

Groff Landscape Design,

# Employee Handbook



***Design & Build a Better Future***  
***ON TIME, ON BUDGET GUARANTEED***

# Introduction

Welcome to the Groff Team! We are so pleased to have you join us and are looking forward to all that we can accomplish together!

We hope that you find your experience here to be as rewarding as it is challenging and productive.

Here at Groff, we consider ourselves open minded and encourage employee suggestions and input. As a new employee at GLD, we challenge you to improve yourself and our business every single day.

Hard work and determination have allowed Groff Landscape to increase sales by a steady rate of 25% almost every year. We strive to continually improve our business structure, culture and the GLD product.

Thank you for your commitment to Groff and to providing the client care we have built our business on and for contributing to the future success of our company as we grow together.

# Core Values + Goals

To become your best, you have got to know your why. Why do we get out of bed before the sun rises? Why do we continue shoveling when we are exhausted? Why agonize the tiny details of the plans? The answer is simple. Because our Core Purpose tells us to.

At Groff, our core purpose is, "To Design & Build A Better Future." To achieve our Core Purpose, we are guided by THREE Core Values.

1. **PEOPLE:** At Groff, we treat everyone – our co-workers and our clients -- like family. Working here, you are part of a team. We take time to listen compassionately. Most importantly, we're here to support you. Everyone makes mistakes – you should always feel comfortable in asking questions and asking for help. We learn so much from each other. At Groff, we work together with humility and vulnerability. We are a team. When you're feeling down, we're here to lift you up. We work hard, but we also work with a focus on your health, wellness, safety and life balance. Because Groff's culture focuses on family and dedication, treating our clients like we would want to be treated will be nothing more than second nature.
2. **ENVISION:** We want you to come to Groff to chase your dreams. Whether Groff is the first stepping stone on your long winding path or the last; we want to make a positive impact on the life of you and your family. We want to be a part of your success.
3. **PURPOSE:** Each day is an opportunity to make a positive impact on our team, our clients, and our community. We choose *purpose over profit* so at the end of the day, we can go home with our heads high and with no regrets. At Groff we understand that if we do things the "right way", profit will come as a byproduct.

People, Envision & Purpose. We challenge you to believe, adhere and incorporate these values into your everyday behavior here at Groff. We use these values to hire, fire, review, reward and recognize our team members. Thank you for being a part of our team.

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## **Employee Acknowledgement of Handbook**

To be signed and returned before an employee begins work.

## **Definitions:**

- Lead Hand = Laborer
- Project Manager = Foreman

# 1. Employee Benefit Programs

## 1.1 Employee Benefits

Benefits eligibility is dependent upon a variety of factors, including employee position in the company. Your supervisor can identify the programs and incentives for which you are eligible.

The following benefit programs are available to eligible employees:

- Sick & Bereavement leave
- Holidays & Vacation Benefits
- Insurance: Health, Disability & Workers Compensation
- 401K\* (available to some employees)
- Profit Sharing
- Project Managers may be granted take home use of a Company truck

\*This would have a tax implication annually. Employees doing side work have to cover the GLD info with a magnet.

## 1.2 Vacation Benefits

### Vacation

Vacation time cannot be carried over to the next calendar year. Exceptional circumstances may be approved by the owner/supervisor, at their discretion. Any unused vacation by an employee can be arranged to be paid out at the end of the year. Employees must have been employed for 45 days to use any vacation time.

GLD requests that you submit your vacation requests no less than 2 weeks prior, preferable as early as possible through the Employee Portal. Vacation requests may be turned down if another employee has already requested the same time period off. They must be approved by the proper channels. Approvals must be obtained from management, once submissions are made via the Employee Portal.

### Vacation Time Entitlement

Vacation time for **office managers** & **operations managers** are dependent on hiring terms. Vacations for **project managers** and **lead hands** are earned according to the following schedule:

- a. First year with GLD: 5 days
- b. Second year with GLD: 7 days
- c. Fifth year with GLD: 10 days
- d. Tenth year with GLD: 14 days

**\*Years of experience pertains to number of years completed in this position.**

New hires must wait 45 days to take any vacation (vacation is prorated based on hire date the first year).

Vacation time should be used prior to the use of unpaid leave for any requested time off.

## 1.3 Holidays

### Statutory Holidays

The following Statutory Holidays are observed by the Company:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Presidents Day
- Memorial day
- Independence Day
- Labor day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day

When a holiday falls on a:

- Sunday: It will normally be observed the following Monday.
- Saturday: It will normally be observed the preceding Friday.

Any changes from this will be announced in advance.

### Religious Holidays

GLD does not observe religious holidays. All observed holidays are either national or special company holidays. If you wish to take time off for a religious holiday, you will not be paid for that day unless, at your option, you decide to count that day as part of your regular paid vacation time, if you have available vacation days. Arrangements for this should be made in advance of your absence and approved by your Supervisor and HR.

## 1.4 Workers Compensation Insurance

The Company provides a comprehensive workers' compensation insurance program at no cost to employees, pursuant to law. This program covers any injury or illness sustained in the course of employment that requires medical, surgical, or hospital treatment in accordance with the policy issued.

Employees who sustain work-related injuries or illnesses should inform their supervisor immediately. No matter how minor an on-the-job injury may appear, it is important that it be reported immediately. This will enable an eligible employee to qualify for coverage as quickly as possible.

## 1.5 Return to Work Policy

### Return to Work Definition

Return to work is the process or strategy of safely returning employees to the workplace in a timely manner. The goal is to return the employee to their pre-injury position through complete cooperation of employee and employer.

## 1.6 Disability Insurance

Groff Landscape Design will acquire and purchase Disability Insurance for qualifying employees after 90 days of employment.

## 1.7 Sick Leave Benefits

Groff Landscape Design provides paid sick leave benefits to all eligible employees for periods of temporary absence due to illnesses or injuries.

### **Regular full-time employees**

Eligible employees will have sick leave benefits at the rate of 5 days per year (pro-rated the first year of employment).

Paid sick leave can be used in minimum increments of one day. An eligible employee may use sick leave benefits only for an absence due to his or her own illness or injury, a medical appointment or to care for/an appointment of a child, parent, or spouse of the employee.

Employees who are unable to report to work due to illness or injury should login to the Employee Portal before the scheduled start of their workday if possible. This must also be done on each additional day of absence. If an employee is absent for three or more consecutive days or 3 days in a work week due to illness or injury, the company may require a physician's statement verifying the illness or injury and its beginning and expected ending dates. Such verification may be requested for other sick leave absences as well and may be required as a condition to receiving sick leave benefits.

Sick leave benefits will be calculated based on the employee's base pay rate at the time of absence and will not include any special forms of compensation, such as incentives, commissions, bonuses, or any other differentials.

Sick leave benefits are intended solely to provide income protection in the event of illness or injury to the employee or their immediate family member, or care of a family member. Sick leave should be requested no later than the day of the requested time off via the Employee Portal.

**Unused sick leave benefits will not transfer, or rollover.**

## 1.8 Maternity/Paternity Leave

### **MATERNITY:**

At the start of employment, an employee may be enrolled in or may be given the opportunity to enroll in the short term disability policy provided by Groff Landscape Design . Per the short term disability policy, the employee must be on staff full time for 12 months to be eligible to use this benefit for maternity leave.

The coverage offers 60% of pay during leave for recovery from delivery. Employee will receive payment from Insurance Company. The length of leave is dependent on type of birth.

