



HUMAN RESOURCE MANUAL

**FORUM FOR WOMEN DEVELOPMENT & RESEARCH
(PRIVATE) LIMITED**

Human Resource Manual

**Forum for Women Development &
Research (Private) Limited**

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1. HOW TO USE THE MANUAL

1.1. INTRODUCTION TO THIS MANUAL

This manual provides the guidelines for policies, systems and procedures related to human resource function at Forum for Women Development & Research (Private) Limited (henceforth referred to as the Forum). This manual has been designed to provide a ready reference to Forum policies and procedures on Human Resource (HR) that are currently implemented and practiced. The manual will help to smooth the operations of Forum by providing the management with timely information for decision making. It is intentionally written in easy English to make it user friendly. The HR policies included in this manual focus on key organizing principles and are designed to provide direction to Forum's departments and its employees for the management and use of human resources. These policies are an expression of underlying values contained in the principles and goals set by the Forum management.

1.2. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The Board of Directors (BOD) is responsible for the overall establishment and maintenance of systems, however, day to day implementation is to be carried out by the Human Resource Officer, which in turn reports to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) regarding status and performance of the Human Resource department.

1.3. CLARIFICATION, UPDATING AND ADMINISTRATION

Requests for clarification or explanation of any policy shall be addressed to the HR Officer.

1.4. CUSTODY AND ACCESS

This manual shall remain in the custody of following:

- a. CEO;
- b. National Coordinator;
- c. HR Officer;
- d. Any other person approved by CEO.

This manual is the property of Forum for Women Development and Research. Its unauthorized use and/or copying is strictly prohibited.

2. DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

2.1. DEFINITIONS

In this manual, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context, the following definitions will be applicable:

- 1) **Allowed Leave** – Any absence duly approved by the authorized supervisor such as casual leave, earned leave, sick leave etc.
- 2) **Appointment Date** - The date of appointment as shown in the letter of appointment.
- 3) **Appeal** - Formal request for reconsideration by an employee of a decision by the competent authority
- 4) **Applicant** - Individual who has filed an application for a vacant position and desires to be considered for appointment to a position.
- 5) **Appointing Authority** - A director/manager authorized by Forum to make an appointment, in accordance with the Delegation of Authority.
- 6) **Benefit** - Anything that furthers a person's financial interest or from which a person hopes to gain in any way.
- 7) **Cadre** - A group of employees in a specific employment category e.g. cadre of professionals etc.
- 8) **Cause**- Means reason for disciplinary action of regular employees, determined by the standards of job performance and maintenance of the public interest.
- 9) **Confidential Information** - Information which by law or practice is not available to the public.
- 10) **Competent Authority** – In accordance with the context, it includes the Board of Directors, the CEO; or any managerial or supervisory employee of Forum formally designated.
- 11) **Day** - A calendar day beginning and ending at midnight.
- 12) **Demotion** - The assignment of an employee from one class or category to another that has a lower pay-grade and lower maximum rate of pay.
- 13) **Disability** - An employee or applicant who has: a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities; or a record of having such impairment; or is regarded as having such impairment.
- 14) **Disciplinary Action** - Action taken against an employee such as reprimand, suspension, demotion, or dismissal.
- 15) **Discretion** - Making a decision after considering various possibilities.
- 16) **Discrimination** -The Forum does not tolerate any form of unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex, gender identity, color, ancestry, serious medical condition, national origin, age, or disability, in Forum employment, its programs, services or facilities.
- 17) **Dishonesty** -In common use it may be defined as the act of being dishonest; to act without honesty; a lack of probity, to cheat, lying or being deliberately deceptive; lacking in integrity; being corrupt. Dishonesty is the fundamental component of a majority of offences relating to the acquisition, conversion and disposal of property (tangible or intangible) defined in the criminal law.
- 18) **Dismissal** - Involuntary termination of employment for reasons other than lack of funds or lack of work.
- 19) **Due Process** - The right granted to a ~~full-time or part-time~~ regular employee, who has

completed the probationary period, to pre- and post-disciplinary hearings, for actions of suspension, demotion, or dismissal.

- 20) **Eligible Employee** - Means any employee.
- 21) **Employee** - An individual who is legally employed by Forum and is paid through the Forum payroll, except for consultants.
- 22) **Entry Level Rate of Pay** - The minimum base rate in any salary grade established for a class or category.
- 23) **Family** - Employee, his/her dependent parents, spouse and children wholly dependent upon the employee.
- 24) **Financial Embezzlement** – Also referred to as misappropriation or fiscal irregularity, implies a dishonest, illegal, or fraudulent act involving funds, property, etc. and may include forgery or alteration of financial instruments or documents, records pertaining to employee benefits or related items such as bills, claims, etc., misappropriation of funds, securities, supplies or any other organizational asset for private gain, illegal or fraudulent handling or reporting of money transactions; acceptance or solicitation of any gift, favor, or service that might reasonably tend to influence the employee in the discharge of his or her official duties, destruction or disappearance of records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment.
- 25) **Financial Interest** - Any property ownership, management, professional or private interest from which the employee his or her family or household member receive a financial benefit.
- 26) **Forum** - The Forum for Women Development and Research as incorporated under the Companies Act, 2017 as a company limited by shares.
- 27) **Full-Time** - An employee working at least 40 hours or more per week.
- 28) **Governing Body** – Means Forum’s Board of Directors and member of Advisory Council
- 29) **Grievance** - Means a formal, written statement from an eligible employee concerning actions taken by the organization on one of the following items: loss of pay, written reprimand, suspension, and termination.
- 30) **Harassment** – Any behavior that creates a hostile work environment through unwelcome words, actions or physical contact.
- 31) **Hostile environment** – Created due to harassment on the basis of race, religion, sex, gender, identity, color, ancestry, serious medical condition, national origin, age, or disability.
- 32) **Immediate Family (Emergency)** - For purpose of emergency leave: spouse, child or step-child, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother and sister.
- 33) **Immediate Family (Sick)** - For purpose of sick leave: spouse, child or stepchild, mother, father an individual for whom the employee is a court appointed legal guardian or domestic partner and eligible dependent.
- 34) **Incumbent** - The current occupant of a duly approved position in Forum.
- 35) **Independent Judgment** - The comparison and evaluation of possible course of conduct, and acting or making a decision after the various possibilities have been considered.
- 36) **Insubordination** - Failure to obey direct lawful instructions from a supervisor with responsibility to exercise independent judgment, that are part of the job specification, and whose non-performance affects the fulfillment of job responsibilities or completion of planned tasks or achieving of organizational aims in any way.
- 37) **Job Analysis** - Comprehensive analysis of the duties and responsibilities and essential

functions of a position and of the qualifications required of persons selected for the position.

- 38) **Job Description** - A written description of a job, which includes the position title, specification of duties and responsibilities, requirements, and definition of working conditions.
- 39) **Job Specification** - A written statement of duties, responsibilities and essential required characteristics/attitude and includes education, experience, knowledge, and ability required to perform the duties of the job.
- 40) **Layoff** - The separation of an employee, which occurs when a regular position has been abolished which results into termination of all employees in that position in a given area or section because of material changes in duties, or shortage or stoppage of work or funds, or other reasons in the best interest of the organization as determined by the CEO.
- 41) **Leave** - An authorized absence from regularly scheduled work hours for reasons specified in the personnel rules (holidays, sickness, injury, disability, casual or annual, etc.).
- 42) **Leave With Pay** - Authorized absence from work with pay.
- 43) **Leave Without Pay** - Authorized absence from work without pay.
- 44) **Mala-fide**- a conscious violation of the law to the prejudice of another with intent to do harm out of revenge or enmity. *Mala fide* does not necessarily involve a malicious intention.
- 45) **Supervisor** - A person designated as head of a group of employees, section, project or activity, with authority and responsibility to exercise independent judgment;
 - i. Person duly authorized to assign tasks, set standards of job performance, and recommend hiring, transfers, suspensions, layoffs, recalls, promotions, and termination of subordinates;
 - ii. Person authorized to assign, reward, or discipline others, and direct or adjust employee grievances.
- 46) **Matters of Significance** - Level of importance or consequence of the work performed.
- 47) **Merit System** - A personnel system designed to attract and hold employees by making individual employment decisions based on qualifications, experience, and performance rather than on political association.
- 48) **Month** - Means the month as used by the Government of Pakistan such as January, February etc.
- 49) **Nepotism** - Patronage of one's relatives or friends by providing them employment or position by bypassing the Merit System or using undue influence to do so.
- 50) **Negligence**- The breach of an obligation (duty) to act with care, or the failure to act as a reasonable and prudent person would under similar circumstances. When a person fails to exercise the care that a reasonable, prudent person would exercise under the same circumstances, that person is said to be negligent
- 51) **Official Position** - An office or post of authority within Forum for which one has been hired.
- 52) **Open Competition** - Competition for a position, which is available to all interested persons.
- 53) **Overtime** – The time an employee is directed and authorized to work in excess of the 40 hours per week stipulated by law.
- 54) **Per diem** – An allowance paid to an employees for lodging, meals, and incidental

