources.

MFDP seeks to be an attractive work environment that encourages creativity and achievement in each employee. MFDP aims to raise the bar for the quality of our public finance and economic management and our development planning. The mainstay of our strategy will be to offer a higher level of policy formulation, analysis and recommendation, transparent and efficient public financial management, and results-focused economic management leading to shared growth and development.

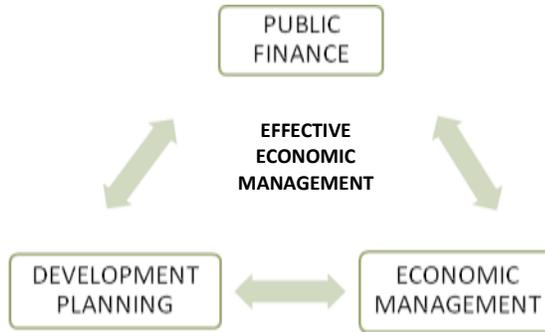
Maintaining such an environment is the responsibility of every staff member. Because of their role, directors, managers and supervisors have the additional responsibility to lead in a manner which fosters an environment of respect for each person and equal treatment across the entire ministry.

To help achieve this objective, the MFDP seeks to attract highly motivated individuals who value the teamwork, commitment, responsibility, risk taking and discipline required to achieve our vision. Part of our approach to attracting these individuals is to build a culture that promotes both uniqueness and a basis for action.

While we will be realistic in setting goals and expectations, the MFDP will also be aggressive in achieving its objectives. This success will in turn enable us to give our employees attractive compensation and innovative benefits or rewards, key elements in helping us maintain our leadership position in economic management and development planning while remaining cognizant of the fact that with these above average compensation benefits or rewards are closely tied to accountability and results.

1.2.5 GOALS

The MFDP's over-arching goal is to achieve effective management of the economy.



1.2.6 CORE VALUES

The leadership and staff of the MFDP are all equally bound by the following core values, which support our management philosophy of responsibility and mutual respect:

Transparency	Transacting of business in a visible, predictable and intuitive manner; encouraging and inviting public participation and oversight.
Accountability	Ensuring that employees assume responsibility for their actions; and that consequences for misconduct and underperformance are fair and predictable.
Integrity	Adhering to morality and ethics, with ZERO TOLERANCE FOR CORRUPTION.
Service orientation	Providing timely, courteous and consistent delivery of quality services to customers.
Effective Communication	Sharing information clearly so that the message delivered is understood as intended. Respecting and giving fair consideration to opposing views.
Innovation	Introducing new ideas, tools and methods and translating them into goods and services that add value.
Commitment	Demonstrating dedication, loyalty and obligation to the MFDP's vision and mission.
Teamwork	Working constructively with a group of people, in order to achieve a shared goal.
Result Focused	Remaining intent on achieving SMART (S=Simple, M=Measurable, A=Achievable, R=Relevant and T=Timely) goals and outcomes.
Efficiency	Achieving a goal without wasting materials, time or energy

While upholding our Core Values, each employee must contribute to the building of a healthy work culture by:

- Fostering cooperation and effective communication among employees to ensure clarity of standards and expectations;
- Treating others fairly, with dignity and respect; encouraging and considering opinions of other employees or members, and inviting their participation in decisions that affect their work and their careers;
- Encouraging the growth and development of employees by helping them achieve their personal goals at MFDP and beyond;
- Seeking to avoid workplace conflict, and if it occurs, resolving it fairly and quickly;

- Administering all policies equitably and fairly, recognizing that jobs are different but each is important; that individual performance should be recognized and measured against predetermined standards; and that each employee has the right to fair treatment; and
- Recognizing that employees in their personal lives may experience crisis and, therefore, show compassion and understanding.

1.2.7 VISION

To be a dynamic and efficiently managed institution of public finance, economic management and development planning to achieve sustainable economic growth and transformation.

1.2.8 MISSION

The Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) is established to promote inclusive sustainable growth and development through:

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| A. | Efficient resource allocation |
| B. | Equitable wealth distribution |
| C. | Prudent financial management |
| D. | Integrated development planning |
| E. | Coordinated economic management |
| F. | Well formulated and implemented policies |

1.2.9 ORGANIZATIONAL AND MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Ministry of Finance & Development Planning is divided as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 1. Departments (4) | headed by Deputy Ministers |
| 2. Divisions (8) | headed by Assistant Ministers and a Comptroller & Accountant General |
| 3. Units (32) | headed by Directors |
| 4. Sections (48) | headed by Assistant Directors |

As the Minister is the head of entity, all decisions are his/her responsibility. However, in order to assist the Minister in making effective decisions, various levels of management have been established as follows:

1. **EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM (EMT):** This team comprises the Minister and Deputy Ministers. It is expected that this team meets at least weekly or as frequently as may be called by the Minister. In such meetings, decisions are made and policies are approved.
2. **TOP MANAGEMENT TEAM (TMT):** This team comprises the Minister, Deputy Ministers, Assistant Ministers, and Comptroller & Accountant General. This team is required to meet at least twice a month or as frequently as may be deemed by the Minister or any of the Deputy Ministers. This meeting is usually a high level briefing session wherein each division reports on issues and progress or bring to management's attentions developments that require urgent attention or actions.

3. **SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM (SMT):** This team comprises the Minister, Deputy Ministers, Assistant Ministers, Comptroller & Accountant General (CAG) and Directors. This meeting is scheduled for at least once a month or as the Minister may deem appropriate. This meeting is intended to appreciate what is happening at the smallest level of the organization and address challenges. Issues are raised, and recommendations are considered. Beneath this level, departments, divisions, units and sections are required to hold regular meetings geared toward effective management of their units.

1.3 CUSTOMER RELATIONS

Our customers are among our ministry's most valuable assets. They include government officials and functionaries, as well as business people. As each employee represents the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning to our customers and the public, we deem it a high priority to assist any actual or potential customer with the utmost respect and professionalism. The quality of an employee's face-to-face contact with the public, telephone manners, and correspondences to clients on behalf of the Ministry, are a reflection not only of the employee him/herself, but also of the MFDP. Nothing is more important, therefore, than being courteous, friendly, helpful, and prompt in paying due attention to clients, thereby presenting a positive image of the entire Ministry, earning client loyalty, and increasing the public's respect and appreciation for our work.

To build and maintain this positive public image, the MFDP will provide client relations and services training to all employees with extensive client contact. Also, a Customer Relations Office will be established under the supervision of the Office of the Assistant Minister for Administration, to address specific comments or complaints from clients and ensure that appropriate action is taken.

2. EMPLOYMENT

2.1 NATURE OF EMPLOYMENT

Employment with the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning is voluntarily entered into, and the employee is free to resign at any time. Similarly, the MFDP may terminate the employment relationship for established and documented causes ranging from indiscipline to poor performance, within the confines of applicable laws and regulations.

The policies set forth in this handbook are not intended to create a contract, nor are they to be construed as constituting contractual obligations of any kind or a contract of employment between the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning and any of its employees. The provisions of the handbook have been developed at the discretion of management; they should not and cannot be interpreted at any time now or in the future as rights or entitlements of employees and, may be amended or cancelled at any time, at the Ministry's sole discretion.

These provisions supersede all previous policies and practices in the former Ministries of Finance and Planning, and may not be amended or added to without the express written approval of The Executive Management Team.

2.2 EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

The MFDP deems the work conditions, wages, and benefits that it offers to its employees, to be competitive with those offered by other employers in the Liberian public sector. If employees have concerns about work conditions or compensation, they are strongly encouraged to voice these concerns openly and directly to their supervisors.

Experience has shown that when employees deal openly and directly with their supervisors, it contributes to a healthy work environment wherein communication is clear and attitudes are positive. We believe that the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning amply demonstrates its commitment to employees by responding effectively to employee concerns.

In an effort to protect and maintain constructive employer-to-employee relations, the Executive Management will do its utmost to protect the rights of employees to speak for themselves, while holding employees to the highest standards of professionalism as they exercise those rights.