Vaginal Deliveries: 6 weeks leave (after the waiting period)

C-section Deliveries: 8 weeks leave (after the waiting period)



Waiting Period: Close to expected due date, Groff Landscape Design and employee will complete the packet of Claims forms provided by Northwestern (short term disability provider). The coverage outlined above begins after the first 8 days, which is known as the benefit waiting period. During the waiting period, employee can use Groff Landscape Design PTO days (sick or vacation), receiving their full rate of pay for 1 week and 3 days.

Any remaining PTO days may also be rolled into the end of the coverage period. Time off is not to exceed 12 weeks total, which includes the 6-8 weeks offered by short term disability insurance and the first 8 days (1 week and 3 days) paid by Groff Landscape Design.

To prepare for maternity leave, employee should notify Groff Landscape Design at their four month milestone in pregnancy with expected due date. Employee is expected to work with manager to determine a transition plan and to provide written documents and training leading up to due date and leave.

**PATERNITY:**

Groff Landscape Design provides paid paternity leave benefits to Father's for three days beginning the day after the birth/arrival of a new child. For planning purposes please inform management 6 months prior to, or as soon as possible, about the approximate arrival of the new child. Once the time arrives, or is close please request the time off officially through the Employee Portal.

## 1.9 Bereavement Leave

In the event of a death in your family, you may, upon request, be granted a paid leave of absence from work. Please submit all requests through the Employee Portal and await approval.

- Employees with at least 90 days of continuous employment are eligible for bereavement pay.
- Employees with less than 90 days are eligible for bereavement leave for immediate family only.

\*The following is a guide to the number of days allowed. The number of days actually allowed for bereavement will be determined by the Owner.

Immediate Family	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spouse/Partner/Children</li> <li>• Parents/Guardian</li> <li>• Brother/Sister</li> </ul>	Up to 5 consecutive days
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mother-in-law</li> <li>• Father-in-law</li> <li>• Grandparents</li> <li>• Grandchildren</li> </ul>	Up to 2 consecutive days
Other Family Members	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brother-in-law</li> <li>• Sister-in-law</li> </ul>	1 working day

## 1.10 Jury Duty

Serving on a jury when called is a civic duty and as such, is recognized and supported by GLD. GLD will grant jury duty leave to all employees summoned to serve as a member of a jury. It is expected that the employee will report to work when off for the day or excused early.

It is the responsibility of the employee to notify GLD upon receipt of a jury duty summons or court subpoena. Time off for jury duty can be submitted through the Employee Portal. A copy of the jury summons is to be sent to HR and or your supervisor as soon as it is received.

## 1.11 Health Insurance Benefits \*\*Subject to change & terms of insurance plan.

Groff Landscape Design offers all employees Health Insurance Benefits at no cost to the employee (after 30 days of work). Employees families can also be insured provided they meet the requirements (paperwork to be provided). The difference in the cost of family coverage versus the individual employees' coverage is to be deducted from the employees' paycheck. Any amounts owed at the end of employment will be due to the employee within 14 days. Please review the following regarding coverage dates:

### **Eligibility and Effective Date Of Covered Employee**

A person who is eligible may elect to be covered under this Plan by completing and signing an enrollment form that is approved by Groff Landscape Design. Verification of eligibility may also be required.

You will be covered under this Plan on the latest of the following dates:

1. On the date the Employer's Plan first becomes effective provided that You:
  - a. Are eligible for coverage on that date; and
  - b. Are employed on a Full-Time Basis by the Employer; and
  - c. Have satisfied any Employment Waiting Period; and
  - d. Enroll for coverage during the initial enrollment period.
2. On the date You first become eligible for coverage provided that You:
  - a. Are Currently Performing Services for the Employer; and
  - b. Have satisfied any Employment Waiting Period; and
  - c. Enroll for coverage on or before the date You first become eligible for coverage.
3. On the first day of the calendar month following the date You enroll for coverage provided that You:
  - a. Are Currently Performing Services for the Employer; and
  - b. Have satisfied any Employment Waiting Period, if applicable; and
  - c. Enroll for coverage within 31 days after You first become eligible for coverage.

### **Covered Employee's Termination Date**

Your coverage and all benefits will terminate at 12:01 a.m. local time at the main office of the Employer on the first day of the Billing Period that commences immediately after the first to occur of the following events:

1. The date this Plan terminates, unless otherwise prohibited by applicable law.
2. The date there is fraud or material misrepresentation made by or with the knowledge of any Covered Person with regard to eligibility for this coverage or filing a claim for benefits.
3. When You are no longer employed by the Employer or treated or considered an Employee by the Employer. You will be considered no longer employed by the Employer if You are laid off or retired from the Employer.
4. When You stop Currently Performing Services for the Employer, including layoff, retirement or leave of absence (other than a leave of absence You are entitled to under the federal Family and Medical Leave Act). The Monthly Plan Day is stated on the Benefit Summary.
5. When You become a temporary, seasonal, or part-time Employee of the Employer, unless the Employer has elected to cover part-time Employees or required by law.
6. When You join, on a full-time basis, the military forces of any country or the service of any governmental agency involving employment outside the United States, except to the extent coverage is required by USERRA or other applicable law.
7. A required payment owed by the Covered Employee with regard to coverage under the Plan was not paid to Employer.

## 1.12 401 K

Groff Landscape Design provides 401K benefits to all eligible employees. You are allowed to defer a portion of your compensation to the Plan. These amounts are referred to as deferrals and are held in an account for you. If you make Regular 401(k) deferrals, your deferrals are not subject to income tax until distributed from the Plan.

You may elect to defer up to 90% of your compensation each year instead of receiving that amount in cash. Your total deferrals in any taxable year may not exceed a dollar limit which is set by law in 2020 the maximum contribution is \$19,500.00.

Groff will make the following safe harbor matching contribution. In order to maintain "safe harbor" status, your Employer will make a safe harbor matching contribution equal to 100% of your salary deferrals that do not exceed 3% of your compensation plus 50% of your salary deferrals between 3% and 5% of your compensation. This safe harbor matching contribution is 100% vested.

For purposes of calculating the safe harbor matching contribution, your compensation and deferrals will be determined on an annual basis. For example, if you defer 6% of compensation for six months and then change your deferral to 0% for the remaining six months of the year, then you will have deferred 3% for the purposes of determining your matching contribution.

A more in depth look at the 401K program and examples of investing and contributions can be provided to you by Human Resources along with the application.

## 1.13 Company Vehicle Use

The use of a company vehicle is a fringe benefit for employees that is taxable and therefore impacts your W-2 wages. It is no different than a bonus received in a paycheck.

The benefit is calculated based on personal miles driven and how new the vehicle you are driving is. Personal mileage must be tracked and reported annually. The company vehicle should be used primarily for business - commuting to and from work (where the vehicle would otherwise be stored) is determined as personal usage as well as any other driving that isn't related to your job.

Groff will help you to track this information and assist you in understanding this benefit.

## 2. Employment

### 2.1 Nature of Employment

Employment with Groff Landscape Design is voluntarily entered into and is "at-will," which means that the employee is free to resign at will at any time, with requested two weeks notice. Similarly, the Company may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice or cause, so long as there is no violation of applicable law.

Policies set forth in this Handbook are not intended to create a contract, nor are they to be construed to constitute contractual obligations of any kind or a contract of employment between the Company and any of its employees. The provisions of the Handbook have been developed at the discretion of management and, except for its policy of employment-at-will, may be amended or cancelled at any time, at the Company's sole discretion.

These provisions supersede all existing policies and practices and may not be amended or added to without the express written approval of the CEO or person designated by the CEO of the Company.