expenses incurred when travelling. This allowance is in lieu of paying their actual travel expenses.

- 55) **Performance Appraisal** - An assessment of an employee's work.
- 56) **Person** - Any man or woman, and extended to include any firm, association, corporation or partnership.
- 57) **Policy** - A policy is typically described as a principle or rule to guide decisions and achieve rational outcomes. Policies are generally adopted by the Board within Forum.
- 58) **Primary Duty** - Principal, main, major or most important duty that the employee is hired to perform.
- 59) **Probation** - A trial period of employment, during which an employee is required to demonstrate fitness for employment. The probation period is another aspect of the selection process and may be waived or extended in some cases at the discretion of the CEO.
- 60) **Probationary Employee** - An employee hired to fill a position in the classified service, which has not yet completed the probationary period of employment during which time the employee may be terminated without notice.
- 61) **Procedure** - A procedure is designed to describe Who, What, Where, When, and Why by means of establishing corporate accountability in support of the implementation of a "policy".
- 62) **Project** - Any venture requiring investment that has been taken into its operational stage by Forum.
- 63) **Promotion** - The assignment of an employee from one class or category to another, which has a higher maximum rate of pay, and greater responsibility. Promotion requires that an employee be upgraded and reclassified.
- 64) **Reclassification**- Reassignment of a position from one class or category to a different class or category to recognize a change in the duties and responsibilities of a position.
- 65) **Recruitment Process** - Procedures used by Forum's Human Resource Section in attracting job applicants for Forum positions.
- 66) **Re-Hire** - Re-employment of a former employee who left Forum in good standing.
- 67) **Reinstatement** - An action whereby an employee is restored to Forum's service after involuntary termination or suspension. Reinstatement is to a position that has pay and benefits comparable to those received at the time of termination or suspension.
- 68) **Reviewer** - The immediate supervisor who is required to review and approve each performance review within his/her purview before it is included as part of the reviewed employee's permanent record.
- 69) **Rules** - Means the Personnel Rules and Regulations of the Human Resource Manual adopted by due process and authority, in accordance with the provisions of the Forum's Memorandum and Articles of Association and the law under which Forum is registered.
- 70) **Salary** - Payment for work performed that is pre-determined and uniform from one pay day to the next and does not depend on the number of hours worked.
- 71) **Salary Range** - The minimum, and maximum base rates established for Forum's employees.
- 72) **Selection** - Means the choosing of a candidate for employment.
- 73) **Selection Criteria** - Used separately or in combination, as appropriate, to obtain the best qualified candidates for vacant positions.
- 74) **Separation** - Removal of an employee from the Forum payroll for voluntary or

involuntary reasons; it includes dismissal, resignation, layoff, retirement, abandonment of the job, death, and other reasons.

- 75) **Sick Leave** - Leave with pay, granted to an employee for illnesses.
- 76) **Spouse/s** - Two individuals who are married under law or in a declared, mutually exclusive, committed relationship, who share a primary residence, are jointly responsible for the common welfare of each other, share financial obligations and have provided evidence of domestic partnership to the Human Resource Section seeking this status.
- 77) **Threat** – Any expression of intent to inflict harm. Any indication of imposing danger or harm or any signs or warnings of impending danger or harm.
- 78) **Transfer** - Assignment of an employee from one position to another in the same salary schedule. May also be assignment of an employee from one work location to another, or from one section or project to another. Transfers may be voluntary or involuntary.
- 79) **Unauthorized Absence** - Absence from duty without supervisory approval.
- 80) **Vacancy** - An authorized position not occupied by an incumbent, which has been approved by the appropriate designated authority for filling.
- 81) **Wage** - Payment that is calculated according to the number of hours worked and which may fluctuate from one payday to the next as the number of hours worked varies.
- 82) **Workplace Violence**—Hitting, shoving, pushing, kicking, and sexual assaults; this also includes verbal outbursts and can happen in the form of threats, harassment, abuse, use of weapons and intimidation.
- 83) **Work Requiring Advanced Knowledge** -Work which is predominantly intellectual in nature which includes work requiring the consistent exercise of discretion and judgment.

2.2. INTERPRETATIONS

In this manual, unless specified otherwise, words referring to the masculine gender shall be taken to include the feminine gender and vice versa, and words in the singular shall include the plural and vice versa.

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1. OVERVIEW

Forum for Women Development & Research (Private) Limited is a private company limited by shares. It is registered under the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) and aims to earn income by executing projects for Safe Motherhood. The company's head office is located in Islamabad, Pakistan. All employee contracts, financial documents, policies and procedures, and activities are approved and finalized at the head office.

This manual is designed to acquaint the staff with the organization and provide information about its culture, policies and practices, rules, working conditions and benefits effecting employment. The terms and conditions contained in this manual apply to all staff and abiding to these terms is considered a condition of continued employment.

This manual addresses the staff currently employed and being provided administrative support by the Forum. It contains all those policies that are continuously in practice, effect employment directly and are required for a more regular review and reference. The staff is required to follow all terms and policies as laid down in this manual.

While the material in this manual should prove useful, it should not be construed as either a complete treatment of all the policies or an official statement as to the subject matter reviewed. Questions regarding this Manual should be addressed to the appropriate personnel.

3.2. VISION

A Pakistan where all women & girls realize their right to quality health & well-being.

3.3. MISSION

To activate a people led movement for reproductive, maternal & new-born health & rights

3.4. PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL

The purpose of this manual is to facilitate programme implementation in a transparent manner through sound HR policies and procedures to be followed by all Forum employees without exception unless expressly decided by the Board of Directors through a resolution. The purpose of this Manual is to establish consistent basic Human Resource policies and practices to govern relations between Forum and its employees. This Manual does not constitute an employment contract. This Manual is to be interpreted as a whole rather than a sum of parts. This manual covers all the key HR policies, procedures, service rules applicable to all categories of staff.

3.5. DISTRIBUTION & REVISION

This manual will be available to all designated Forum employees, as a reference handbook. The manual will be reviewed at least once in three years, though changes may be made more frequently should the programme so require.

3.6. COMMENCEMENT & AUTHORITY TO APPROVE AND AMEND THE FORUM'S EMPLOYEES SERVICES RULES AND PROCEDURES

This manual will be effective from the date of approval by BOD. The manual consolidates all existing Forum's HR policies, rules, procedures, office orders etc. and therefore, supersedes all earlier versions.

The Board of Directors has the final authority to approve Forum's major HR policies. However procedural changes may be made with approval of the Chief Executive Officer; however the BOD will be informed in its upcoming meeting about procedural changes made by CEO.

Human Resource Section is the only one responsible for communicating the official interpretation of these policies and procedures within and outside of the organization as and when authorized by the CEO.