2.3 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all employees, employment decisions at the MFDP will be based on merit, academic qualification and technical ability, professional and moral conduct. The Ministry, in employment opportunities or practices, does not discriminate based on tribe, religion, gender, age, disability or any other characteristics protected by law.

This policy governs all aspects of employment, including selection, job assignment, compensation, promotion, discipline, termination, and access to benefits and training.

Any employees with questions or concerns about any form of discrimination in the workplace are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of their immediate supervisor or the Human Resources Unit. Employees can raise such concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

2.4 BUSINESS ETHICS AND CONDUCT

The successful operation and reputation of the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning is built upon the fair dealing and ethical conduct of our employees. Our reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and letter of all applicable laws and regulations, as well as a scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity.

The continued success of the Ministry is dependent upon our clients' trust, and employees must be dedicated to preserving that trust. Employees have a duty to the MFDP, its clients, partners, and stakeholders to conduct themselves in such a way as to merit the continued trust and confidence of the public.

The Ministry will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and expects its ministers, directors, and employees to conduct operations in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct.

In general, the use of good judgment, based on high ethical principles, will guide you with respect to lines of acceptable conduct. If a situation arises, where it is difficult to determine the proper course of

action, the matter should be discussed openly with your immediate supervisor and, if necessary, with the Minister, for advice and consultation.

Compliance with this policy of business ethics and conduct is the responsibility of every MFDP employee. Disregarding or failing to comply with this standard of business ethics and conduct could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment.

2.5 PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS IN THE WORKPLACE

The employment of relatives or individuals involved in a dating relationship in the same Unit or Section of the ministry may cause serious conflicts of interest and problems with favoritism and employee morale. In addition to claims of partiality in treatment at work, personal conflicts from outside the work environment can be carried over into day-to-day working relationships.

For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage. A dating relationship is defined as a relationship that may be reasonably expected to lead to the formation of a consensual "romantic" or sexual relationship. This policy applies to all employees without regard to the gender or sexual orientation of the individuals involved.

Although the MFDP has no prohibition against employing relatives of current employees or individuals involved in a romantic relationship with current employees, the Management is committed to observing situations in which such relationships exist in the same unit or section. In case of actual or potential problems, the Ministry will take prompt action, which can include reassignment. Employees in a close personal relationship should refrain from public workplace displays of affection or excessive personal conversation.

2.6 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Employees have an obligation to conduct business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflicts of interest. This policy establishes only the framework within which the Ministry wishes its employees to operate. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide general direction so that employees can seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation. Contact the Deputy Minister for Administration for more information, for questions about conflicts of interest or the National Code of Conduct for Public Officials and Employees of the Government of Liberia.

Transactions with outside firms must be conducted within a framework established and controlled by the executive level of the Ministry. Business dealings with outside firms should not result in unusual gains for those firms. Unusual gain refers to bribes, product bonuses, special fringe benefits, expedited payment processing, and other windfalls designed to ultimately benefit the employer, the employee, or both. Preferential treatment that could be interpreted to involve unusual gain requires specific executive-level approval.

An actual or potential conflict of interest occurs when an employee is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for that employee or for a relative because of MFDP business dealings. For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage, or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

No "presumption of guilt" is created by the mere existence of a relationship with outside firms. However, if employees have any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts, or leases, it is

imperative that they disclose in writing to a senior MFDP official, as soon as possible, the existence of any actual or potential conflict of interest so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties.

Personal gain may result not only in cases where an employee or relative has a significant ownership in a firm with which the Ministry does business; but also when an employee or relative receives any kickback, bribe, substantial gift, or special consideration as a result of any transaction or business dealings involving the Ministry.

2.7 OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees will not be prohibited from holding jobs outside the MFDP, as long as they meet the performance standards of their position with the Ministry. All employees will be judged by the same performance standards and will be subject to MFDP scheduling demands, regardless of any existing outside work requirements. In this case, the employee must make full disclosure to his/her immediate supervisor on such outside work requirements; obtain from the supervisor written consent to the arrangement, to include working hours; and ensure that MFDP facilities and equipment are not used to facilitate such outside jobs.

If the MFDP determines that an employee's outside work interferes with performance or the ability to meet the Ministry's requirements as they are modified from time to time, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment if he or she wishes to remain with the MFDP.

Outside employment that constitutes a conflict of interest is prohibited. Employees may not receive any income or material gain from individuals outside the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning for services rendered while performing their jobs.

2.8 NON-DISCLOSURE

The protection of confidential MFDP information and documents is vital to the interests and the success of the Ministry. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to:

- compensation data;
- payment vouchers;
- pending projects and proposals;
- client transaction information;
- Taxpayer information;
- Internal emails and communications;
- Financial information about clients; and
- Bank account information.

All employees are required to sign a non-disclosure agreement, as a condition of employment. Employees who improperly use or disclose confidential information or documents will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and legal action, even if they do not actually benefit from the disclosure of the information.

2.9 DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

The MFDP is committed to ensuring equal opportunity in employment for qualified persons with disabilities. All employment practices and activities are conducted on a non-discriminatory basis.

Hiring procedures have been reviewed and proven to provide persons with disabilities meaningful employment opportunities. Upon request, job applications are available in alternative, accessible formats, as is assistance in completing the application. Pre-employment inquiries are made only regarding an applicant's ability to perform the duties of the position.

Reasonable accommodation is available to all disabled employees, where their disability affects the performance of job functions. All employment decisions are based on the merits of the situation in accordance with defined criteria, not the disability of the individual.

Qualified individuals with disabilities are entitled to equal pay and other forms of compensation – or changes in compensation, job assignments, classifications, organizational structures, position descriptions, lines of progression, and seniority lists. Leave of all types will be available to all employees on an equal basis.

The MFDP is also committed to the fair treatment of qualified employees regardless of their relation to or association with a person with a disability. The Ministry will follow any and all laws that provide individuals with disabilities greater protection.

This policy is neither exhaustive nor exclusive. The MFDP is committed to taking all other actions necessary to ensure equal employment opportunity for persons with disabilities in accordance with all applicable laws.

2.10 JOB POSTING AND EMPLOYEE REFERRALS

The MFDP provides employees an opportunity to indicate their interest in open positions and to advance within the organization according to their skills and experience. In general, notices of all regular, full-time job openings are posted, although the Ministry reserves its discretionary right not to post a particular opening in which case approval will be sort from Civil Service Agency (CSA).

Job openings will be posted on the employee bulletin board and/or in the email system, and normally remain open for at least 5 business days. Each job posting notice will include the dates of the posting period, job title, department, location, grade level, job summary, essential duties, academic qualifications, required skills and abilities.

To be eligible to apply for a posted job, employees must have performed competently for at least 90 calendar days in their current position. Employees who have a written warning on file, or are on probation or suspension are not eligible to apply for posted jobs. Eligible employees can only apply for those posted jobs for which they possess the required skills, competencies, and qualifications.

To apply for an open position, employees should submit a job posting application to the Human Resources Unit listing job-related skills and accomplishments. It should also describe how their current experience with the MFDP, prior work experience and/or education qualifies them for the position.

The Ministry of Finance & Development Planning recognizes the benefit of developmental experiences and encourages employees to talk with their supervisors about their career plans. Supervisors are encouraged to support employees' efforts to gain experience and advance within the organization.

An applicant's supervisor may be contacted to verify performance, skills, and attendance. Any staffing limitations or other circumstances that might affect a prospective transfer may also be discussed.

Job posting is a way to inform employees of openings and to identify qualified and interested applicants who might not otherwise be known to the hiring manager. Other recruiting sources may also be used to fill open positions in the best interest of the organization.

The MFDP also encourages employees to identify friends or acquaintances that are interested in employment opportunities and refer qualified external applicants for posted jobs. Employees should obtain permission from the individual before making a referral, share their knowledge of the organization, and not make commitments or oral promises of employment.

An employee should submit the referral's resume and/or completed application form to the Human Resources Unit for a posted job. If the referral is interviewed, the referring employee will be notified of the initial interview and the final selection decision.

3. EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND RECORDS

3.1 EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES

It is the intent of the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning to clarify the definitions of employment classifications, so that employees understand their employment status and benefit eligibility.

Each employee is designated as either full time (senior management or regular) or contractor. Full time regular employees are entitled to overtime pay under the specific provisions of the Civil Service Agency (CSA) Human Resource Manual (Section 31). Full time senior and contract employees are excluded from overtime payment even though they may get bonus or honorarium.

In addition to the above categories, each employee will belong to one of the other following employment categories:

REGULAR FULL-TIME employees are those who do not have contractual or probation status, but are regularly scheduled to work at the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning on a full-time schedule. Generally, they are eligible for an MFDP benefit package, subject to the terms, conditions, and limitations of each benefit program.

PROBATION employees are those whose performance is being evaluated to determine whether further employment in a specific position or with the Ministry is appropriate. Employees who satisfactorily complete the probation period, which typically lasts for three months, will be notified in writing of their new employment classification.

CONTRACTORS are those who are hired as interim replacements, to temporarily supplement the work force, or to assist in the completion of a specific project. Employment assignments in this category are of a limited duration not to exceed one year, and are not renewable except in special cases to be approved by the Minister. Employment in this category, beyond any initially stated period, does not in any way imply a change to a permanent employment status. Contractors retain that status unless and until notified of a change; any such notification must be done in writing, by the Deputy Minister for Administration, with the documented consent of the Minister. Contractors are ineligible for all MFDP benefit programs.

The following conditions will guide the hiring of contract employees:

1. First it must be clear that the capacity to perform the task doesn't exist with the Ministry;
2. A request justifying the need for the contract employee along with the Term of Reference (ToR) must be presented by the head of the department requesting the contract employee;
3. That must be approved by the Executive Management Team (Team) before the position can be tendered;
4. Employment assignments in this category are of a limited duration not to exceed one (1) year and are not renewable;
5. Contractors are ineligible for all of MINISTRY OF FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT PLANNING benefit programs;
6. Departments shall be allowed more than two (2) consultants per fiscal subject to approved national budget; and
7. Compensation in such category shall not exceed that of an Assistant Minister in the Ministry.

3.2 ACCESS TO PERSONNEL FILES

The Ministry of Finance & Development Planning maintains a personnel file on each employee, which contains personal information, information on beneficiaries, the employee's job application, resume, records of training, documentation of performance appraisals and salary increases, and employment records.

Personnel files are the property of the Ministry and access to the information they contain is restricted. Generally, only MFDP supervisors and management personnel who have a legitimate reason to review information in a file are allowed to do so. In such cases a written request shall be made indicating who is seeking to access such files and the reason for the request. Such requests shall be logged for future reference.

Employees who wish to review their own file should contact the Human Resources Unit. With reasonable advance notice, employees may review their own personnel files in the Ministry's offices and in the presence of an individual appointed by the MFDP to maintain the files.

3.3 PERSONNEL DATA CHANGES

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify the Ministry of any changes in personnel data. Personal mailing addresses, telephone numbers, number and names of dependents, individuals to be contacted in the event of emergency, educational accomplishments, and other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times. If any personnel data has changed, please notify the Human Resources Unit.

3.4 PROBATIONARY PERIOD

The probationary period is intended to give new employees the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to achieve a satisfactory level of performance and to determine whether the new position meets their expectations. MFDP uses this period to evaluate employee capabilities, work habits, and overall performance.

All new and rehired employees work on a probationary basis for the first 90 calendar days, and not more than one year, after their date of hire. Any significant absence will automatically extend the probation period by the length of the absence. If the MFDP determines that the designated probation

period does not allow sufficient time to thoroughly evaluate the employee's performance, the probation period may be extended for a specified period.

Upon satisfactory completion of the probationary period, employees enter the "regular" employment classification.

During the probationary period, new employees are eligible for those benefits that are required by law, such as pension and Social Security. After becoming regular employees, they may also be eligible for other MFDP-provided benefits, subject to the terms and conditions of each benefits program. Employees should read the information for each specific benefits program for the details on eligibility requirements.

3.5 EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS

The Ministry of Finance & Development Planning relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in the exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

3.6 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Supervisors and employees are strongly encouraged to discuss job performance and goals on an informal, day-to-day basis. Additional formal performance evaluations are conducted to provide both supervisors and employees the opportunity to discuss job tasks, identify and correct weaknesses, encourage and recognize strengths, and discuss positive, purposeful approaches for meeting goals.

After the employee has completed his/her probationary period of 3 months, the immediate supervisor evaluates the performance of the employee and makes any necessary adjustments.

The annual salary review of all employees is based on performance reports of employees.

3.7 JOB DESCRIPTIONS

The MFDP makes every effort to create and maintain accurate job descriptions for all positions within its organizational structure. There should be no position within the Ministry that does not have a job description. Each description includes a section detailing job information, a job summary (giving a general overview of the job's purpose), essential duties and responsibilities, a supervisory responsibilities, qualifications (including education and/or experience, reasoning ability, and any certification required); and describing the physical demands and work environment.

The MFDP maintains job descriptions to aid in orienting new employees to their jobs; identifying the requirements of each position; establishing hiring criteria; setting standards for employee performance evaluations; and establishing a basis for making reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

The Human Resources Unit and the hiring manager prepare job descriptions when new positions are created. Existing job descriptions are also reviewed and revised periodically to reflect any changes in the position's duties and responsibilities, and to ensure that each position meets the current needs of the

Ministry. All employees will be expected to help ensure that their job descriptions are accurate and current, reflecting the work being done.

Employees should remember that job descriptions do not necessarily cover every task or duty that might be assigned, and that additional responsibilities may be assigned as necessary. You may contact the Human Resources Unit, if you have any questions or concerns about your job description.

3.7.1 ESTABLISHING EMPLOYEES DELIVERABLES

At the beginning of each fiscal year, each employee may request from, or propose to, their supervisor, the specific deliverables that the employees are to produce on an annual basis for performance evaluation, consistent with the key deliverables of the section, unit, division and department. The deliverables of employees must be clear and measurable and must manifest themselves into a product such as a report, etc., against which performance can be also objectively appraised.

3.8 SALARY ADMINISTRATION

The salary administration program at MFDP was created to achieve consistency in pay practices, to comply with Civil Service Standing Orders, to mirror our commitment to equal employment opportunity, and to offer competitive salaries within our labor market. Because recruiting and retaining talented employees is critical to MFDP's success, our commitment to paying employees equitable wages that reflect the requirements and responsibilities of their positions and are comparable to the pay received by similarly situated employees in other organizations in the area.

Compensation for every position is determined by several factors, including job analysis and evaluation, the essential duties and responsibilities of the job, and salary survey data on pay practices of other employers. The MFDP periodically reviews its salary administration program and restructures it as necessary. Merit-based pay adjustments may be awarded in conjunction with superior employee performance documented by the performance evaluation process. Incentive bonuses may be awarded depending on the Ministry's overall efficiency and based on each employee's individual contribution.

Employees should bring their pay-related questions or concerns to the attention of their immediate supervisors, who are responsible for the fair administration of departmental pay practices. The Administration Department is also available to answer specific questions about the salary administration program.

4. EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PROGRAMS

4.1 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Eligible employees at MFDP are provided a wide range of benefits. A number of the programs (such as health or medical insurance) cover all employees in the manner prescribed by law.

Eligibility for benefits is dependent upon a variety of factors, including employee classification. The Human Resources Unit can identify the programs for which you are eligible. Details of many of these programs can be found elsewhere in the employee handbook.

The following benefit programs are available to eligible employees:

- Medical Insurance
- Life Insurance
- Social Security & Pension

In some cases, the benefit program may require contributions from the employee as a percentage of the applicable premiums.

4.2 VACATION BENEFITS

Vacation is paid by the MFDP to regular full-time employees, consistent with the Civil Service Standing Orders.