### 2.2 Employee Relations

Groff Landscape Design believes that the work conditions, wages, and benefits it offers to its employees are competitive with those offered by other employers in this area and in this industry. If employees have concerns about work conditions or compensation, they are strongly encouraged to voice these concerns openly and directly to their supervisors.

Our experience has shown that when employees deal openly and directly with supervisors, the work environment can be excellent, communications can be clear, and attitudes can be positive. We believe that the Company amply demonstrates its commitment to employees by responding effectively to employee concerns.

### 2.3 Equal Employment Opportunities Policy

Groff Landscape Design is committed to equality in employment and prohibits unlawful or unfair discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, sex reassignment, disability, ethnic or national origin, nationality, sexual orientation, marital status, responsibility for dependents, religion or belief, trade union activity or age.

## 2.4 Business Ethics + Conduct

The successful business operation and reputation of Groff Landscape Design are built upon the principles of fair dealing and ethical conduct of our employees. Our reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and the 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 Company is dependent upon our customers' trust and we are dedicated to preserving that trust. Employees owe a duty to the Company, its customers, and its shareholders to act in a way that will merit the continued trust and confidence of the public.

The Company will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and expects its directors, officers, and employees to conduct business 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, for advice and consultation.

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 area of an organization may cause issues with favoritism and 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. Any relationships need to be reported to management immediately.

## 2.6 Immigration Law

GLD is committed to employing only citizens and aliens, who are authorized to work in the country. GLD does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship or national origin.

Employees with questions or seeking more information on immigration law issues are encouraged to contact their Supervisor for direction. Employees may raise questions or complaints about immigration law compliance without fear of reprisal.

## 2.7 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 GLD wishes the business 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. Speak with your Supervisor for questions about conflicts of interest.

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 as a result of the Company's 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.

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 to an officer of the Company 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 Company 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 Company.

## 2.8 Non-Disclosure

The protection of confidential business information and trade secrets is vital to the interests and the success of the Company.

All employees may be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement as a condition of employment. Employees who improperly use or disclose trade secrets or confidential business information 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 disclosed information.

## 3. Employment Records

### 3.1 Access to Personnel File

Groff Landscape Design maintains a personnel file on each employee. The personnel file includes such information as the employee's job application, résumé, records of training, documentation of performance appraisals and salary increases, as well as other employment records.

Personnel files are the property of the Company and access to the information they contain is restricted. Generally, only supervisors and management personnel of GLD, who have a legitimate reason to review information in a file, are allowed to do so.

Employees may have access to their own personnel file in the Company's offices and in the presence of the Manager or Supervisor and the file is not to be removed from the office area.

### 3.2 Personnel Data Changes

It is the responsibility of each employee to promptly notify the Company of any changes in personal data.

- Personal mailing addresses
- Telephone numbers
- Number and names of dependents
- Individuals to be contacted in the event of an emergency
- Educational accomplishments
- Other such status reports should be accurate and current at all times
- Driving violations if you are a driver of a company vehicle

If any personal data has changed, notify your Supervisor and or Human Resources immediately.

## 4. Employment Conditions

### 4.1 Probation Period

The probation 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. The Company uses this period to evaluate employee capabilities, work habits, and overall performance. Either the employee or the Company may end the employment relationship at will at any time during or after the introductory period, with or without cause or advance notice.

All new and rehired employees work on a probation basis for the first 90 calendar days after their date of hire unless otherwise specified. Any significant absence will automatically extend a probation period by the length of the absence. If the Company 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.

### 4.2 Work Schedule + Timekeeping

#### Working Hours

During the "Peak Season" (determined by supervisors), GLD will maximize work hours. All employees should be on-site working at (but not making noise before) 7:00am. Project Manager(s) may need to start early on the first day of the project and crews may have to work late on the last day of the project (if necessary). During the "Off Season" (determined by supervisors), GLD will work 5 days per week and 8 hour days as work load permits.

During peak times, or when production slows due to unfavorable weather conditions, these hours may vary and/or include working on Saturdays as determined by management.

Employees are advised to report to work in appropriate rain gear (waterproof clothing) on rainy or windy days. There may be work at the shop, items to be picked up and/or delivered. The company continues to work in light rain conditions on a regular basis. **Employees are encouraged to contact their immediate crew leader, in advance, when weather conditions are questionable, however, the employee must not ever assume work has been cancelled.**

#### Rest + Meal Periods

All field employees are provided with one thirty minute meal period each workday. Supervisors will schedule meal periods to accommodate operating requirements. Employees will be relieved of all active responsibilities and restrictions during meal periods. Brief rest periods will be allowed, as required by law.

Lunch is 30 minutes between 12:00 and 12:30 at the discretion of the Crew Leader. Depending on the type of work being done and/or site conditions, lunch and/or break may be held earlier or later. Lunch, snack and drink containers, etc. are to be collected immediately after lunch/break and disposed of appropriately. **Lunch breaks are to be held on site, leaving the site for lunch is not permitted.**



## 4.3 Pay Periods, Deductions + Pay Corrections

### Payday

All employees are paid Bi-weekly. Each paycheck will include earnings for all work performed through the end of the previous payroll period. It is the responsibility of the employee to be sure they are punching in and out each work day through the ADP app. Should you miss a punch in or out, notify HR immediately via text. Any missed punches should be addressed the same day.

### Deductions

The law requires that the Company makes certain deductions from every employee's compensation. The Company offers programs and benefits beyond those required by law. Eligible employees may voluntarily authorize deductions from their paychecks to cover the costs of participation in these programs. If you have questions concerning why deductions were made from your paycheck or how they were calculated, the Supervisor can assist in having your questions answered.

### Administrative Pay Corrections

The Company 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 an error in the amount of pay, the employee should promptly bring the discrepancy to the attention of HR so that corrections can be made as quickly as possible. Most corrections will be rectified on the following paycheck.**

## 4.4 Drug and Alcohol Policy

To minimize the risk of unsafe and unsatisfactory performance due to the use of alcohol or other drugs, the following standards have been set out and apply to everyone when on Groff Landscape Design business, premises and worksites including when operating any type of motorized vehicles and/or equipment. All employees are expected to report fit for work, and remain fit throughout their work day or shift, including when scheduled to be on call.

REMEMBER: Your safety, and the safety of your fellow employees, depends on a safe, responsible work environment. Your decisions, instincts, timing, and co-ordination are all affected by drugs and alcohol. Violating this policy not only puts yourself at greater risk of harm, but you also put the lives and families of co-workers, customers, and casual passer-by's at risk as well.

**Groff Landscape Design has zero-tolerance for violations of this drug and alcohol policy. Any violations of this policy can be grounds for immediate suspension or termination of employment.**

## What Substances Are Covered By The Drug and Alcohol Policy?

1. The following are prohibited:

- use, possession, distribution, offering or sale of illicit drugs or illicit drug paraphernalia;
- possession of prescribed medications without a legally obtained prescription, and distribution, offering or sale of prescription medications (trafficking);
- reporting for work under the influence of illicit drugs; and
- presence in the body of illicit drugs as determined through the testing program.

2. **Alcohol:** The following are prohibited:

- reporting for duty under the influence of alcohol;
- use of alcohol during the work day including during meals and breaks;
- possession, distribution, offering or sale of beverage alcohol;
- use of alcohol within eight hours of an accident or until tested or advised by Groff Landscape Design,

3. **Medications:** Everyone is expected to use prescribed and over-the-counter medications responsibly. The intentional misuse of medications (for example, using the medication not as it has been prescribed, using someone else's prescription medication, combining medication and alcohol use against direction) while on Groff Landscape Design business, premises or worksites is prohibited. Medications of concern are those that inhibit or may inhibit an employee's ability to perform their job safely and productively.