3.7. PRINCIPLES

Forum's HR policies and procedures have been developed based on the following principles:

- Equal opportunity
- Transparency
- Flexibility to Meet Diverse Requirements of the Projects
- Zero Tolerance for Corruption and Sexual Harassment
- Continuous Capacity Building
- Rewarding Exceptional Performers

4. RECRUITMENT & SELECTION

4.1. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Forum is an equal opportunity employer. The organization is committed to recruit and select the most competent and qualified persons. Recruitment and selection shall be executed in a manner that ensures open competition, and strictly discourages all sorts of discriminations on the basis of sex, creed, religion, and disability.

4.2. RECRUITMENT COMMITTEE /INTERVIEW PANEL

A three-member committee/panel will be nominated by CEO. This committee will conduct interviews of all proposed positions. The committee will be comprised of not less than 2 members of the Governing Body. Wherever feasible, the committee shall be gender balanced. In cases of recruitment of specialized expertise, a subject specialist may also be invited as a member.

4.3. APPOINTING AUTHORITY:

The appointing authority for all positions is the CEO.

4.4. EMPLOYEES CLASSIFICATION AND CATEGORIES WITH THE SELECTION CRITERIA

Entry point for each position mentioned in the Organogram has been defined as:

Designation	Qualification and Experience
Management	
Chief Executive Officer	To be decided by BoD
Project/Regional/Provincial Director/Manager	Masters Degree, 15 Years Exp.
National Coordinator	Masters Degree, 10 Years Exp.
Professional Staff	
Project/Regional/Provincial Coordinator/Officer	Masters Degree, 5 Years Exp.
Finance Officer, Admin Officer, HR Officer, IT Officer, Communication & Advocacy Officer, etc.	Masters Degree, 3 Years Exp.
Support Staff	
Programme Assistant/Office Assistant/Other Assistant etc.	Masters Degree, 1 Year Exp.
Auxiliary Staff	
Office Boys, Drivers, Cooks, etc.	Required Certification
Others	
Interns	Fresh Graduates

The CEO may waive off above mentioned requirements in lieu of reputation or past position of the candidate.

4.5. NATURE OF CONTRACT

All employees will be hired on contractual basis for a specific period of time, as decided by the CEO/BoD. There will be no core staff unless decided by the CEO/BoD. The terms of

employment i.e. Salary, benefits, allowances etc. shall be negotiated at the time of agreement and will be based on mutually agreed provisions.

The employment of such staff shall terminate in the event of any of the following:

- Force majeure conditions or the failure of the project/programme as a whole e.g. natural or manmade disaster which makes it impossible for Forum to run the project/programme;
- Suspension/termination of the project/programme or funding by the donor;
- On account of misconduct/misappropriation/fraud

4.6. GENERAL RULES FOR RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

a. Affinity & Blood Relative

Candidate who is directly related to an existing employee in Forum as a first/second/third blood relative shall not be acceptable for employment i.e.

- Spouse
- Parent including in-laws and stepparents
- Children, including in-laws and step-children
- Siblings
- Aunts, uncles, cousins

It shall be the responsibility of new hire to disclose such relationship. If this fact is discovered after appointment, the incumbent's employment agreement will be terminated with a notice period of 7 days. However the CEO may accord approval of any such appointment in keeping with the best interests of Forum; the reasons thereof must be documented.

b. Pre-Selection Prohibited

No Forum's employee will promise job appointments to any person. All inquiries regarding vacancies should be referred to the Human Resource Officer.

c. Education and/or Experience Substitution

All internal and external candidates seeking employment must meet the minimum qualifications/experience requirement outlined in the relevant job announcement. Should a job posting yield an insufficient pool of suitable candidates, the Human Resource Officer may recommend to the CEO whether to re-advertise the position or review applications to waive or make substitutions for education and/or experience in favor of appropriate candidates.

d. Substitution of Experience for Education

A suitable number of years of direct/relevant experience may be substituted for each year of required education in exceptional circumstances. Direct/ relevant experience is experience that has equipped the applicant with the particular knowledge, skill set, and ability to perform the requisite duties successfully and is typically in or directly related to the job description of the position to be filled.

For example, if a position requires a Master's degree in Public Health and an applicant has not studied at that level, the CEO may determine that two years of direct professional-level

primary healthcare delivery experience, supervised by a qualified expert, may substitute for such an academic degree. However, where positions require professional qualification such as accounting or medicine or nursing, substitution cannot be granted on experience alone. In such cases the CEO may direct the Human Resource Officer to modify the job specifications, and if necessary, the job class or category and restart the selection process.

Unless otherwise specified, one year of relevant, accredited education at the post-Bachelor's level may be substituted for two years of required experience. Relevant education may be classified as the necessary qualification that equips the applicant with the particular knowledge, skill set, and ability to successfully perform the duties of the vacant position and is typically in or related to the job description of the position to be filled.

At the CEO's discretion, credit for two year of experience may be given for each year of full-time, accredited studies at a Higher Education Commission-approved institution provided the area of knowledge is directly relevant to the position to be filled. Relevant professional courses, duly accredited by recognized academic bodies may be substituted for experience at the discretion of the CEO, provided an applicant can prove their academic credit and relevance to the job.

To attract talent, applicants who have received higher education from reputable universities, like the top 20 universities in the world, will be offered special salary packages.

e. Level of Experience

Only related professional level experience will be credited for professional positions. Professional level experience involves work that is intellectual and varied in nature, requires advanced knowledge and education, and the exercise of discretion and judgment.

Non-professional level experience shall not be substituted for the requisite professional level experience. In certain instances, and at the discretion of the CEO, non-professional experience may be substituted for educational requirements when the applicant pool does not contain applicants who meet the minimum requirements of the position, but the justification/reason must be recorded for such a relaxation.

Supervisory level experience will be credited if the experience involves supervision of two or more full-time positions. Supervisory experience involves work where one has the authority to conduct performance evaluations, approve requests for leave, and make recommendations regarding hiring, termination or other decisions affecting the employment status of others.

f. Equivalence of Professional & Academic Degrees

For the purpose of equivalence, professional Bachelor's degrees in Engineering, Medicine, Agriculture, Veterinary Sciences and Forestry will be considered equivalent to a Master's degree. The completion of Chartered Accountancy up to Module D level will be counted as Master's Degree. A PhD degree shall be considered equivalent to four years' experience.

g. Employment of Retired Persons

Persons who have retired from any other organization may be eligible for employment unless they have attained the age of 60 years, in which case they shall not be employed in a classified position under any circumstances. In case of specific technical skills, CEO may relax the age limit.

h. Age of Retirement or Superannuation

An employee shall retire from service on completion of his/her 60 years of age. However, advisors, consultants, technocrats and highly skilled professional of more than 60 years of age can be engaged for special projects with prior approval of CEO on a fixed salary annual contract.

4.7. PROCEDURE OF RECRUITMENT

- a. The recruitment process starts by completing the 'Recruitment Requisition Form, HR-001 by the HR Officer.
- b. HR Officer shall check the RR form to ensure that the recruitment is as per budgeted position and is duly approved by all concerned people at the organization. Where this is outside the approved budget, HR Officer shall ensure its justification and shall forward it to the CEO for approval before further processing. HR Officer shall also ensure that the Job Description of the said position is available, and if it is not then he/she shall develop it.
- c. After the Recruitment Requisition form is verified for its authenticity, Human Resource Officer should initiate the search by identifying suitable candidates through any of the following sources as selected by CEO:

1) Head Hunting

In order to save time and cost, the CEO may approve vacant positions to be filled without initiating the formal competitive process and select employee through the referral approach instead.

2) Advertisement

Those positions which are earmarked to be advertised shall be duly announced using the following prescribed advertisement procedure:

- i. Advertising in a Newspaper having Nationwide Circulation; and/or
- ii. Advertising on Forum's website and/or recruitment websites

4) Through Internship Programme

Those graduates of internship programmes who have completed the required training and meet specific education skills criteria can be directly appointed by the CEO.