All employees are required to give at least TWO MONTHS' notice to their supervisor of their vacation plans. You will not be eligible to receive pay instead of vacation time, except with the ministry's express permission or upon termination. Vacation time, which is taken prior to being earned, is considered an advancement of wages and, upon termination, will be deducted from your paycheck. Any conflict in vacation requests will be decided based on employee seniority and ministry needs. You will not be entitled to accrued vacation during periods when you are on personal leave of absence or if you are suspended from the ministry.

If a holiday occurs during your vacation period, you will be granted one additional day of vacation. You must take vacation in allotments lasting for a minimum of TWO WEEKS, unless a special arrangement is specifically approved of by your supervisor.

An employee is eligible for paid vacation only after having completed one year of employment with the Ministry. Therefore, an employee who resigns after nine months of employment with the ministry will not be eligible for any vacation pay benefits.

Employees are encouraged to use available paid vacation time for rest, relaxation, and personal pursuits. In the event that available vacation is not used by the end of the benefit year, employees cannot carry unused time forward to the next benefit year.

Employees will be paid for unused vacation time that has been accrued through the last day of work, upon termination of employment for the benefit.

4.3 HOLIDAYS

Employees of the MFDP shall subscribe to all official listed holidays of the Republic of Liberia, as per official proclamations, and any other such holidays as declared by the President of the Republic that specifically indicate closure of work places and businesses. In such instances the Ministry shall communicate appropriately to all employees.

The Ministry will grant holiday time off to all employees on the holidays listed below:

- New Year's Day
- Armed Forces Day
- Decoration Day
- J.J. Roberts' Birthday
- Fast and Prayer Day
- National Unification Day
- Independence Day

- Flag Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- William V.S. Tubman's Birthday
- Christmas Day

The MFDP will grant paid holiday time off to all eligible employees, immediately upon assignment to an eligible employment classification. For all other religious holidays, employees are encouraged to notify their immediate supervisors, who are encouraged to grant such requests.

4.4 SICK LEAVE BENEFITS

The Ministry provides paid sick leave benefits to all eligible employees for periods of temporary absence due to illness or injury. Employees classified as full time regular, full time senior, and contractors, are eligible for such benefits:

LEAVE FOR ILLNESS

Employees are entitled to paid time off due to illness, but must notify their supervisor in writing or other means.

In addition to illness, sick leave may also be granted for medical, dental, or optical examinations or when a member of your immediate family requires your personal care and attention due to illness.

CERTIFICATION OF ILLNESS

Certification of illness by a physician will not normally be required to qualify for payment under this program. However, the Ministry reserves the right to require a physician's statement verifying an infirmity claim.

EFFECT ON PERFORMANCE

While the Ministry pays for authorized sick days, employees are expected to be honest in taking days off only when they are actually ill. Any abuse of this benefit will be taken into account in performance evaluations.

Employees who are unable to report to work due to illness or injury should notify their direct supervisor at least two (2) hours before the scheduled start of their workday, if possible. The direct supervisor must also be contacted on each additional day of absence. If an employee is absent for three or more consecutive days, due to illness or injury, a physician's statement may be requested to verify the disability and its beginning and expected ending dates. Such verification may also be requested for other sick leave absences, and may be required as a condition to receiving sick leave benefits. If the disability is perpetual or last up to a year or more, the employee shall be either pensioned or severed.

4.5 BEREAVEMENT/FUNERAL LEAVE

Employees who require time off due to the death of an immediate family member should notify their supervisor immediately.

Paid bereavement or funeral leave will be provided to employees who have worked for the MFDP for a minimum of 60 calendar days:

- a) Five (5) working days, in the case of the death of an employee's spouse, child or stepchild.
- b) Three (3) working days, in the case of the death of an employee's parent or sibling.

- c) One (1) working day in the case of the death of an employee's grandparent, grandchild, sibling of parents, child of sibling, parent or sibling in-law, daughter-in-law, father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, grandson, grand-daughter.

Bereavement leave will normally be granted unless there are unusual business needs or staffing requirements. Employees may, with their supervisors' approval, use any available paid leave for additional time off as necessary.

In the case of death of a current employee, the Ministry shall make a contribution of US\$1,000.00 to assist the family with funeral expenses.

4.6 RELOCATION BENEFITS

When the MFDP asks employees to relocate to a new area a substantial distance from their current residence, certain relocation benefits may be provided to facilitate the transition. Relocation benefits may be available to any eligible transferred employee who must relocate in order to reside within 25 miles of the new place of work. For specific information regarding the terms and extent of relocation benefits, discuss with your immediate supervisor or Human Resources Director.

Employees must request relocation assistance for specific items in advance of the date the expenses are incurred. The MFDP will reimburse expenses only if the employee has received advance approval, incurs reasonable expenses, and submits satisfactory proof of the expense within 30 calendar days of the date the expense was incurred.

The Ministry extends these relocation benefits in an effort to contribute to the success of every employee's relocation. However, if an employee separates from the MFDP within one year of the relocation, the amount of the relocation reimbursement will be considered a loan. Accordingly, the employee will be asked to reimburse all relocation expenses to the Ministry.

4.7 EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

The MFDP recognizes that the skills and knowledge of its employees are critical to its success. The educational assistance program encourages personal development through formal education, so that employees can maintain and improve job-related skills or enhance their ability to compete for reasonably attainable jobs within the Ministry. However, such assistance is dependent on availability of funds and the immediate needs of the MFDP of the area of study.

The Ministry may provide educational assistance to all eligible employees upon assignment to an eligible employment classification. To maintain eligibility, employees must remain on the active payroll and be performing their job satisfactorily through completion of each course. Only Regular full-time employees are eligible for educational assistance.

Employees should contact the Human Resources Unit for more information or questions about educational assistance. Once resources are available, the Department of Administration will publish criteria and application procedures.

While educational assistance is expected to enhance employees' performance and professional abilities, the MFDP cannot guarantee that participation in formal education will entitle the employee to automatic advancement, a different job assignment, or a pay increase.

4.7.1 FOREIGN TRAINING

Foreign training will target two broad areas: Post graduate degree for high performing employees with undergraduate degrees; and short term, professional level specialized courses that result in professional certifications (Finance, Procurement, Human Resources, etc.).

The MFDP, through Government of Liberia budgetary allocation and through bilateral and multilateral scholarships, will ensure equal opportunity and access on the basis of merit, for foreign training and education assistance.

Employees who are granted foreign scholarship through efforts of their own may be granted study leave. The Ministry will cover no other expenses (travel or otherwise) for the employees.

4.8 HEALTH INSURANCE

The MFDP health insurance plan provides employees and their dependents access to medical insurance benefits. Only those classified as Regular full-time employees are eligible to participate in the health insurance plan, subject to all terms and conditions of the agreement between The Ministry of Finance & Development Planning and the insurance carrier.

Details of the health insurance plan will be described in a brochure provided by the insurance company selected by the ministry. Information on the cost of coverage will be provided in advance of enrollment to eligible employees. Employees may contact the Human Resources Unit for more information about health insurance benefits.

4.9 LIFE INSURANCE

Life insurance offers families important financial protection against unforeseen challenges. The MFDP provides a basic life insurance plan for its Regular full-time employees, subject to all terms and conditions of the agreement between Ministry and the insurance carrier. Details of the basic life insurance plan including benefit amounts will be described in the brochure provided by the carrier. Employees may contact the Human Resources Unit for more information about life insurance benefits.

4.10 MARRIAGE AND MATERNITY LEAVE

MARRIAGE

One (1) paid working day off is allowed for the marriage of the employee or one of his/her children. An employee may take one (1) day leave of absence for the marriage of a parent or sibling.

MATERNITY LEAVE ADMISSIBILITY

To be eligible for a pregnancy or maternity leave of absence, the employee must be a non-temporary, full-time female employee.

MAXIMUM LENGTH OF LEAVE

The maximum length of pregnancy or maternity leave allowed is THREE (3) Months. If the employee needs a longer leave due to medical complications, the employee should notify the MFDP Human Resource Unit, as soon as possible. The additional leave will be treated the same as any other medical or disability leave.

WRITTEN REQUESTS

A written request for pregnancy or maternity leave must be submitted within a reasonable time. The employee must submit a written doctor's statement, indicating the anticipated delivery date. The employee should also inform the Ministry of the expected duration of her pregnancy leave, so that MFDP may plan around the absence efficiently until her return.