As an employee, you are expected to investigate (through your doctor or pharmacist) whether a medication can affect safe operation of vehicles, equipment, and/or tools, or in any way put yourself at risk at the workplace. Employees must take appropriate steps to minimize associated risks. Employees must report any requirement for modified work to their supervisor and follow any recommended course of action to minimize safety risk.

## Other Responsibilities Relating to this Policy

**Call-in Situations:** Employees who work in on-call situations are expected to be fit for work and in compliance with these standards. If unexpected circumstances arise where an individual is requested to perform unscheduled services while under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs or medications, it is the responsibility of that individual to notify their supervisor, and decline work.

**Reporting:** If you have reasonable cause to suspect that any co-worker, vendor, sub-contractor, customer, visitor, or any other person(s) at the workplace might be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, you must report said person(s) immediately to your supervisor. If your supervisor is the person(s) suspected, then you must report your suspicion directly to the company owner. If you are in a situation where you are unsure of the person(s) are under the influence, err on the side of caution and report your suspicions immediately.

**Enabling:** Any employee, sub-contractor, or supervisor discovered to have ignored and/or not reported suspected or known incidents of drug and alcohol abuse will be considered to have enabled the situation. Groff Landscape Design has a zero tolerance for enablers and unreported incidents of drug and alcohol abuse, or suspected abuse, can be cause for immediate suspension and/or termination of employment.

**Rehabilitation:** GLD recognizes that dependence can affect some persons similar to a disease. Treatment can be used to successfully cure/treat dependence and encourages any employee(s) suffering from dependence to take an active role in gaining control over their dependence. Dependence will not be tolerated as an excuse for poor or unsafe performance – employees suffering from dependence are expected to seek advice and follow a treatment program immediately. Employees who voluntarily request assistance with treatment issues will be treated with respect and, if required, assigned modified duties while completing treatment.

## Smoking

Smoking is prohibited throughout the workplace, as required by law. This policy applies equally to all employees, customers, and visitors.

# 4.5 Vehicle + Equipment Maintenance Policy

## Purpose of this Policy

To provide a standard practice for defining responsibility for maintenance and the reporting of company vehicles and equipment including the management of all related operating costs.

## Vehicle + Equipment Maintenance Policy

Groff Landscape Design is committed to ensuring compliance with local regulations and authorities pertaining to the maintenance of all company vehicles and equipment, licensing/permits, insurance and inspections.

Vehicles, equipment and parts will be purchased to ensure our equipment is in compliance with regulated standards. All repairs will be performed in a manner that ensures these standards.

# 4.6 Vehicle and Mobile Equipment Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of those individuals who operate company vehicles and mobile equipment. Vehicle and mobile equipment accidents are costly to GLD, but more importantly, they may result in injury to yourself or others. It is the responsibility of the driver to drive in a safe manner and drive defensively to prevent injuries and property damage.

## Operator Qualifications

All individuals who operate company vehicles and mobile equipment must have the appropriate skills, certification and/or license.

A qualified operator must:

1. Possess a valid driver's license appropriate for the type of vehicle or mobile equipment.
2. Successfully complete a practical operating exam administered by competent and authorized personnel.

## Driver Eligibility

- Company vehicles and mobile equipment are to be operated by authorized employees only, except in emergencies or repair testing by a mechanic. Spouses or family members are not authorized to operate company vehicles or mobile equipment.
- Any employee who has had their driver's license revoked or suspended must immediately notify their Supervisor and HR and discontinue operation of the company vehicle or mobile equipment. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.
- Driver's may be asked to provide proof of their driving record (obtained from the DMV)
- Any driving infractions must be reported immediately through the Employee Portal.

## Operator Safety Rules

The operator should be knowledgeable of the following:

1. Their responsibilities to operate the vehicle or mobile equipment in a safe manner.
2. Familiarity and comprehension of safety requirements for the vehicle or mobile equipment which they intend to operate.
3. Manufacture's operating and maintenance procedures.
4. How to communicate to maintenance personnel or a Supervisor when there is a problem with a vehicle or mobile equipment.

## What is to be Done in Case of an Accident?

To minimize the results of an accident, the driver must prevent further damage or injuries and obtain all pertinent information and report it accurately.

1. Call for medical aid, if necessary.
2. Call the police. All accidents, regardless of severity, must be reported to the police.
3. Record names and addresses of driver, witnesses, and occupants of the other vehicles and any medical personnel who may arrive at the scene.
4. Record the following information:
  - License number of the other driver.
  - Insurance company names and policy numbers of other vehicles.
  - Make, year, model of other vehicles.
  - Date and time of accident.
  - Overall road and weather conditions.
5. Do not discuss the accident with anyone at the scene except the police. Do NOT accept any responsibility for the accident. DON'T argue with anyone.
6. Provide the other party with your name, address, phone number, driver's license number, and insurance information.
7. Immediately report the accident to your Supervisor and provide a copy of the accident and/or your written description of the accident - these can be submitted on the employee portal as well as any traffic tickets.

## 4.7 Telephone + Electronic Device Policy

This Telephone and Electronic Device Policy outlines the use of office telephones, company issued electronic devices and the safe use of electronic devices while driving.

### Office Telephones

Efficient and appropriate use of the telephone is important to Groff Landscape Design. All employees must adhere to the following guidelines:

- **If a client contacts you (email, phone call or text) before 5:00pm**, the contact should be returned (or at least acknowledged) on the same day.  
**If a client contacts you after 5:00pm**, the contact should be returned (or at least acknowledged) by the next morning no later than 10:00am.
- No personal toll or paid calls are to be made unless authorize by a Supervisor.

### Company Issued Electronic Devices

The following guidelines apply to the use of company issued electronic devices by employees:

- Company issued electronic devices will be allocated to named employees who will remain responsible for their use. Supplied cases must be used at all times to protect electronics.
- Employees are expected to only use company issued electronic devices in safe areas and to ensure the timing of their use is safe.
- Employees are advised not to let others use company devices unless it is an emergency.
- Company issued electronic devices are provided for business purposes, therefore, the company maintains the right to monitor usage when there is a suspicion of improper use.
- Employees will be held responsible for charges where policy violations exist.

### Safe Use of Electronic Devices while Driving

Groff Landscape Design prohibits the use of electronic devices while driving, unless fitted with a hands-free device.

Employees whose job responsibilities include regular or occasional driving and who are issued electronic devices for work-related use are expected to refrain from using their electronic devices while driving. Safety must come before all other concerns. Regardless of the circumstances, including slow or stopped traffic, employees are required to pull off to the side of the road and safely stop the vehicle before placing or accepting a call. If acceptance of a call is unavoidable and pulling off is not an option, employees are expected to use the hands-free device, keep the call short, refrain from complicated or emotional discussions and keep their eyes on the road. Special care should be taken in situations where there is traffic, inclement weather, or the employee is driving in an unfamiliar area.

Employees who are charged with traffic violations resulting from the use of their electronic device while driving will be solely responsible for all liabilities that result from such action.

## Sanctions

Failure to comply with these guidelines will result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary actions, such as verbal and written warnings, suspension, employment probation, demotions, termination and potential civil and criminal liability.

## 4.8 Computer Use + Internet Policy

This Computer Use and Internet Policy was adopted by Groff Landscape Design, to ensure proper and productive use of computer, network, Internet and telecommunication technology by employees, contractors, and other users of the Company's computer and telecommunications technologies.