The CEO is authorized to decide upon the mode of selection according to the situation and requirement. However, to the extent possible all employees should be recruited using the most competitive process except where the selection is made through Head Hunting or other noncompetitive appointments.

4.8. PROCEDURE FOR APPOINTMENT THROUGH ADVERTISEMENT

When a request to fill a vacancy has been approved, the following procedure shall be followed:

- a. Vacancy announcements will be advertised in one or more National leading Newspaper(s) or Forum's website or recruitment websites,
- b. Deadline for submitting a CV should not be less than five working days. However the CEO may waive off this period of time for emergency hiring.

i. Short Listing of CVs

The Human Resource Officer shall screen and shortlist CVs according to the criteria given in the Job Description. He shall then prepare a list of suitable candidates and with the approval of CEO shall initiate interviews.

Preferably 3-5 candidates should be short-listed. Although the number could vary in certain cases (as in the case of lack of easy access or unavailability of required expertise in the market for any reason).

For some positions, a technical exam or an assessment may be required. The Human Resource-Officer will be responsible for conducting this exam on recommendation of the Selection Committee.

ii. Grounds for Rejection of Job Applicants

An applicant may be rejected if the applicant:

- a. Does not meet the minimum qualifications required for the position.
- b. Has deliberately falsified an application or resume. Individuals hired as employees who are found to have violated this section are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
- c. Is less than 18 or above 60 years of age.
- d. Has established an unsatisfactory employment record.
- e. Has submitted an incomplete application and/or has failed to provide copies of documents cited in the job announcement prior to a final decision on hiring.

iii. Interviews

The Human Resource Officer will arrange interviews time and accessible locations for them to take place at once the short-listing process has been satisfactorily completed. Interview Evaluation Form (IE) HR - 003 and Consolidated Interview Evaluation Form HR-004 will be filled to evaluate the Interviewee.

- a. The Human Resource-Section will call short listed candidates for interviews via telephone, e-mail, or Call Letter, depending upon the situation.
- b. The assembled interview panel shall be dictated by the level of the position. Selection of the interview panel shall be made by HR Officer in consultation with CEO.
- c. Interviews shall include a scoring mechanism developed to provide a standardized way of rating answers to interview questions.

iv. The Human Resource Officer is responsible for contacting references or verifying previous employment as per Reference Check Form (HR-005).

After completion of interviews of all short listed candidates, Selection Committee will select the best candidate for the position and get an approval from the CEO.

v. Hiring

Human Resource Officer will:

- a. Set starting date and inform the new employee about the date of joining , time and place to report to work.
- b. Send out an official Offer Letter; The HR Officer will initiate and maintain personnel files for all the new employees containing:
 - Academic Certificates (Copies)
 - Acknowledgement form on Code of Conduct
 - Copy of CNIC (Copy) (Copy)
 - Declaration form on Conflict of Interest Policy
 - Employee personal data on a specified form.
 - Employment Agreement
 - Experience Certificates (Copies)
 - Passport Size Photograph
 - Reference/s
 - Resume
 - Any Other Relevant Documents Applicable
- c. On acceptance of offer, HR Officer will proceed with the preparation of Employment Agreement containing details of the candidate's starting date, the position title and the Job Description. A template of Employment Agreement is provided at HR – 007
- d. The Employee will submit a Joining Report to HR Officer on the first day at work to be filed in his records file.
- e. During the employee's first week on the job, the Supervisor should make him aware of all company rules, policies and procedures.

vi. Employee Induction & Orientation

Forum welcomes and orients new employees in a timely and consistent manner in order to ensure full understanding and compliance with Forum mission, objective, methodology and policies and procedures.

- a. New employees should be introduced to the staff working in the same office within a week time.
- b. The employee's supervisor is responsible for ensuring that Program Orientation/Job-Specific Orientation occurs before the end of the employee's second week of work.
- c. The employee's supervisor should review work performance expectations/objectives, tasks and responsibilities of the employee at this time, and in consultation with the employee agree on some clear cut activities and targets to be assessed at the time of completion of probation. The fact that confirmation of employment at that time will be contingent on successful accomplishment of the same should be clearly communicated to the employee.

4.9. SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT OF INTERNEES

- a. This is usually for a period of 8 to 12 weeks and offered to those who are in the process of completing their education from a recognized university. No stipend shall be paid to such interns, however, subject to the approval from CEO, a fixed allowance may be offered to cover food and transport expenses.
- b. Upon the request/recommendation letter of the recognized/reputed university's authority, an internship for a specified period may be offered to the student, subject to the consent and approval of CEO.
- c. The immediate supervisor of the internee will evaluate the intern's performance upon completion of the Internship period.
- d. An Internship certificate will be issued by Forum upon successful completion of training by the internee.

5. GENERAL EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

It is the policy of Forum to employ a consistent and comprehensive procedure when hiring new employees so as to create a positive working environment in which an employee's rights and responsibilities are clearly defined. Forum seeks to attract, motivate and retain the best people in the right positions to enable the organization to successfully achieve its vision and mission. This policy describes the policies, rules, procedures and exceptions necessary to regulate the matters related to:

5.1. PROBATION

Every candidate selected for appointment shall be on probation for a minimum period of three to six months depending on the recommendation/requirement of the concerned supervisor and the tenure of the position. During this period, if found unsatisfactory, the appointment may be terminated by the appointing authority without giving any prior notice and assigning any reason thereof. Upon completion of this period, the probation may be extended if deemed necessary or if the probationer's performance has been found unsatisfactory.

Termination of Probation Period

Probation shall be terminated upon its satisfactory completion with approval of the supervisor and appointing authority under the terms and conditions agreed upon in the employment contract. The employee shall be informed of his/her evaluation. The assessment shall be conducted at least two weeks prior to completion of the probationary period. A Probation Evaluation Report will be made using HR – 010 by the concerned supervisor and approved by CEO.

Extension of Probation

The probationary period may be extended beyond the initial period by a maximum of six months in exceptional circumstances. Reasons for extending the probationary period may include situations where the employee's performance has been assessed as failing to meet expected standards, but the CEO/Concerned supervisor considers that the employee is likely to reach that level by the end of the extended period.

Termination of Employment Agreement during Probation

An employee's engagement can be terminated at any time during the probationary period.

5.2. TRANSFERS AND POSTINGS

Employees may be transferred from one section to another; from one project to another, from one job group to another, and from the head office to a regional office and vice versa, as may be expedient in the interests of the organization.

Forum will give first right to an outgoing employee to join a new position.

5.3. PROMOTIONS

All promotions shall be made on the merit of each case and no employee shall have a claim to be promoted to a particular position by virtue of seniority alone. The CEO shall make

promotions, on the recommendation of the respective Supervisor and on the basis of performance and merit.

5.4. ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

Whenever possible, time-off should be scheduled in advance. Excessive unscheduled absenteeism or failing to be punctual adversely affects Forum's work quality, workload of co-workers, and the employee's record. Repeated unscheduled absences, even for legitimate reasons, will be subject to review and disciplinary action may be initiated. Employees are personally responsible for properly notifying their immediate supervisor or, in his or her absence, the next in line manager, in advance of the time they wish to be absent, late, or leave before close of business.

5.5. TERMINATION OF SERVICES AND RESIGNATION

All employees of Forum are "employees at-will" and, as such, are free to resign at any time with or without reason after serving the prescribed notice period as stipulated below. Likewise, Forum retains the right to terminate an employee's employ at any time, subject to payment of compensation in accordance with the laws of Pakistan.

Resignation

- a. For resigning from Forum, employees shall give one month's prior written notice or else, forfeit one month's salary.
- b. The CEO may waive the aforesaid notice periods if such a waiver is deemed to not be in conflict with the interests and objectives of Forum.
- c. An employee who tenders his resignation or gives notice of resignation while on an unapproved leave will be treated as having left the service of Forum without notice from the date, he/she proceeds on leave.
- d. Resigning employee will clear all accounts with Forum, and also submit a clearance certificate, stating that he does not hold any official paper, equipment, or any property of the Forum, and has no outstanding dues, which shall be duly verified by concerned officers on the prescribed form before being relieved by Forum.