TRANSFERS

An employee requesting pregnancy leave may also ask for a transfer to another less strenuous or less hazardous position, if so desired. The request must be in writing, and must state the reason for the transfer.

PAID LEAVE

While the MFDP provides for paid pregnancy leave for the period of THREE (3) Months, the employee may also use any accumulated paid sick days and/or paid vacation days to extend her pregnancy leave beyond the paid leave period. The employee will be paid for those designated days.

MEDICAL INCAPACITY

At her option, the employee may continue to work up to the delivery date, depending upon the employee's medical circumstances and the nature of the employee's job. In the event the employee is physically incapable of performing her regular job duties at any time during her pregnancy, the employee may request to be placed on pregnancy leave. An advance notice of a minimum of FOUR (4) weeks should be given, accompanied by a statement from the employee's physician attesting to the employee's incapacitation.

BENEFITS

While an employee is away from work on an approved pregnancy leave of absence, she continues to participate in MFDP's employee benefit programs. The Ministry will endeavor to return the employee to the same or equal job she had prior to her maternity leave. Although the MFDP does not guarantee a return to the identical position, the employee will suffer no loss in seniority.

BIRTH OF A CHILD OR ADOPTION

Two (2) paid working days off are granted as leave of paternity to a male employee immediately following the birth of the employee's child or of the adoption of a child. Employee may request additional unpaid leave, which must be taken within 15 days following days of the arrival of the child at the house.

4.11 VEHICLE ASSIGNMENT & USAGE

The MFDP is committed to providing the necessary tools and resources for the effective performance of assigned tasks. This includes vehicles, which will be made available where there is a need, noting that individual assignment of vehicles is reserved for TOP MANAGEMENT only.

Available vehicles in the ministry will be assigned based on the following priorities:

1. Top Management: the Minister; Deputy Ministers; Assistant Ministers and officials of equivalent rank;
2. As necessary, each of the offices named above may be assigned an operation vehicle for the purpose of efficiency;

3. Units headed by Directors; the assigned vehicles will be used specifically for the work of the unit, and not for the personal use of Director; and
4. Unless there are specific, established and justified operational needs of certain positions (example, regional planning officers) all other vehicles shall be maintained in a pool and operated from there.

In the cases where vehicles are assigned to individuals, it will be their personal responsibility to insure, maintain and service the vehicles. Furthermore, anyone who loses or damages a ministry assigned vehicle will not have another vehicle assigned to them within a two (2) years.

4.12 FUEL & SCRATCHCARDS ALLOWANCE

Included in the MFDP's package of resources available for the fulfillment of employees' assigned responsibilities are fuel and gas slips, and scratch cards.

Because it is not possible to provide every employee fuel and scratch card allowances, it is the policy of the MFDP to provide fuel and scratch cards on an operational basis, distributed as follows:

1. Allowances (quantity) will be determined at the beginning of each fiscal year, based on the approved budget;
2. Fuel and scratch cards will be provided to various offices which include:
 - a. Office of the Minister
 - b. Office of the Deputy Ministers
 - c. Office of the Assistant Ministers
 - d. Office of the Comptroller & Accountant General
 - e. Office of the Directors

There will be no personal fuel or scratch card allowances.

5. TIMEKEEPING / PAYROLL

5.1 TIMEKEEPING

Accurately recording time worked is the responsibility of every regular full-time employee. The Civil Service Standing Orders require that each employee spends a minimum of eight (8) hours performing assigned tasks. Time worked is all the time actually spent on the job performing assigned duties.

Altering, falsifying, tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee's time record may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

If corrections or modifications are made to the time record, both the employee and the supervisor must verify the accuracy of the changes by initialing the time record.

5.2 PAYDAY AND METHOD

All employees are paid monthly between the 15th and 25th of the month, unless otherwise ordered due to budgetary issues.

Employees will receive salary payment by direct deposit into their bank accounts, and so must provide banking details at the time of employment. No live check will be written to any employee for salary.

5.3 EMPLOYMENT TERMINATION

Termination of employment is an inevitable part of personnel activity within any organization, and many of the reasons for termination are routine. Below are examples of the most common circumstances under which employment is terminated:

- Resignation – voluntary employment separation initiated by an employee.
- Discharge – involuntary employment termination initiated by the Ministry.
- Layoff – involuntary employment termination initiated by the Ministry for non-disciplinary reasons.
- Retirement – voluntary employment termination initiated by the employee meeting age, length of service, and any other criteria for retirement established by the Ministry.

5.4 ADMINISTRATIVE PAY CORRECTIONS

The MFDP takes all reasonable steps to ensure that employees receive the correct amount of pay in each paycheck, and that employees are paid promptly on the scheduled payday.

In the unlikely event that there is a payment error, the employee should promptly bring the discrepancy to the attention of the Budget & Finance Unit or Human Resources Unit, so that corrections can be made as quickly as possible.

6. WORK CONDITIONS AND HOURS

6.1 WORK SCHEDULES

The normal work schedule for all employees is 8 hours a day, Monday through Friday, from 9:00A.M. to 5:00P.M. Staffing needs and operational demands may necessitate variations in starting and ending times, as well as variations in the total hours that may be scheduled each day and week. Supervisors will therefore advise employees of the scheduling needs of their respective offices.

Flexible scheduling, or flextime, is available in some cases to allow employees to vary their starting and ending times each day within established limits. Flextime may be possible if a mutually workable schedule can be negotiated with the supervisor involved. However, such issues as staffing needs, the employee's performance, and the nature of the job will be considered before approval of flextime. Employees should consult their supervisor to request participation in the flextime program.

6.2 USE OF PHONE AND MAIL SYSTEMS

In the cases where ministry provides a phone for use on the job, personal use of the telephone for long-distance calls is not permitted. Employees should practice discretion when making local personal calls and may be required to reimburse the MFDP for any charges resulting from their personal use of the telephone. The Ministry reserves the right to request the call-logs from the service providers for such assigned phones, where there is a reason to suspect abuse.

The use of MFDP-paid postage for personal correspondence is not permitted.

To ensure effective telephone communications, employees should always use an approved greeting and speak in a courteous and professional manner. Please confirm information received from the caller, and hang up only after the caller has done so.

6.3 SMOKING

In keeping with the MFDP's intent to provide a safe and healthful work environment, smoking is prohibited throughout the workplace. This policy applies equally to all employees, clients, and visitors.

6.4 LUNCH BREAK

All employees are provided with one lunch break of 60 minutes or one hour in length each workday. Supervisors will schedule lunch periods to accommodate operating requirements. Employees will be relieved of all active responsibilities and restrictions during lunch periods and will not be compensated for that time.

6.5 OVERTIME

When operational requirements or other needs cannot be met during regular working hours, employees will be given the opportunity to volunteer for overtime work assignments. All overtime work must receive the supervisor's prior authorization and be documented. Overtime assignments will be distributed as equitably as practical to all employees qualified to perform the required work.

Overtime compensation is paid to all regular full-time employees in accordance with CSA HR Policy Manual. Overtime pay is based on actual hours worked. Hourly rate will be calculated as monthly salary divided by 22 working days. Failure to work scheduled overtime, or overtime worked without prior authorization from the supervisor and approval by the Department of Administration, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including possible termination of employment.

6.6 USE OF EQUIPMENT

Equipment essential in accomplishing job duties is often expensive and may be difficult to replace. When using property, employees are expected to exercise care, perform required maintenance, and follow all operating instructions, safety standards, and guidelines.

Please notify the supervisor if any equipment, machines, or tools appear to be damaged, defective, or in need of repair. Prompt reporting of damages, defects, and the need for repairs could prevent

deterioration of equipment and possible injury to employees or others. The supervisor should answer questions about an employee's responsibility for maintenance and care of equipment used on the job.

The improper, careless, negligent, destructive, or unsafe use or operation of equipment can result in disciplinary actions, up to and including termination of employment.