### Acceptable Internet Use

Use of the Internet by employees of Groff Landscape Design is permitted and encouraged where such use supports the goals and objectives of the business.

However, Groff Landscape Design has a policy for the use of the internet whereby employees must ensure that they:

- Take all necessary steps to safeguard any password that is assigned for their use. Password shall be committed to memory and shall not be auto-saved, stored on the computer or network, printed, kept in written form or other hard copy.
- Comply with current legislation.
- Use the internet in an acceptable way.
- Do not create unnecessary business risk to the company by their misuse of the internet.

### Unacceptable Behavior

The following is deemed unacceptable use or behavior by employees:

- Accessing the Company's computers and networks using any password other than the password that is specifically assigned to that user.
- Visiting Internet sites that contain obscene, hateful, pornographic or other illegal material.
- Using the computer to perpetrate any form of fraud, software, music or film piracy.
- Using the internet to send offensive or harassing material to other users.
- Downloading commercial software or any other copyrighted materials belonging to a third parties, unless this download is permitted under a commercial agreement or license.
- Hacking into unauthorized areas.
- Undertaking deliberate activities that waste staff effort or network resources.
- Introducing any type of computer virus into the corporate network.
- Engaging in any chat room discussions or instant messaging using the Company's technology for personal benefit or pleasure of the user.
- Sending unauthorized, unsolicited or bulk Email.

## Monitoring

Groff Landscape Design accepts that the use of the internet is a valuable business tool. However, misuse of the internet can have a negative impact upon employee productivity and the reputation of the business.

In addition, all of the company's internet-related resources are provided for business purposes. Therefore, the company maintains the right to monitor the volume of Internet and network traffic, together with the Internet sites visited. The specific content of any transactions will not be monitored unless there is a suspicion of improper use.

## Sanctions

Failure to comply with these guidelines will result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary actions, such as verbal and written warnings, suspension, employment probation, demotions, termination and potential civil and criminal liability.

# 4.9 Employee Privacy Policy

Groff Landscape Design, privacy policy is designed to assist you in understanding how we collect and use the personal information you provide to us.

## How do we collect personal information?

We obtain the personal information we collect directly from the potential employee or contractor. During the application process, most potential employees and contractors provide us with a resume, which includes personal information, skills and experience. They also may complete our Employment Application form. Once a candidate is hired, they are required to complete our Employee Information form.

## Type of information we collect and hold

The personal information we collect is related to the practice of hiring and employment:

- Personal information is collected and recorded from potential employee's and contractors for the purpose of hiring and reference checking.
- All personal information that is normally required to be transferred between an employee and an employer in the context of an employment relationship, including but not limited to, personal address, tax information, banking details, skills, experience and information that might be relevant to a worker's compensation claim.

## Purpose for collecting and holding personal information

We collect and hold personal information of potential employees, contractors and current/previous employees to:

- Gain a comprehensive understanding of skills and experience.
- Conduct an independent verification of skills and experience through reference checks.
- Assess suitability for positions we are seeking to fill or positions that may come available in the future.

We provide every effort through physical and technological security measures to protect personal information from unauthorized access, modifications and disclosure.

### Disclosing of your personal information

We do not disclose the personal information of potential employees, contractors or current/previous employees, except where it is required by law.

## 4.10 Environmental Policy

### Environmental Statement

Groff Landscape Design recognize that activities of the organization could have a significant impact on the environment. We embrace our responsibility to minimize this impact and are offering innovative solutions that protect and sustain the environment. We promise to operate in compliance with all relevant environmental legislation and we will strive to use pollution prevention and environmental best practices in all we do.

### Good Practice Commitments

Groff Landscape Design values are reflected in our commitment to:

- Ensure that all applicable legislation, regulations, and codes of practice are adhered to.
- Increase awareness of environmental responsibilities among management and employees.
- Train, educate and inform employees about environmental issues that may affect their work.
- To prevent pollution and minimize environmental disturbances as a result of our activities.
- Avoid wasting materials, water and energy by paying careful attention to their use.
- Minimize noise, dust and mud.
- Continue to reduce the consumption of fossil fuels and to incorporate long term strategies for energy efficiency into planning and development.
- Promote a purchasing policy which will give preference, where practical, to those products and services which cause the least harm to the environment.
- Maintain the grounds and the building of Groff Landscape Design, , where practical, to reduce harmful environmental impacts.
- Strive to continually improve our environmental performance by periodically reviewing our environmental policy with regard to current and planned work.



## Working Hours

All installation employees should be on-site working at (but not making noise before) 7:00am. Project Managers may need to start earlier to prepare for their work day. All other employees are to work their schedule as it is determined by management.

During peak times of the season, or when production slows due to unfavorable weather conditions, these hours may vary and/or include working on Saturdays.

Employees are advised to report to work in appropriate rain gear (waterproof clothing) on rainy or windy days, unless otherwise notified. There may be work at the shop, items to be picked up and/or delivered. The company continues to work in light rain conditions on a regular basis. Employees can contact their immediate crew leader, when weather conditions are questionable, however, the employee must not assume work has been cancelled.

Lunch is 30 minutes to be held on the jobsite between 12:00 and 12:30 at the discretion of the Crew Leader. Depending on the type of work being done and/or site conditions, lunch and/or break may be held earlier or later than usual. Lunch, snack and drink containers, etc. are to be collected immediately after lunch/break and disposed of appropriately. **Lunch breaks are to be held on site, leaving the site for lunch is not permitted.**

## Inclement Weather Policy

If installation employees report to work and are unable to work a full day due to weather or the jobsite conditions due to weather, they will be paid a flat 2 hours. They should do a standard punch in – but no punch out.

Operations Crew & Client Coordinator must notify HR of the "inclement weather day" and HR will pay all employees for 2 hours. If an employee did not work OCC must verify this with HR.

Pre-approved vacation days or sick days will supersede inclement weather days.

## Time Off

The Company, at its discretion, will offer up to 5 days without pay, which may be pro-rated, per calendar year to accommodate illness, family illness, medical and dental appointments, personal time off, legal appointment, etc. All time off is to be recorded. **Before any non-paid time off can be utilized all vacation time and sick days must be used.**

If you are ill, a doctor's note may be required after 3 consecutive days off. If you are absent for 2 days or more without notifying the Company, you will be assumed to have voluntarily terminated your employment. Excessive absence, tardiness, and leaving early are all considered reasons for termination of employment.

**Time off requests** for appointments must be pre-approved. Approvals must be obtained from the Owner or Supervisor prior to submitting to Human Resources. The request must be submitted a minimum of 14 days in advance, unless exceptional circumstances apply. **All vacation and requests for days off must be placed via the Employee Portal only.**

## 4.12 Visitors in the Workplace

To provide for the safety and security of employees and the facilities of Groff Landscape Design, only authorized employees are allowed in the workplace or on job sites. 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.

## 5. Health + Safety

### 5.1 Health + Safety Policy

#### Health and Safety Policy Statement

Groff Landscape Design is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for all employees and all those involved in our projects. To fulfill this commitment, GLD is ultimately responsible for ensuring that every reasonable precaution is taken for the protection of all employees. We will make every effort to maintain the highest level of safety standards.

All supervisors, employees and those involved in our projects will protect their own and fellow employees' health and safety by working in compliance with the government's current legislative requirements and safe work practices and procedures established by our company.