Termination

The services of an employee may be terminated on the following grounds:-

- a. By giving one month's notice or salary in lieu thereof generally as a consequence of restructuring, job elimination, and economic downturns in funding or lack of work. All benefits admissible under these rules for such terminations will be provided to the employee.
- b. Staff terminated on grounds of indiscipline, theft, fraud, misconduct, misappropriation or dishonesty, or for acts or omissions involving moral turpitude, shall not be entitled to any benefits normally admissible to staff leaving the service of Forum.
- c. The services of an employee may be terminated for a variety of reasons, including, but not limited to, the following:-
 - i. During Probation, employment may be terminated at any time with or without any stated reason subject to the approval of the CEO.
 - ii. Conclusion of a provisional, seasonal, or temporary assignment.

- iii. Inability or lack of capability to perform the functions required of the job as described in the employee's job specification of the position for which the employee has been hired. The recommendations for initiation of this process of termination must be supported by the outcome of performance appraisal process. The Supervisor may initiate this process through his recommendation which will be endorsed by HR Officer and approved by CEO.
- iv. Proven or demonstrated violation of work rules, which include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Income earned by any employee by renting out his property or charging for services or selling personal goods to Forum or any project/programme managed by Forum directly or indirectly, without appropriate formal written approval.
 - Dereliction of duty.
 - Failure to report any criminal conviction.
 - Flagrant or continued failure to obey work rules and regulations, as set forth in this Manual or as may be notified by the CEO from time to time.
 - Dishonesty in the execution of job duties, or dishonesty when participating in an administrative investigation.
 - Conduct detrimental or prejudicial to the best interests of Forum.
 - Misuse of Forum resources.

Effects of Termination

- a. Upon termination of employment for any reason, neither the Employee nor the Employee's legal heirs or beneficiaries shall have any rights or claims under any signed contract of employment or otherwise, to receive any compensation other than as expressly set forth in such employment contracts, if any, or to participate in any other plan, agreement, or benefit, after such termination or resignation.
- b. Upon expiry or termination of employment, the Employee shall immediately return to the Employer any and all documents, manuals, data, records, confidential information or other property belonging to the Employer that may have been entrusted to and/or placed in the possession of the Employee by virtue of and/or during the course of such employment, without making any copies thereof and/or extracts there from. The Employee shall also deliver forthwith to the Employer all notes, analysis, summaries, and working papers relating thereto.
- c. If there are any amounts due from the Employee, such amounts may be adjusted against any amounts due to the Employee from the Employer on account of salary and other payments.

Disciplinary Actions

Without prejudice to the general meaning of the term "misconduct or gross misbehavior" as stated in the definitions, the following are some illustrative acts of misconduct and omissions on which disciplinary action may be initiated:

- a. Willful insubordination or disobedience whether alone or in combination with others, to any lawful and reasonable order of a superior.
- b. Theft, fraud or dishonesty in connection with Forum's work and property.

- c. Willful damage or loss of Forum's goods or property.
- d. Taking or giving bribes or illegal gratification.
- e. Continual breach of policies or any Law applicable to Forum.
- f. Drunkenness, Discourteous, riotous, violent or disorderly behavior during working hours at the establishments of Forum or any act subversive of discipline.
- g. Chronic negligence.
- h. Making commitments beyond the scope of authority delegated by Forum.
- i. Making commitments known to be detrimental to the interests of Forum.
- j. Whilst in the services of Forum and without Forum's permission, engaging directly or indirectly in any other business or paid occupation.
- k. Joining Forum on the basis of any deception or false pretense.
- l. Divulging any confidential matter that may adversely affect Forum.
- m. Violation of Forum's policies and procedures.
- n. Refusing to receive any official memorandum or communication addressed to the employee by Forum.
- o. Taking part in political activities while on duty.
- p. Gambling within Forum's office premises.
- q. Disclosing to any unauthorized person any confidential information — including proprietary information, in regard to processes, dealing and affairs of Forum or its affiliates that may come into the possession of the employee in the course of the employment.
- r. Conviction by a court of law on any criminal offence involving moral turpitude.
- s. Discrimination against current or intended Forum program beneficiaries for reasons of sex, race, religion, beliefs or other factors not directly relevant to the purpose or intent of Forum's stated program.
- t. Trading of organizational funds in the black market, or on capital and money markets without specific approval of the competent authority.
- u. The use of unfair and discriminatory practices in the hiring of new employees for Forum.
- v. Unfair or discriminatory practices in the procurement of outside contracts or services for Forum.
- w. Providing false or misleading information in applications for employment or other official Forum documents.

The policies set forth herein above are intended to provide employees with fair notice of what is expected of them. Inevitably, however, such policies cannot envisage and address every possible variety of conduct and performance. Therefore employees should be aware that conduct not specifically listed above, but which adversely affects or is otherwise detrimental to the interests of Forum, other employees or related agencies, may also result in disciplinary action.

At its own discretion, Forum reserves the right to proceed directly to a written warning or to terminate for misconduct or performance deficiency without resorting to prior disciplinary steps, when Forum deems such action appropriate in the circumstances.

Any Employee dismissed for misconduct will not be entitled to any benefit or privileges under these policies and procedures, or any other benefit or privilege by Forum.

Dismissal from service will disqualify a person for future employment with Forum.

Procedure for Disciplinary Actions

I. Informal Disciplinary Action

For minor infringement of rules or standards, any informal corrective guidance given will not be documented in the employee's personal file. The Supervisor will make a note of the event and retain it for reference purposes in his record.

II. Formal Disciplinary Action

When informal discipline fails, or where the offences are more serious and/or recurrent, then the use of the formal disciplinary procedures become necessary. Supervisors are advised to first consult with HR Officer before taking any disciplinary action. Formal Disciplinary Action will be instituted only by HR after consultation with CEO.

- a. Verbal Warning:** Where the offence is minor, an employee is normally given a formal verbal warning by the employee's Supervisor concerning unsatisfactory conduct or performance. The employee will be advised that this represents the first stage of the disciplinary procedure. When delivering the verbal warning, the Supervisor must make clear to the employee the mistake committed and warn that any recurrence would result in a written warning. Written details of any verbal warning must be sent to HR Officer to support any disciplinary actions, if necessary, in the future. Where further action is being taken, no salary increases or promotions will be considered until the Inquiry is complete and the decision is announced in writing.
- b. First Written Warning:** Where the offence is repeated or the employee's job performance does not improve or the offence is more serious and having an adverse effect on Forum, the employee will normally be issued a formal written warning. HR will deliver this written warning within one month of the impugned misconduct or of the date on which it came to HR's notice, with a copy thereof to the concerned Supervisor. The written warning will set out the nature of the complaint, the improvement required and the time-frame within which such an improvement must be made.
- c. Show Cause:** In the event of further misconduct or if the employee's job performance still does not meet the required standard or where the offence is more serious and having an adverse effect on Forum, the Employee will normally be given a show cause notice with details of the charges against him/her. Such a notice would also provide reasonable time and opportunity to the Employee to respond with an explanation.
- d. Dismissal with Notice:** If the conduct or performance is still unsatisfactory, and the employee fails to provide a satisfactory explanation for the charges made against him/her, and termination becomes necessary, then a proper inquiry should be conducted through the inquiry committee. Upon findings of the inquiry committee the Employee's services may be terminated. If no immediate dismissal of employee is possible because of the requirement for further investigation, the Employee may be suspended from duty by the appointing authority.

Establishment of an Inquiry Committee

- a. Depending on the nature of the offence, HR, with the consent of CEO, may constitute an Inquiry Committee to investigate the offence and report its findings and recommendations to the Supervisor. The Inquiry Committee shall constitute at least three impartial members from Forum's Governing Body.
- b. The CEO can place the concerned employee under suspension during the process of the inquiry. No salary increases or promotions will be considered unless the inquiry is complete, and the decision announced in writing.
- c. The decision reached after the inquiry will be conveyed to the concerned employee in writing and will be filed in the employee's personal file.