6.7 EMERGENCY CLOSING

At times, emergencies such as severe weather, fires or power failures, can disrupt ministry operations. In extreme cases, these circumstances may require the closing of the office.

In cases where an emergency closing is not authorized, employees who fail to report for work will not be paid for the time off. Employees in essential operations may be asked to work on a day when operations are officially closed.

6.8 BUSINESS TRAVEL EXPENSES

Travels on behalf of the MFDP will usually be prepaid. However, in cases where an employee makes an approved travel on behalf of the Ministry without prepaid expenses, those expenses will be reimbursed. All business travel must be approved in advance by the immediate supervisor and the Minister.

Employees whose travel plans have been approved should make all travel arrangements through the MFDP travel section. When approved, the actual costs of travel, meals, lodging, and other expenses directly related to accomplishing business travel objectives will be prepaid or reimbursed the Ministry, using Government approved rates.

When travel is completed, employees should submit completed travel expense reports within 15 days. Reports should be accompanied by receipts for all individual expenses for which reimbursement will be requested by the employee.

All employees whose travels are sponsored by donors/partners are required to comply with all of the requirements for retiring such trips as per the donor/partner rules.

Employees should contact the MFDP travel section for guidance and assistance on procedures related to travel arrangements, travel advances, expense reports, reimbursement for specific expenses, or any other business travel issues.

Abuse of this business travel expenses policy, including falsifying expense reports to reflect costs not incurred by the employee, can be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

6.9 VISITORS IN THE WORKPLACE

To provide for the safety and security of employees and the facilities at the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning, only authorized visitors are allowed in the workplace. Restricting unauthorized visitors helps maintain safety standards, protects against theft, ensures security of equipment, protects confidential information, safeguards employee welfare, and avoids potential distractions and disturbances. Employees are strongly encouraged to discourage or limit visits by families, friends and acquaintances during working hours.

All visitors should enter MFDP premises at the reception area. Authorized visitors will receive directions or be escorted to their destination. Employees are responsible for the conduct and safety of their visitors.

If an unauthorized individual is observed on MFDP premises, employees should immediately notify their supervisor or security and, if necessary, direct the individual to the reception area.

To facilitate the identification of all persons in the building, all employees must display their identification cards at all times while on Ministry premises.

6.10 COMPUTER AND EMAIL USAGE

Computers, computer files, the email system, and software furnished to employees are MFDP property intended for business use. Employees should not use a password, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication without authorization. To ensure compliance with this policy, computer and email usage will be monitored.

The MFDP strives to maintain a workplace free of harassment and sensitive to the diversity of its employees. Therefore, the use of computers and the email system in ways that are disruptive, offensive to others, or harmful to morale is prohibited.

For example, the display or transmission of sexually explicit images, messages, and cartoons is not allowed. Other such misuses include, but are not limited to, ethnic slurs, off-colored jokes, or anything that may be construed as harassment or showing disrespect for others.

MFDP Email may not be used to solicit others for commercial ventures, religious or political causes, outside organizations, or other non-business matters.

6.11 INTERNET USAGE

Internet access to global electronic information resources on the World Wide Web is provided by the Ministry to assist employees in obtaining work-related data and technology. The following guidelines have been established to help ensure responsible and productive internet usage. While internet usage is intended for job-related activities, incidental and occasional brief personal use is permitted within reasonable limits.

All Internet data that is composed, transmitted, or received via our computer communications systems is considered to be part of the official records of the MFDP and is, therefore, subject to disclosure to law enforcement or other third parties. Consequently, employees should always ensure that the business information contained in internet email messages and other transmissions is accurate, appropriate, ethical, and lawful.

The equipment, services, and technology provided to access the internet remain at all times the property of the MFDP. As such, the Ministry reserves the right to monitor internet traffic, retrieve and read any data composed, sent, or received through our online connections and stored in our computer systems.

Data that is composed, transmitted, accessed, or received via the Internet must not contain content that could be considered discriminatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, intimidating, or disruptive to any employee or other person. Examples of unacceptable content may include, but are not limited to written content, images, video or audio material emitting members that are sexual or gender-

specific in nature, or that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of ethnicity, age, gender, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.

The unauthorized use, installation, copying, or distribution of copyrighted, trademarked, or patented material on the internet is expressly prohibited. As a rule, if an employee did not create the material, does not own the rights to it, or has not received authorization for its use, the employee should upload it onto the internet. Employees are also responsible for ensuring that the person sending any material to them over the internet has the appropriate distribution rights.

Internet users should take the necessary anti-virus precautions before downloading or copying any file from the internet. All downloaded files are to be checked for viruses; and all compressed files are to be checked before and after decompression.

Abuse of the internet access provided by the MFDP's policies will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees may also be held personally liable for any violations of this policy. The following behaviors are examples of previously stated or additional actions and activities that are prohibited and can result in disciplinary action:

- Sending or posting discriminatory, harassing, or threatening messages, images video or audio material;
- Using the organization's time and resources for personal gain;
- Stealing, using, or disclosing another employee's code or password without authorization;
- Copying, pirating, or downloading software and electronic files without permission;
- Sending or posting confidential material, trade secrets, or proprietary information outside of the organization;
- Violating copyright law;
- Failing to observe licensing agreements;
- Engaging in unauthorized transactions that may incur a cost to the Ministry or initiate unwanted internet services and transmissions;
- Sending or posting messages or material that could damage the Ministry's image or reputation;
- Participating in the viewing or exchange of pornography or obscene materials;
- Sending or posting messages that defame or slander other individuals;
- Attempting to break into the computer system of another organization or person;
- Refusing to cooperate with a security investigation;
- Sending or posting chain letters, solicitations, or advertisements not related to business purposes or activities;
- Using the internet for political causes or activities, religious activities, or any sort of gambling;
- Jeopardizing the security of the Ministry's electronic communications systems;
- Passing off personal views as representing those of the Ministry;
- Sending anonymous email messages;
- Engaging in any other illegal activities regarded as cybercrime.

6.12 WORKPLACE MONITORING

Workplace monitoring may be conducted by the Ministry to ensure quality control, employee safety, security, and client satisfaction.

Employees who regularly communicate with clients by way of an MFD provided office phone may have their telephone conversations monitored or recorded. Telephone monitoring is used to identify and correct performance problems through targeted training. Improved job performance enhances our clients' opinion of the Ministry, as well as their satisfaction with our service.

Computers furnished to employees are the property of the MFD. As such, computer usage and files may be monitored or accessed.

Employees can request access to information gathered through workplace monitoring that may impact employment decisions. Access will be granted unless there is a legitimate business reason to protect confidentiality or an ongoing investigation.

Because the Ministry is sensitive to the legitimate privacy rights of employees, every effort will be made to guarantee that workplace monitoring is done in an ethical and respectful manner.

6.13 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION

The MFD is committed to preventing workplace violence and to maintaining a safe work environment. Given the increasing violence in society in general, the Ministry has adopted the following guidelines to deal with intimidation, harassment, or other threats of (or actual) violence that may occur during business hours or on its premises.

All employees, including supervisors and contract employees, should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from fighting, "horseplay (wrestling)," or other conduct that may be dangerous to others.

Conduct that threatens, intimidates, or coerces another employee, a client, or a member of the public at any time, including off-duty periods, will not be tolerated. This prohibition includes all acts of harassment, including harassment that is based on an individual's gender, tribe, age, or any characteristic protected by law.

All threats of (or actual) violence, both direct and indirect, should be reported as soon as possible to your immediate supervisor or any other member of management. This includes threats by fellow employees, as well as threats by clients, vendors, solicitors, or other members of the public. When reporting a threat of violence, the employee should be as specific and detailed as possible.

All suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor. Do not place yourself in harm's way. If you see or hear a commotion or disturbance near your workstation, do not try to intercede or see what is happening.

The MFD will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of (or actual) violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as is practical. In order to maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, the Ministry may suspend employees, either with or without pay, pending investigation.

Anyone determined to be responsible for threats of (or actual) violence or other conduct that is in violation of these guidelines will be subject to prompt disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

The Ministry of Finance & Development Planning encourages employees to bring their disputes or differences with other employees to the attention of their supervisors or the Human Resources Unit before the situation escalates into potential violence. The MFDP is eager to assist in the resolution of employee disputes, and will not discipline employees for raising such concerns.