Supervisors are responsible for the health and safety of employees under their supervision. Supervisors will ensure that the machinery and equipment required by each employee is safe and that each employee is in compliance with established safe work practices and procedures for each piece of equipment. Employees will receive adequate training in their specific work tasks to protect their health and safety.

Every employee, subcontractor, and employee of a subcontractor must protect his or her own health by working in compliance with the law and with safe work practices and procedures as established by GLD. Your attitude and cooperation in the endorsement of accident prevention will assist in achieving our goal to make Groff Landscape Design a safer place to work.

At Groff Landscape Design the goal of our disciplinary program is to ensure that all employees understand the seriousness of our rules and safe work practices. Discipline will be kept positive and not used in a punitive or negative way. The goal of our disciplinary program is to correct the problem, action or behavior of the person. The type of discipline will fit the severity of the misconduct and will be conducted in private.

The following are types of disciplinary warnings that could be received:

1. Verbal warnings
2. Written warnings
3. Grounds for possible dismissal

## 5.2 Health + Safety Responsibilities

### Purpose

The purpose of this document is to ensure that all Senior Management, Supervisors, Employees, Visitors, and Health + Safety Representatives comply with their specific requirements within the health + safety program.

### Standards + Procedures

To ensure understanding, review the following roles + responsibilities annually. If there are any changes, review the new responsibilities with all employees.

## Employer/Senior Management

### Roles + Responsibilities

The Senior Management of Groff Landscape Design has the following health + safety responsibilities:

- Providing a healthy and safe workplace for all employees.
- Ensuring that all work is performed in compliance with current government legislation.
- Appointing competent supervisors.
- Ensuring that equipment, protective devices and materials are provided and in good working order.
- Ensuring that operators comply with both the law and the health + safety program.
- Reviewing accidents and responding as required.
- Reporting injuries to the appropriate authorities.
- Being visibly committed to making health + safety work.

## Supervisor

### Roles + Responsibilities

The Supervisor(s) of Groff Landscape Design have the following health + safety responsibilities:

- Implementing, supporting and enforcing the health + safety program at crew level.
- Ensuring that all work is performed in compliance with current government legislation.
- Ensuring that the machinery and equipment required by each employee is safe and that each employee is in compliance with established safe work practices and procedure.
- Ensuring that employees properly wear protective safety equipment.
- Ensuring that employees are aware of potential hazards and outline appropriate safe-work procedures and training requirements.
- Correcting unsafe acts and unsafe conditions.
- Conducting safety meetings and site inspections.
- Ensuring that injuries are treated and reported. Performing accident/incident investigations.
- Setting an example by being safety conscious and insisting on safe work practices.

# Employees

## Roles + Responsibilities

The Employee(s) of Groff Landscape Design have the following health + safety responsibilities:

- Working in accordance with the health + safety program.
- Ensuring that all work is performed in compliance with current government legislation.
- Using equipment and materials only in the manner intended.
- Requesting the replacement of worn out, defective, or otherwise hazardous tools, equipment, and materials.
- Using or wearing protective devices or clothing, as required by law and/or by the company health and safety program.
- Not removing or making ineffective any protective device without providing an adequate temporary protective device. When work is complete, original protective device must be replaced immediately.
- Assessing jobsite safety and reporting hazards or unsafe conditions to the Supervisor immediately.
- Reporting all accidents, injuries and near-misses immediately to the Supervisor.
- Not engaging in any prank, contest, unnecessary exertion or boisterous conduct.
- Helping new employees recognize job hazards and follow proper procedures.
- Providing recommendations to the Supervisor to improve health + safety.

## 5.3 Accident / Incident Report Investigation Policy

### Accident / Incident Report + Investigation Policy Statement

Groff Landscape Design requires that all employees **report** injuries, accidents, near misses and incidents that result in property damage immediately to their Supervisor. Supervisors are required to report accidents promptly to management to ensure timely submission of reports to the appropriate bodies required by legislation.

Once a report is submitted, Groff Landscape Design will **investigate** each accident/incident to determine cause and will implement corrective action to reduce or eliminate risk of reoccurrence.

## 5.4 Hazard Analysis Procedure

### Purpose

The purpose of the hazard analysis is to identify potential hazards and to control or eliminate these hazards in the workplace.

### Commitment to safety

Groff Landscape Design is committed to identifying and controlling or removing hazards in our workplace and on the jobsite. The hazard analysis will assist in determining:

- The steps in the work activity.
- The potential hazards in the work activity
- The protective measures for the safety of our workers assigned to infrequently performed work activities.

### Resources

To properly conduct a hazard analysis, the following resources could be consulted:

- Legislation.
- Existing practices and procedures.
- Previous accident reports.
- Worker knowledge – unsafe conditions, known hazards.

## 5.5 Personal Protective Equipment

In order to ensure that all employees are protected from hazards, where possible, it is policy that all employees on a Groff Landscape Design project wear the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) at all times.

### Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Responsibilities

Supervisors have a responsibility to ensure that:

- All employees on site wear:
  - Approved safety footwear: Steel Toe Boots
  - Approved safety glasses
- Employees are trained in the use and care of the PPE they are using.
- PPE is cleaned and inspected regularly.
- Defective or damaged equipment is removed from service.
- PPE requirements are communicated to all new hires, subcontractors and visitors to the site.

Employees have a responsibility to ensure that:

- They purchase and come to the site wearing:
  - Approved safety footwear: Steel Toe Boots
  - Approved safety glasses
- PPE is worn whenever necessary.
- PPE is cleaned and inspected regularly.
- Defective or damaged equipment is removed from service.
- Participate in PPE training (if and when necessary).
- Not to remove or make ineffective any protective device required by regulation or employer.

## Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Procedures

1. Supervisor will give new hires an orientation. This orientation will include the use and care of PPE and any specialized training.
2. Supervisor will ensure that approved head protection (when required) and footwear is worn by every person at all times on site.
3. All employees are responsible to report any hazardous condition.
4. The Supervisor is responsible for communicating that failure to comply with stated regulations will result in disciplinary actions.

## Types of Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment falls into two categories:

1. Basic protective equipment
  - Basic protective equipment should be worn at all times by all employees in the workplace.
  - Basic protective equipment includes safety glasses, steel toe boots, and appropriate clothing.
2. Specialized protective equipment
  - Specialized protective equipment should be worn for specific jobs or for protection from specific hazards.

## Foot Protection

Safety footwear is designed to protect against foot hazards in the workplace. Safety footwear protects against compression, puncture injuries, and impact.

Steel toe boots are required.

## 6. Employee Evaluation

A formal written performance evaluation will be conducted annually. 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.

## 7. Employee Conduct + Disciplinary Action

### 7.1 Employee Conduct + Work Rules

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

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:

- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property.
- Falsification of timekeeping records.
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace, while on duty or while operating employer-owned vehicles or equipment.
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace.
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace.
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of employer-owned or customer-owned property.
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct.
- Violation of safety or health rules.
- Smoking in the workplace.
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment.
- Possession of dangerous or unauthorized materials, such as explosives or firearms, in the workplace.
- Excessive absenteeism or any absence without notice.
- Unauthorized disclosure of business "secrets" or confidential information.
- Violation of personnel policies.
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct.

Nothing in this policy is intended to change the company's at-will employment policy. Employment with the GLD is at the mutual consent of the Company and the employee, and either party may terminate that relationship at any time, with or without cause, and with or without advance notice.

## 7.2 Attendance + Punctuality

To maintain a safe and productive work environment, the Company 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 Company. 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: including forfeiture of vacation days, suspension without pay, and termination of employment.

## 7.3 Personal Appearance

Dress, grooming, and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the business image that the Company presents to the community.