Procedures to Be Observed By the Inquiry Committee:

Where an inquiry committee is appointed, the committee will:

- a. Frame a charge-sheet and communicate it to the accused, together with a statement of allegations explaining the charges and any other related circumstances which are proposed to be taken into consideration.
- b. Require the accused, within a reasonable time, which will not be less than three days or more than fourteen days from the day charges have been communicated, to put in a written explanation.
- c. The inquiry committee will inquire into the charges and examine such oral or documentary evidence in support of the charges or in defense of the accused as may be deemed necessary and the accused will be entitled to cross-examine the witness(s), if any.
- d. That inquiry committee will hear the case from day to day, with no adjournment except for reasons to be recorded in writing. However, every adjournment, with reasons thereof, shall be reported forthwith to HR.
- e. Where the inquiry committee observes that the accused is hampering or attempting to hamper the process of the inquiry, it will administer a warning and, if thereafter, the accused is acting in disregard of such warning, it will record a finding to that effect and proceed to complete the inquiry in such a manner as it thinks best suited to do substantial justice.
- f. The inquiry committee will, within 7 days of conclusion of such proceedings, or such longer period as may be allowed by the CEO, submit its findings and the grounds thereof to the CEO.
- g. During the whole process (starting from verbal warning to inquiry and then termination), if the accused employee refuses to acknowledge any office order/notice, HR's representative must read out the contents of the same to the Employee in the presence of the Supervisor and another witness. In such an eventuality, HR must make notes on the letter explaining that its contents have been read out to the Employee but that the Employee refused to sign the letter of warning. The letter must then be signed by HR and two witnesses, after which the original and a copy of the letter should be filed in the Employee's personal file.
- h. If an Employee is found not guilty of the charge, the warning record will be considered void. Similarly, all matters relating to his/her compensation, promotion etc. will also be resolved.

5.7. SEPARATION FROM SERVICES

Employees are required to complete a Clearance & Final Settlement Form (HR-012), and obtain relevant signatures in order to make sure that all outstanding liabilities have been cleared. At the time of payment of the last salary to employee, he/she must confirm that all payments due from/to Forum have been paid/received.

5.8. SUSPENSION AND OTHER DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

An employee who is found to be guilty of breach of regulations of the Forum, or of indiscipline, or contravention of instructions / orders issued to him/her in connection with official work, or who displays negligence, inefficiency, or indolence, or who knowingly does anything detrimental to the interest of the Forum, or is guilty of any other act of misconduct, may be subjected to one or more of the following penalties by the Competent Authority, depending on the gravity of the offence:

- a. Reprimand.
- b. Stoppage of increment or withholding of promotion for a specified period.
- c. Forfeiture of pay for any period of unauthorized absence from duty.
- d. Recovery from pay of the whole or part of any pecuniary loss caused to Forum by the employee.
- e. Reduction to a lower scale of pay in his grade, or to a lower grade or post.
- f. Dismissal from service.

Suspension

- a. A supervisor may recommend suspension along with a request for conducting an inquiry of an employee from work for flagrant violation or disregard of work rules, personnel policies, and regulations for varying periods of time, for consideration and approval from the CEO.
- b. Duration of suspension may be made for 4 days at a time and up to a maximum of 4 weeks within which the matter must be decided, however any adjournment due to circumstances beyond the control of the management of Forum may be excluded with the permission of CEO. The (*suspended*) official shall be entitled to same wages as he/she would have received if he/she has not been suspended.
- c. The (*suspended*) official can avail causal & sick leave during his period of suspension, and may be required to be present at the place of his duty and will report to HR. However he/she will not affix a signature on, guide, participate, share, and/or give any suggestions regarding official matters.
- d. After a thorough inquiry, if the employee is held responsible, the employee will be liable to punishment as deemed fit as per the approval of the competent authority; and if not found liable, the employee will be exonerated of the charges. Alternatively, the employee may be placed under observation for a maximum period of six (6) months to check his/her performance.

5.9. PERSONNEL RECORDS

Employees shall receive a copy of all personnel transactions that affect their employment or personal status. Human Resource Officer will maintain an updated record of service for all staff. Separate files shall be maintained for each employee including but not limited to the following information:

- Request for Hiring
- Copy of the Job Advertisement
- Job Description
- Job Application
- Detailed CV
- Personnel Data Form
- Interview score sheet or results card
- Copy of The National Identity Card (NIC)
- Passport Size Photograph
- Academic certificates and experience certificate (if any)
- Reference/s
- Acknowledgement form on Code of Conduct
- Declaration form on Conflict of Interest Policy
- Appointment letter
- Employment Agreement
- Joining report
- Performance Objectives & Performance Evaluation Report(s)
- Bank Details

Each employee shall notify his or her immediate supervisor and Human Resource Officer of any changes, which may affect his or her employment or benefit status. Examples of changes in personal status include, but are not limited to:

- a. Marital status
- b. Dependent status
- c. Legal name change
- d. Physical limitation
- e. Additional educations, training or certification
- f. Revocation of license, permit certification, or credentials required for the job
- g. Changes of address or telephone number

Forum will retain official personnel records for at least 3 years or in accordance with the prevailing law, after retirement or resignation of its employee.

6. ENTITLEMENTS AND BENEFITS

6.1. INTRODUCTION

The compensation management system at Forum aims to achieve a fair and attractive pay and benefits system with emphasis on rewarding individual performance, contribution, and competence. The objective of compensation management is to help Forum achieve its strategic objective while ensuring internal and external equity.

Forum classifies all jobs into cadres as per salary ranges which:

- a. Recognize differences in the relative importance, complexities and responsibility of jobs and the resultant differences in skill and qualification requirements
- b. Are competitive with prevailing salary scales for similar work in comparable organizations.

6.2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Compensation & Benefits Policy at Forum remains competitive enabling the organization to attract, retain, and motivate the right people for the organization.

6.3. SCOPE

This policy covers all confirmed full time staff members.

6.4. COMPENSATION & BENEFITS STRUCTURE

The Forum philosophy is to be a high performance organization that retains its employees through best practices such as career progression and development thereby enabling employees to realize their optimum potential along with a competitive compensation strategy.

i. Salary Structure

The salary ranges are given on the table on next page, these shall be reviewed from time to time by the CEO/BoD.

ii. Salary Ranges:

The salary ranges comprise of positions and their respective salary ranges. A salary range specifies the minimum and maximum amounts payable for a particular position.

The salary range is applicable to all employees of Forum.

Salary Ranges

Designations	Salary Range (Pak Rs.)
Management	
Chief Executive Officer	To be decided by BoD
Project/Regional/Provincial Director/Manager	200,000 – 500,000
National Coordinator	150,000 – 300,000
Professional Staff	
Project/Regional/Provincial Coordinator/Officer	100,000 – 180,000
Finance Officer, Admin Officer, HR Officer, IT Officer, Communication & Advocacy Officer etc.	80,000 – 150,000
Support Staff	
Programme Assistant/Office Assistant/Other Assistant etc.	30,000 – 60,000
Auxiliary Staff	
Office Boys, Drivers, Cooks, etc.	17,000 – 25,000

* The CEO may approve separate salary ranges for project employees on the basis of availability of project funds.

** Salary ranges can be reviewed yearly and shall be notified accordingly.

iii. Benefit Structure

Benefits	Management	Professionals	Support	Auxiliary
Gratuity/ Severance	1/12 th of each completed month after confirmation of job	1/12 th of each completed month after confirmation of job	1/12 th of each completed month after confirmation of job	1/12 th of each completed month after confirmation of job
Communication Expense	3,000 per month	1,500 per month	1,000 per month	1,000 per month
POL Expense	Rs.5000	Rs.5000	Rs.5000	Rs.2000

* The benefit structure can be reviewed, as and when required, and shall be notified to staff accordingly after the approval of CEO.