7. EMPLOYEE CONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY ACTION

7.1 EMPLOYEE CONDUCT AND WORK RULES

To ensure orderly operations and provide the best possible work environment, the MFDP expects employees to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all employees and the Ministry.

It is not possible to list all the forms of behavior that are considered unacceptable in the workplace. The following are examples of infractions of rules of conduct that may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment:

- Possessing, using, selling, negotiating the sale of, or being under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other controlled substances during working hours, on ministry property (including ministry vehicles), in ministry uniform or on ministry business.
- Falsification of the hours worked by you or any other employee; signing in for another employee or falsifying any record.
- Falsification of any other employment related document including, but not limited to, personnel files, employment review documents, intra-ministry communication, communications with those outside the ministry, expense records, etc.;
- Theft or destruction of ministry property or that of visitors, clients or fellow employees;
- Possession of potentially hazardous or dangerous property, such as firearms, weapons, chemicals, etc., without prior authorization;
- Fighting with, or harassment of, any fellow employee or customer;
- Unauthorized or excessive use of Ministry property or property of any visitors, customers, fellow employees, including but not limited to, vehicles, supplies, telephones, mail and computers;
- Disclosure of confidential or proprietary information of the Ministry, its clients or fellow employees; or releasing Ministry information without proper authorization;
- Insubordination, including but not limited to, refusal to perform a requested or required job task;
- Excessive tardiness or absences; and taking unexcused absences from work;
- Smoking;
- The taking of unauthorized overtime;
- Solicitation (begging) of fellow employees or customers on Ministry premises;
- Failure to keep your workplace in a neat and sanitary condition;
- Use of obscene or otherwise inappropriate language or conduct in the work place;
- Failure to provide medical authorizations for medical absences in excess of two days;

- Inappropriate horseplay(wrestling), which either is distracting to fellow employees or could endanger others;
- Criminal activity at, or outside of, the workplace;
- Off-duty conduct that could affect the Ministry’s credibility or reputation;
- Outside employment which interferes with your ability to perform your job at the MFDP, including but not limited to that with another government entity;
- Gambling on Ministry premises;
- Sleeping or neglect of job duty, ignoring work duties or loafing during working hours;
- Taking unauthorized gratuities in connection with Ministry business;
- Lending keys to Ministry property to unauthorized persons or allowing the unauthorized duplication of keys;
- Harassment of, or discrimination against, an employee, customer or visitor because of that person’s tribe, religion, political affiliations or beliefs, gender, age, disability or national origin;
- Bad-mouthing or spreading rumors;
- Failure to be at the work place, ready to work, at the regular starting time;
- Willfully damaging, destroying, or stealing property belonging to fellow employees or the Ministry;
- Leaving your work station (except for reasonable personal needs) without permission from your supervisor;
- Intentionally giving any false or misleading information to obtain employment or a leave of absence;
- Failing to wear clothing generally conforming to or accepted in the business /professional environment;
- Misuse, mismanagement, neglect, abuse or unauthorized use of Ministry equipment and tools;
- Engaging in collective bargaining activities that are clearly against Civil Service Standing Orders; and
- Inciting or attempting to incite other employees to engage in unlawful activities.

7.2 SEXUAL AND OTHER UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT

The Ministry of Finance & Development Planning is committed to providing a work environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and conduct that can be considered harassing, coercive, or disruptive, including sexual harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's gender, tribe, age, religion, disability, or any other legally protected characteristic will not be tolerated.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwanted sexual advances, or visual, verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. This definition includes many forms of offensive behavior and includes gender-based harassment of a person of the same sex as the harasser. The following is a partial list of sexual harassment examples:

- Unwanted sexual advances;
- Offering any of the defined employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors;
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances;
- Visual conduct that includes leering, making sexual gestures, or displaying of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons or posters;
- Verbal conduct that includes making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, or jokes;
- Verbal sexual advances or propositions;
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentaries about an individual's body, sexually degrading words, or suggestive or obscene letters or invitations;
- Physical conduct that includes touching, assaulting, or impeding or blocking movements;

Unwelcome sexual advances (either verbal or physical), requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

- (1) Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of employment;
- (2) Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct is used as a basis for making employment decisions; or
- (3) The conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

If an employee experiences or witnesses sexual or other unlawful harassment in the workplace, s/he should report it immediately to his/her supervisor. If the supervisor is unavailable or believed to be an inappropriate person to contact, the reporting party should immediately contact the Human Resources Unit or any other member of management. All employees are encouraged to raise such concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal or retaliation.

All allegations of sexual harassment will be quickly and discreetly investigated. To the extent possible, the confidentiality of the reporting party and that of any witnesses and the alleged harasser will be protected against unnecessary disclosure. When the investigation is completed, the reporting party will be informed of the outcome of the investigation.

Any supervisor or manager who becomes aware of possible sexual or other unlawful harassment must immediately inform the Human Resources Unit or any relevant member of management, in writing, so that the can be investigated in a timely and confidential manner. Anyone engaging in sexual or other unlawful harassment will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

7.3 ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

To maintain an efficient and productive work environment, the MFDP expects employees to be reliable and to be punctual in reporting for scheduled work. Absenteeism and tardiness place a burden on other employees and on the Ministry. In the rare instances when employees cannot avoid being late to work or are unable to work as scheduled, they should notify their supervisor as soon as possible in

advance of the anticipated tardiness or absence. *Poor attendance and excessive tardiness are disruptive. Either may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.*

Accountability for monitoring staff attendance and continuous presence at work for 8 hours daily shall fall with the immediate supervisor and shall be considered a performance issue for the supervisor. Until the optimum digital system is created, staff attendance shall be logged in the existing digital system and manually in each section, unit, division and department.

7.4 PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the business image that the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning presents to its clients and visitors.

During business hours or when representing the MFDP, each employee is expected to present a clean, neat, and tasteful appearance; and dress and groom him/herself according to the requirements of his/her position and accepted social standards. This is particularly necessary for those in positions involving engagement with clients or visitors in person, attending high level meetings and official functions.

Supervisors and department heads are responsible for establishing a reasonable dress code appropriate to the jobs performed under their leadership. Employees should consult their respective supervisors for clarity on what constitutes appropriate appearance. Where necessary, reasonable accommodation may be made to a person with a disability.

Without unduly restricting individual tastes, the following personal appearance guidelines should be followed:

- Jeans, T-shirts, shorts and slippers do not present an appropriate professional image. Smart casual attire will be allowed on Fridays;
- Unnaturally colored hair (green, pink, etc.) and extreme hairstyles, such as spiked hair do not present an appropriate professional appearance;
- Offensive body odor and poor personal hygiene is not professionally acceptable;
- Facial jewelry, such as eyebrow rings, nose rings, lip rings, and tongue studs, is not professionally appropriate and must not be worn during business hours;
- Multiple ear piercings (more than one ring in each ear) are not professionally appropriate and must not be worn during business hours; and
- Tattoos and similar body art must be covered during business hours.

7.5 RETURN OF PROPERTY

Employees are responsible for all MFDP property, materials, or written information issued to them or in their possession or control. Employees must return all Ministry property immediately upon request or upon termination of employment. Where permitted by applicable laws, the MFDP may withhold from the employee's check or final paycheck the cost of any items that are not returned when required. The Ministry may also take all action deemed appropriate to recover or protect its property.

7.6 RESIGNATION

Resignation is a voluntary act initiated by the employee to terminate employment with Ministry of Finance & Development Planning. Although advance notice is not required, the MFDP requests at least 2 weeks' written notice of resignation from employees.

Prior to an employee's departure, an exit interview may be scheduled to discuss the reasons for resignation and the effect of the resignation on benefits, handover of assets and handover report.

7.7 SECURITY INSPECTIONS

The MFDP wishes to maintain a work environment that is free of illegal drugs, alcohol, firearms, explosives, or other improper materials. To this end, the Ministry prohibits the possession, transfer, sale, or use of such materials on its premises and will establish and periodically revise measures and related security inspections to protect the work environment. The cooperation of all employees is required in the administration of this policy.