During business hours or when representing the Company, you are expected to present a clean, neat, and tasteful appearance.

GLD provides apparel for all Operations employees to wear. Every employee is expected to wear GLD apparel (collared shirt, zip pullover, or vest, etc.) and black, charcoal, or khaki colored pants when representing GLD in meetings with employees, vendors, or clients.

GLD provides uniforms for all Installation employees to wear. Every employee is expected to wear them. If your supervisor feels that your personal appearance is inappropriate, you may be asked to leave the workplace until you are properly dressed or groomed. Under such circumstances, you will not be compensated for the time away from work. Consult your supervisor if you have questions as to what constitutes appropriate appearance.

## 7.4 Return of Property

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

## 7.5 Resignation

Resignation is a voluntary act initiated by the employee to terminate employment with the Company. Although advance notice is not required, the Company requests at least two weeks written notice of resignation from employees.

Prior to an employee's departure, the employee is required to return all Company property.



## 7.6 Progressive Discipline + Dismissal Policy

### Statement

Groff Landscape Design is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy work environment. Therefore, disciplinary actions may be necessary to deal with non-compliance and problems with attendance.

### First Offence: Verbal Warning

- The employee is given a verbal warning.
- The employee is advised that the next infraction will result in a written warning.
- The verbal warning is documented and kept in the employee's personnel file.

### Second Offence: Written Warning

- The employee is given a written warning.
- The written warning includes notification that the next infraction will result in a 3 day suspension from work without pay.
- A copy of the written warning is kept in the employee's personnel file.

### Third Offence: Suspension

- The employee is dismissed for the remainder of the day and an additional two day suspension without pay.
- The suspension is confirmed in writing.
- The suspension confirmation includes notification that the next infraction will result in an immediate and permanent dismissal.
- A copy of the suspension confirmation is kept in the employee's personnel file.

### Fourth Offence: Dismissal

- The employee is dismissed immediately.
- The dismissal is confirmed in writing (via mail).
- A copy of the dismissal is kept in the employee's personnel file.

## 7.7 Violence in the Workplace Prevention Policy

### Zero Tolerance

Groff Landscape Design has a policy of zero tolerance for violence and unacceptable behaviors.

"Violence and unacceptable behaviors" include, but are not limited to physically harming another, shoving, pushing, or other physical assaults, stalking, threats, harassing, bullying, emotional abuse, intimidation and other forms of conduct that create anxiety, fear and a climate of distrust in the workplace.

It is the intent of this policy to ensure that everyone associated with GLD including employees, subcontractors and clients, never feel threatened by any employee's actions or conduct.

Individuals who engage in the previous behaviors may be removed from the premises and may be subject to dismissal or other disciplinary actions, arrest and/or criminal prosecution. This policy applies to all work locations, including offices, work sites, field sites, and vehicles.

### Employee Responsibilities

This applies to all Groff Landscape Design employees, contractors, subcontractors and other personnel who are performing duties for Groff Landscape Design.

It is the responsibility of Project Manage, to support Groff Landscape Design's mission by:

1. Respecting all persons and property, and refrain from behavior that could be perceived as threatening, harassing, intimidating or dangerous to yourself or others.
2. Reporting violent acts, threats of violence and unacceptable behaviors to your immediate supervisor.
3. Refraining from reporting false information or making unfounded complaints against others.
4. Cooperating and participating in efforts recommended to resolve workplace concerns.

**DO NOT IGNORE VIOLENT, THREATENING, HARASSING, INTIMIDATING, OR OTHER DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR.**

If you observe or experience such behavior by anyone, report it immediately to a Supervisor. Threats or assaults that warrant immediate attention should be reported to the police at 911.

## 8. Employee Participation

### 8.1 The Lean Landscaping System - Overview

Most contractors in the landscape industry have room to increase the profit line on their financial statements. Many think that they need to increase sales, or add a crew to achieve that increased profit. There is another myth that it is hard to make money with a certain number of employees.

It has been my experience in working with hundreds of landscape contractors and dissecting their financial statements that the most common problem lies in **EFFICIENCY**. What I am referring to here is really quite simple, if the company invoiced its clients for every hour worked with a proper allowance factor for non-billable hours included in the billable rate, if all of the material, equipment, and subcontracting items were estimated properly on every project a gross capacity can be easily calculated for the company based on the total number of hours the company has available to bill its clients each year. Most companies I have worked with are astonished to realize they are operating at 50 – 70% of their actual capacity. The un-used capacity comes in many forms but ultimately it is WASTE. If you can **eliminate the waste** it will turn into profit. I would like to challenge every contractor to eliminate the waste and capture the true potential of their current operation before physically adding more people or equipment to the expense column!

**Waste comes in many forms**, at Landscape Management Network (LMN) we have designed a lean system for waste elimination for landscapers, we call it the Lean Landscaping System (LSS). The WSS is a waste reduction and continuous improvement system that will provide systems and processes to help landscape companies produce high quality services with an outstanding level of safety, at a competitive price while realizing exceptionally high profits and an increased work-life balance for the employees who follow the systems. We have followed these principles in our own landscape company for almost ten years and have consistently improved profits and employee compensation packages while working less year after year.

By focusing on a few key areas of the landscape business, improvements begin to take place rapidly. The WSS provides systems to increase productivity and improve people.

#### People

We start by implementing a powerful Hiring and Recruiting system that the WSS companies develop with a capable work force using a process to find and hire the right people, followed by an automated online training and career development program for all of the employees to learn to use the WSS. What we are building here is CULTURE. To implement the WSS and really improve daily operations, the people need to be team oriented and prepared to follow the systems and do their part to eliminate waste and help implement improvements constantly.

## Continuous Improvement

At the heart of the WSS lies a continuous improvement program that allows the company to reach full capacity. A landscape company that operates at capacity is capable of compensating its employees much better than the current standard in the industry. People enjoy working in organizations that have systems and processes to refer to since they actually allows people a lot more freedom since the systems run the operation rather than a "micro-manager". Employees are empowered to make good decisions based on the fact that they have a framework to follow and a repeatable system to use when attempting to complete their duties. **It is suggested that each employee strive to make one suggestion for company improvement per pay period.**

## 9 Types of Wastes

By teaching employees how to identify waste you begin the improvement cycle. There are nine types of waste:

1. **Overproduction** - Taking unneeded steps while producing the work and using the wrong equipment for the job.
2. **Waiting** - Waiting for material, specialized skills, subcontractors, information, or equipment to complete the task at hand.
3. **Unnecessary Transportation** - Moving equipment, people, and materials more than required as a result of poor planning.
4. **Excess Inventory** - Ordering supplies needed for projects or your facilities results in other wastes.
5. **Unnecessary Movement** - Any wasted motion field workers need to make to reach material or equipment during production.
6. **Defective Work** - Any work that needs to be re-produced as a result of defects or changes in scope.
7. **Extra Processing** - Unused paperwork + reports, relying on inspection instead of proper procedures, unnecessary, inefficient processes.
8. **Unused Employee Creativity** - Losing time, ideas, skills, or improvement ideas by not engaging or listening to employees.
9. **Saying 'No'** - Resisting change, ignoring waste, and not empowering workers to improve their work processes + procedures.