** Provision of these benefits to staff is contingent on the availability of funds with the organization.

6.5. PROCEDURE

- a. Monthly remuneration shall be agreed with each employee individually and notified in their appointment letters or salary re-fixation orders.
- b. The Human Resource will ensure that employees furnish the names of beneficiaries who will receive any dues payable in the unfortunate event of the death of an employee.
- c. If an employee joins Forum and is already a taxpayer, then a copy of the last pay slip from the previous employer may be submitted to the Human Resource Officer for assessing tax liability.
- e. Employees joining the company without any work experience will be generally placed at the starting point of the salary range of the respective cadre. However, depending on the qualification, potential and other relevant aspects of the

employee, he or she may be offered a higher salary, based on the decision of the competent authority.

6.6. SALARY COMPONENTS

The salary cost at Forum constitutes salary package, allowances, utilities and benefits/incentives (if any), the details for which are outlined in this section.

i. Salary Package

This includes gross salary, all other benefits and allowances as per applicable policies.

ii. Gross Salary

Gross salary is the amount which Forum shall commit (on per month basis) with an employee at the time of recruitment and mentioned in the appointment letter. All other benefits and allowances, given in Benefits Structure shall not be the part of gross salary and shall be allowed in accordance with the Forum's applicable policies.

iii. Tax at Source

Tax is deducted at source i.e. from gross salary per month as per applicable tax rates given in Income Tax Ordinance, 2001.

6.7. BENEFITS

Forum currently offers the following benefits to its employees:

Gratuity/Severance

All employees having a contract of 1 year and allocated project budget are entitled to this component, after they have completed the requisite probationary period.

Upon completion of a minimum of one year as an employee of the Forum and upon separation from service due to voluntary separation, employees are entitled to severance pay.

Guidelines

- a. Severance will be payable to the Forum's employee only when he/she leaves the services of Forum.
- b. Severance will be accrued at a rate of one month of the employee's last drawn gross salary multiplied by years of employment and accrued from date of hire. Partial years will be prorated to the nearest month.
- c. Employees who do not follow the prescribed notice process will forfeit severance which will be equivalent of one month's salary. The remainder of their accrued severance will be paid.
- d. In case of death of an employee while in service, an employee's severance (if eligible), will be paid according to the entitlement of the deceased employee to such person(s) nominated by him/her in the employment Form.

Additional Allowance

In case of transfer of services of an employee to any project, keeping in view the project budget and increased workload, the appointing authority may accord approval for an additional allowance under that specific project, on the following terms.

- a. The project allowance will not be more than 50% of the salary of the employee.
- b. All the terms and conditions for salary & allowances will be described in the new contract that may be made to meet project requirements.
- c. During the period of allocation of an allowance under a project, no second allowance under any other project shall be allowed. However, in case of special circumstances CEO may allow more than one project allowance subject to the condition that the sum of allowances should not exceed 50% of the salary package.

Bonus Pay

At the end of every financial year, keeping in view the financial position of Forum, the CEO shall obtain approval from the BoD for awarding bonuses, which may be equivalent to one month's salary, for all staff in all categories. Any conditions specified, in the notification by the CEO shall be binding on all employees.

Communication Expense

Keeping in view need to access important calls/e-mails and internet, Forum facilitates employees in terms of connectivity by covering cell phone bills according to rates specified in the above table. In addition, field based staff is also provided internet stick, if and when required.

Giving of internet sticks will be on the following terms:

1. An internet stick with a maximum ceiling of Rs. 3500/- will be issued to the employee;
2. The issued internet stick is the property of Forum, therefore, at the time of separation from Forum, the employee will be responsible for returning the device to the organization.
3. If a device got damaged or become dysfunctional due to any reason, the device will be charged from the employee's salary.

PoL Expense

Forum facilitates employees in terms of their commute to and from the office by covering PoL expenses according to rates specified in the above table.

6.8. LOANS AND ADVANCES

At Forum giving of loans and advances against salary is not allowed.

6.9. COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCE (COLA):

Cost of Living Allowance is applicable to all employees each year at the start of financial year. This will be given to all employees who have completed a minimum of one year of service at the Forum. Finance section in consultation with HR section will calculate the COLA rate. Information from State Bank of Pakistan reports and trends in other organizations will be considered while recommending the COLA rate. The final decision of approving the COLA rate is with the CEO.

6.10. LEAVES

- a. Each eligible employee must submit a Leave Application Form (HR-014) in advance of the time he or she wishes to be absent from regular duties.
- b. Exceptions may be made in cases of illness, accident, or emergency.
- c. Written requests for leave do not guarantee that the request will be approved.
- d. The employee's supervisor shall consider each request on a case-by-case basis.
- e. Approval shall be considered in terms of workload, availability of personnel, timeliness, and other job-related factors.

General Guidelines

- a. The year will be reckoned from Jan to Dec for the purpose of leave calculations.
- b. Failure to return to work upon completion of a leave of absence, without approval, will constitute employee's voluntary resignation from employment with Forum.
- c. Leave will not be claimed by any employee as a matter of right. The submission of any application (Written) will not be deemed valid until formal sanction by the Competent/Sanctioning Authority and a Leave Application Form has been filled out. The Competent/Sanctioning Authority can allow extension of leave in special circumstances; otherwise it will be treated as leave without pay.
- d. Submission of an approved Leave Application is the sole responsibility of the employee. Leave Application Form has to be submitted either in written form, duly approved prior to availing leave, in case of emergency/sickness the employee should inform his/her supervisor as soon as possible. Leave Application Form will then be submitted on the day the employee returns to the office.
- e. Annual Leaves may be planned with supervisors, ensuring that leaves are staggered in such a way that they do not interfere with key tasks.
- f. Employees hired between the first and fifteenth of a month will get all the intended leave benefits for the whole month whereas employees hired after the fifteenth will begin accruing their leave benefits from the first day of the following month.
- g. Counting of Leave days will be such that leave(s) taken on working days will be counted as leave. Holidays falling in between will not be counted as leave.
- h. Forum reserves the right at all times to suspend or refuse leave if the needs of organization so demand. Forum may, at its discretion, require the employee to make such reasonable adjustment in the proposed period of leave as may be mutually convenient.
- i. If an employee has to obtain a short leave, this will only be applied in case of urgency

Annual Leave

Employees shall be entitled to 30 working days of annual leave in a year, subject to the following conditions:

- a. Two and a half days of annual leave shall be credited to an employee at the end of each month.
- b. Applications for annual leave should be given at least 10 days prior to the date from which leave is required.
- c. No more than fifteen (15) days of annual leave may be carried forward beyond the year.
- d. Un-availed Annual leave is not cashable.

- e. Annual Leave may be accumulated up to a maximum of 60 working days. Any accumulation over and above 60 working days will be considered to have lapsed.
- f. All employees will be entitled to earn 30 workdays in a year as annual leave. The Haj leaves will be deducted from accumulated annual leave balance and thus will not affect the leaves earned during the year.
- g. When an employee is leaving Forum before 15th of a month then no accrual regarding leaves will be made, however if he is leaving Forum after 15th of the month the full months leave accrual will be accrued.

Casual Leaves

- a. An employee will be entitled to casual leaves of up to 12 working days in a year.
- b. This leave will be granted only for urgent and important engagement/reasons.
- c. Casual leave will be allowed only up to 3 working days at a time.
- d. Any un-availed casual leave on 31 Dec of each year will be considered to have lapsed.
- e. Casual leave cannot be combined with any other leave. Any Casual Leave combined with annual or other leave shall be deemed to be Annual Leave.
- f. Un-availed Casual leave is not cashable.