Desks, lockers, safes, cabinets and other storage devices may be provided for the convenience of employees, but remain the sole property of the MFDP. Accordingly, they, as well as any articles found within them, can be inspected by any agent or representative of MINISTRY OF FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT PLANNING at any time, either with or without prior notice.

Employees are strongly discouraged from storing personal effects such as cash and other valuables in the desk, lockers, safe, cabinets and other storage devices provided for the convenience of the employees as the Ministry cannot be held liable for such losses.

7.8 PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

The purpose of this policy is to state the position of the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning on administering equitable and consistent discipline for unsatisfactory conduct in the workplace. The best disciplinary measure is the one that does not have to be enforced and comes from good leadership and fair supervision at all employment levels.

The MFDP's own best interest lies in ensuring fair treatment of all employees and in making certain that disciplinary actions are prompt, uniform, and impartial. The major purpose of any disciplinary action is to correct the problem, prevent recurrence by learning the lessons and taking the corrective actions, and prepare the employee for satisfactory service in the future.

Although employment with MFDP is based on mutual consent and both the employee and the Ministry have the right to terminate employment, consistent with the Civil Service Standing Orders and other laws and regulations where applicable, they Ministry may use progressive discipline at its discretion.

Disciplinary action may call for any of four steps – verbal warning, written warning, suspension with or without pay, or termination of employment – depending on the severity of the problem and the number of occurrences. There may be circumstances when one or more steps are bypassed.

Progressive discipline means that, with respect to most disciplinary problems, these steps will normally be followed: a first offense may call for a verbal warning; a next offense may be followed by a

written warning; another offense may lead to a suspension; and, still another offense may then lead to termination of employment, as provided for in the Civil Service Standing Orders.

The MFDP recognizes that there are certain types of employee problems that are serious enough to justify either a suspension, or, in extreme situations, termination of employment, without going through the usual progressive discipline steps.

While it is impossible to list every type of behavior that may be deemed a serious offense, this Employee Conduct and Work Rules Policy includes examples of problems that may result in immediate suspension or termination of employment. However, the problems listed are not all necessarily serious offenses, but may be examples of unsatisfactory conduct that will trigger progressive disciplinary steps.

By using progressive discipline, we hope that most employee problems can be corrected at an early stage, benefiting both the employee and the Ministry.

7.9 PROBLEM RESOLUTION

The Ministry of Finance & Development Planning is committed to providing the best possible working conditions for its employees. Part of this commitment is encouraging an open and frank atmosphere in which any problem, complaint, suggestion, or question receives a timely response from MFDP supervisors and management.

The MFDP also strives to ensure fair and honest treatment of all employees. Supervisors, managers, and employees are expected to treat each other with mutual respect, and employees are encouraged to offer positive and constructive criticism.

If employees disagree with established rules of conduct, policies, or practices, they can express their concern through the problem resolution procedure. No employee will be penalized, formally or informally, for voicing a complaint with MFDP in a reasonable, business-like manner, or for using the problem resolution procedure.

If a situation occurs when employees believe that a condition of employment or a decision affecting them is unjust or inequitable, they are encouraged to make use of the following steps. The employee may discontinue the procedure at any step.

1. The Employee presents a problem to an immediate supervisor after an incident occurs. If the supervisor is unavailable or the employee deems it inappropriate to contact that person, the employee may present the problem to the Human Resources Unit or any other member of management.
2. If the Supervisor is consulted, he/she responds to the problem during discussion or after consulting with appropriate management, as necessary. Supervisor documents the discussion.
3. The employee presents problem to the Human Resources Unit, if the problem remains unresolved.
4. The Human Resources Unit counsels and advises the employee, assists in documenting the problem and confers with the employee's manager(s), if necessary.
5. If the Human Resources Units unable to resolve the matter, the Employee submits a written complaint to the Deputy Minister for Administration (DMA).
6. The DMA considers the problem and takes necessary action, informing the employee in writing of his/her decision and forwarding a copy of the written response to the Human

Resources Unit for inclusion in the employee's file. The DMA has full authority to make any adjustment deemed appropriate to resolve the problem.

Not every problem can be resolved to everyone's total satisfaction, but only through understanding and discussion of mutual problems can employees and management develop mutual confidence. This confidence is important to the operation of an efficient and harmonious work environment, and helps to ensure the job security of all Ministry employees.

7.10 WORKPLACE ETIQUETTE

The Ministry of Finance & Development Planning strives to maintain a positive work environment where employees treat each other with respect and courtesy. Instances may arise when employees are unaware that their behavior in the workplace may be disruptive or annoying to others. Often, these day-to-day issues can be addressed by politely and discreetly engaging a co-worker to bring the perceived problem to his or her attention. In most cases, common sense will dictate an appropriate resolution. The MFDP encourages all employees to keep an open mind and graciously accept constructive feedback or a request to change behavior that may be affecting another employee's ability to concentrate and be productive.

The following workplace etiquette guidelines are not necessarily intended to be strict work rules with disciplinary consequences. They are simply suggestions for appropriate workplace behavior to promote conscientiousness and consideration for co-workers and the work environment. Please contact the Human Resources Unit if you have comments, concerns, or suggestions regarding these workplace etiquette guidelines.

- Return copy machine and printer settings to their default settings after changing them.
- Replace paper in the copy machine and printer paper trays when they are empty.
- Retrieve print jobs in a timely manner and be sure to collect all your pages.
- Be prompt when using the manual feed on the printer.
- Keep the area around the copy machine and printers orderly and picked up.
- Be careful not to take or discard others' print jobs or faxes when collecting your own.
- Avoid public accusations or criticisms of other employees. Address such issues privately with those involved first; and, if the problem persists, consult your supervisor.
- Try to minimize unscheduled interruptions of other employees while they are working.
- Communicate by email or phone whenever possible, instead of walking unexpectedly into someone's office or workspace.
- Be conscious of how your voice travels, and try to lower the volume of your voice when talking on the phone or to others in open areas.
- Keep socializing to a minimum, and try to conduct conversations in areas where the noise will not be distracting to others.
- Minimize talking between workspaces or over cubicle walls. Instead, conduct conversations with others in their workspace.
- Try not to block walkways while carrying on conversations.
- Refrain from using inappropriate language (swearing) that others may overhear.
- Monitor the volume when listening to music, voice mail, or a speakerphone that others can hear.
- Lower the volume of your cell phone ringtone so that it not disruptive to others.
- Clean up after yourself and do not leave behind waste or discarded papers.
- Put trash in the waste basket and not on the floor.
- Turn lights and air conditioners off when you are leaving the office.

- Loud discussions and heated argument on political issues, sports and trending current events should be avoided in the workplace during working hours.

7.11 SUGGESTION PROGRAM

As employees of the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning, you have the opportunity to contribute to our future success and growth by submitting suggestions for practical work-improvement or cost-savings ideas.

All employees are eligible to participate in the suggestion program.

A suggestion is an idea that will benefit the MFDP by solving a problem, reducing costs, improving operations or procedures, enhancing client service, eliminating waste or spoilage, or making the Ministry a better, safer place to work. Statements of problems without accompanying solutions or recommendations concerning co-workers and management are not helpful.

All suggestions should contain a description of the problem or condition to be improved, a detailed explanation of the solution or improvement, and the reasons why it should be implemented, and the expected direct and indirect impact of the intervention (both positive and negative). This will enable management to make fully informed decisions about matters that may affect the entire Ministry. Employees may direct questions, concerns and suggestions to their respective supervisors.

Submit suggestions to the DMA for the consideration of Management. As soon as possible, you will be notified of the decision on your suggestion. Special recognition may be given to employees who submit a suggestion that is implemented.

IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS OR SUGGESTIONS REGARDING THE CONTENT OF THE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK, PLEASE DIRECT THEM TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES UNIT.

WE WISH YOU A LONG AND REWARDING CAREER AT MINISTRY OF FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT PLANNING!