## Lean Landscaping System Principles

Once you have decided to follow the Lean Landscaping System you will immediately begin to identify waste in your organization and focus on creating systems and processes to prevent that waste from re-occurring in the future. The LLS is founded on the following principles which will govern the way your company makes future decisions:

1. **Long Term Decision Making** - all of your decisions need to be based on long term improvements, even at the expense of the short term gains that could be made using easier or less expensive solutions.
2. **Create Continuous Flow in every Process** - all of the systems and processes used in your operation need to be linked together to allow your team to communicate and eliminate the waste in the overall system. The faster the flow the faster the production, as production increases your company will achieve higher capacity.
3. **Material Management System** - By using a proven material management system, field personnel can manage their material requirements more accurately which is often a major source of waste and a flow inhibitor.

4. **Level Out the Work** - By estimating and scheduling work using a proven system, a company can ensure that all of the work is being completed efficiently since it is much easier to manage the production needs.
5. **Get it Right the First Time** - By building a culture of stopping to fix problems as they occur and completing work properly the first time a company naturally eliminates a great deal of waste that usually occurs in re-work.
6. **Standardized Work** - By creating standard operating procedures (SOP's) you can increase quality and speed simply because your employees can make independent decisions and complete their tasks with more confidence.
7. **Use Visual Aids** - By adding signs in your facilities and by organizing tools and equipment on the projects with visual aids you can eliminate a great deal of confusion and waste.
8. **Embrace Technology** - Using proven technologies to improve communications and obtain maximum efficiencies in all systems and processes.
9. **Develop Exceptional Leaders** - Hire and train the right individuals to supervise your people, implement the systems and build your culture.
10. **Become a Learning Organization** - By implementing the continuous improvement system and creating a culture of waste elimination your team will crave training and education to improve themselves and the company.

This sounds like a large undertaking – and it is. I can honestly say that it can be fun and it is very fulfilling. This is something that has no beginning and end, it's something that will be with you and your company throughout your career. It's a way of doing business. I can assure you that as a business owner if you are looking to make improvements in your work life balance while increasing your profits and company performance this is the solution. You only need to look at the tremendous gains Toyota has made in the North American car market to understand what this LEAN management system will allow you to do in your marketplace.

- The Beach Gardener – Ontario, Canada

## 8.2 The 5S Workplace Organization Procedure

### What is 5s?

- 5s is a Lean tool developed in Japan as part of the Toyota Production System (TPS).
- It serves as the foundation for continuous organizational improvement.
- Following the 5S Process creates an cost-efficient, organized, clean and safe workplace.
- When 5s is in place, workers are able to easily distinguish between normal and abnormal conditions in their workplace.
- 5S involves employee participation.

### Why implement 5s?

- Implementing 5S across the organization will:
  - Install a continuous improvement mindset.
  - Improve employee productivity and efficiency.
  - Eliminate wasted time + materials.

### What are the 5s?

#### Step One: Sort

- Clearly distinguish needed items from unneeded items and eliminate the latter. Sort means that you remove all items from the workplace that are not needed for current tasks.
  - It does **not** mean that you only remove the items that you know you may never need.
  - It does **not** mean that you simply arrange things in a neater fashion.

When sorting, you must only leave the bare essentials. When in doubt, throw it out.

- Identify all potential unneeded items and then determine the following:
  - Is this item needed?
  - If it is needed, is it needed in this quantity?
  - If it is needed, does it need to be located here?
- Place “Red-Tags” on items identified as not needed.
- Evaluate and deal with unneeded items.
  - Move unneeded items to a red tag holding area for a period of time.
  - Dispose of immediately, e.g.: sell, relocate, discard.

#### Step Two: Set In Order (also known as *Simplify*)

Set in order means that you arrange the items that are needed in the area and identify them or label them so that anyone can easily find them or put them away. The key word is “anyone”.

- Store most frequently used items in readily available location(s) – as close to the work area as possible to minimize retrieval time
- Store infrequently used items away from the point of use
- Store items together if they are used together and store them in the sequence they are used
- Make a place for everything using visual controls (labels, signs, marked shelves, painted areas, etc.)

### Step Three: Shine

Shine emphasizes keeping the work site orderly and clean.

- Determine the shine targets – what are we going to clean?
- Set a schedule (how often do we clean?) and assign ownership of tasks to individuals.
- Create procedures for continued daily/weekly/monthly shine processes.
- Set periodic equipment inspection and maintenance targets.

### Step Four: Standardize

Create a standardized way of implementing the tasks that are performed on a daily basis including “Sort,” “Set in Order,” and “Shine.” Do the right things the right way, every time.

- Document the procedures and guidelines for sorting, simplifying and organizing. Include:
  - Visual controls (signs, labels, diagrams, etc.).
  - Item quantity requirements.
- Document the schedule in which they are to be completed and reviewed.

### Step Five: Sustain

Make a habit of maintaining established procedures. Sustain means that the 5S program is continuously applied and workers are self-disciplined enough to ensure its ongoing success.

- Conduct periodic inspections to ensure systems are working.
- Track + score periodic inspections + make supervisors clear that they are being **measured** on their performance.
- Reward excellence, punish neglect.

## 8.3 Continuous Improvement

### Overview

**Every employee is encouraged to come up with ideas** – however small – that could improve his/her particular job activity, job environment or any company process for that matter, and must be given the opportunity to implement their ideas. Small changes can usually be implemented by the same employee with very little investment of time. Great companies are rarely developed by massive change. Most great companies develop slowly through continuous, small improvements developed by every employee.

### Benefits

The continuous improvement procedure helps eliminate or reduce wastes, makes for a happier workplace, improves culture, and, when the company is successful, affords everyone a higher standard of living. Every improvement may be small, but the cumulative effect is tremendous. Continuous improvements improve quality, safety, costs, profits, schedule, environments, productivity and customer service.

### Steps

		Role Responsible	
		Superv	Emp
<input type="checkbox"/>	Identify a problem, waste, or an opportunity for improvement.		R
<input type="checkbox"/>	Develop an improvement idea and discuss it with your supervisor.	I	R
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review idea within a week.	R	I
<input type="checkbox"/>	Implement the idea. If a larger improvement idea is approved, take leadership to implement the idea.	I	R
<input type="checkbox"/>	Share and motivate others and recognize the accomplishment.	R	I

Note: R=Responsible, C=Consult, I=Inform

### Three Key Characteristics of Continuous Improvement

1. **Permanent method changes.** Once a method is changed, do not go back to the old way of doing things.
2. **Continuous flow of small ideas.** The smaller the idea, the better. The continuous improvement procedure is about making day-to-day improvements that when added together, generate enormous savings for the company and empower workers to improve their work space, their crews, and their company.
3. **Immediate local implementation.** Be realistic. The continuous improvement procedure must be performed within realistic, practical, and safe constraints.



# Employee Acknowledgement of Handbook

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the employee handbook. I understand and recognize that there may be changes to the information, policies, and benefits in the handbook. I understand that Groff Landscape Design may add new policies to the handbook as well as replace, change, or cancel existing policies. I understand that I will be told about any handbook changes and I understand that handbook changes can only be authorized by Groff Landscape Design management.

I understand that I became an employee of Groff Landscape Design voluntarily. I understand and acknowledge that there is no specified length to my employment and that my employment is at will. I understand and acknowledge that "at will" means that I may terminate my employment at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. I also understand and acknowledge that "at will" means that Groff Landscape Design may terminate my employment at any time, with or without cause or advance notice, as long as they do not violate federal or state laws.

I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with all policies included within the employee handbook. I further understand that I should consult my supervisor regarding any questions I may have.

<b>Employee Signature</b>	
_____	_____
<i>Employee signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
_____	_____
<i>Printed Name</i>	<i>Employer Representative</i>

***This form is to be signed and returned on or before the first day of work.***