Sick Leave

- a. An employee will be allowed a total of 12 days sick leave with pay per year.
- b. A Medical certificate from a Registered Medical Practitioner, shall be submitted with the sick leave of more than 3 days
- c. Any un-availed sick leave on 31 Dec of each year will be considered to have lapsed.
- d. Un-availed sick leave is not cashable.
- e. Forum reserves the right to nominate its own doctors or have a medical board to determine the severity of an illness.
- f. An employee must provide a doctor's statement when using three (3) or more paid consecutive sick days at a time. If an employee depletes his/her accrued sick days during an illness, they may use annual leave and/or request unpaid leave.

Maternity Leave

- a. Female employees will be permitted up to 12 weeks maternity leave with pay for each confinement period, ideally four weeks before and eight weeks after delivery.
- b. Births shall be notified to Forum within 7 days. Under normal circumstances this privilege may be availed only after completion of one year service at Forum, for a maximum of two confinements with a minimum interval of two years between the two periods of maternity leave.
- c. *Special Notice:* Where an employee gives written notice to Forum of her pregnancy and the organization reasonably believes that continued employment in the position held by the employee may cause injury to the employee or fetus, Forum will make a reasonable effort to transfer the employee to a suitable temporary position if available or send her on leave without pay.

Paternity Leave

- a. Male employees will be permitted up to 12 days of paternity leave with pay for the first two children born to their spouses. Ideally 4 days before and 8 days after delivery.
- b. Birth shall be notified to Forum within 7 days.
- c. This privilege may be availed only after completion of one-year service at Forum, for a maximum of two births with a minimum interval of two years between the two periods of paternity leave unless expressly allowed by the management against a representation.

National Holidays:

- a. Forum issues Holiday Schedules for the staff at the beginning of each calendar year that is in accordance with official government holidays.
- b. There is no carryover of national holidays.

Leave of Absence/Leave without Pay:

Eligibility

All employees with more than two years of service are eligible to apply for leave of absence (leave without pay) subject to the approval of CEO.

Duration

An unpaid leave of absence should be less than six (6) months. However in special circumstances that may include but is not limited to long term sickness or official deputation, the CEO may allow the leave without pay for more than six months. During this time, the employee is not working with Forum nor will Forum be paying the employee's salary and other benefits.

In special circumstances, the CEO may allow continuation of benefits on a case to case basis.

Requesting an Unpaid Leave of Absence

- a. The employee must submit an application (written or online) to his /her supervisor, outlining the reasons for and the duration of the leave.

Returning from an Unpaid Leave of Absence

- a. Leave of absence for medical reasons will not result in the loss of any employment benefits accrued prior to the date on which the leave of absence commenced.
- b. At the end of any medical leave (extended) of absence, an employee may return to his/her original job, or, if not available to an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits and other employment terms.
- c. Employees on non-medical unpaid leaves of absence are not guaranteed a position upon their return. If, however, there is a suitable position available upon the employee's return date for which Forum believes the employee is qualified, CEO may, at his/her discretion, place the employee in the open position. The employee will be compensated at the rate of pay applicable to the new position.

Compensatory Leave

- a. If an employee is asked by his/her supervisor to spend extra time on assignment(s) on weekends or on public holidays, he/she can be allowed, under extraordinary and exceptional circumstances, to avail compensatory leave, but such leave may not be claimed as a right.
- b. Prior authorization must be obtained to take compensatory leave.
- c. A standard leave form must be accompanied by a time sheet of that particular month.

Iddat Leave

Forum provides Iddat leave to only those women who apply for Iddat leaves. The applicant will provide a proof of the death of husband or divorce or Khula with her application;

- a. The period for a widow regarding Iddat is 4 months 10 days while the Iddat period in case of divorce or Khula is 3 months;
- b. During the Iddat period the employee shall be entitled to the salary and all benefits except Communication & Travel Expense;
- c. The Iddat leave shall stand terminated automatically if proved that the applicant after getting Forum approval for Iddat leave did not abide by the terms of the Iddat i.e. confining her stay at home; and
- d. In the case of a breach as mentioned above, the period during which she remained absent will be treated as leave without pay and the HR will serve a notice to her as an incidence of misconduct.
- e. This leave may be availed only after completion of one year service at Forum.

6.11. MEDICAL BENEFITS

At Forum no medical/health benefits are offered to staff.

6.10. TRAVEL POLICY

1. Any official travel undertaken outside the municipal limits of the city of location/post is subject to prior approval of the Supervisor. A Travel Authorization Form (HR-000) shall be submitted for approval preferably at least (5) five working days prior to undertaking travel for timely travel arrangements.
Official business travel undertaken without prior approval may not be deemed as official and thus not liable for reimbursement of expenses incurred by the employee. Travel by an employee between his/her residence and usual office location (commuting) is not considered official travel.
2. Advances are only to be issued to staff for travel purposes where travel and/or per diem expenses are anticipated. Advances should not be given for any personal reason. A Travel Advance Request Form (HR-000) along with a copy of approved travel authorization is submitted to Finance Section after being approved by the concerned Supervisor, at least three (3) working days prior to undertaking official travel. Travel advances must be reconciled within 30 days after traveler returns from trip. Any subsequent travel advance shall not be issued unless all previous advances have been liquidated and reconciled.
3. Forum will set up Bill to Company (BTC) arrangements with 3 to 5 Stars hotels of the major cities and intimate the staff accordingly. When a hotel bill is received for payment by Forum for an official travel of entitled employee, such bills should be verified by the employee. Personal expenses, if any, included in the hotel bill, shall be charged to the personal account of the employee.
4. In case where such arrangement cannot be made then following Per Diems will be applicable:

S. No.	Cadre	Range (Pak Rs.)
1	Management	Rs. 6,000
2	Professionals	Rs. 5,000
3	Support	Rs. 4,000
4	Auxiliary	Rs. 3,000

Per Diem is an allowance paid to an employees for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses incurred when travelling. This allowance is in lieu of paying their actual travel expenses. However, it is not a salary supplement and therefore should not be expected to cover all expected needs/requirements that a traveler would otherwise require. Maximum per Diems amounts can be revised through inter office memos.

An employee is entitled to per diem only if the official travel time is 14 hours or greater and if the travel involves night stay. In case the travel is 14 hours or greater however, no night stay is involved, the employee will be given 30% of the above-given per diem. No supporting is required for claiming per diems.

In cases where the travel time is less than 14 hours, expenses incurred by the employee on food (breakfast/lunch/dinner) will be reimbursed upon provision of original receipts.

5. For purposes of traveling the following options will be available for employees:
 - a. In case of travel required by air subject to the proper justification of the requirement, economy class up to the nearest air link is provided.
 - b. In case there is no air link or unavailability of seats, a Forum vehicle shall be the first priority.
 - c. If a Forum vehicle is not available, then use of a hired car (on BTC arrangements) would be allowed.
 - d. An employee may use his/her personal vehicle for official field travel subject to prior approval by the Supervisor. In such cases, the established mileage reimbursement rate shall be Rs.15 per kilometer. The employee must record all official travel in a Mileage Log in order to receive reimbursement.
Should the employee wish to use his vehicle between points where air travel service is available, then cost reimbursement would be restricted to the air fare or as per Kilometer rates, whichever is lower.
6. Employees are required to submit a formal Trip Report (Form HR-00) after completion of travel. A copy of the trip report must be filed along with the Travel Expense Report for processing.`
7. An employee undertaking official travel is required to submit the fully completed Travel Expense Report (TER) (Form HR-00) within 15 working days of completion of travel. The complete TER shall include:
 - Approved TA
 - Trip report
 - Original receipts for all expenses, initialed by the traveler
 - Used Airfare ticket stub/boarding pass/receipt
 - Since taxis do not supply receipts, traveler must obtain signatures on cash payment form or certify the payment.

The Finance Officer shall approve the TER. Generally, the processing time is 10 working days from the day the completed TER is received.

8. The following travel related expenses when necessary and incurred are authorized:
 - Telephone/fax/internet/photocopy/printing expenses related to the official business.
 - Fees in connection with the issuance of passports and visas (if necessary).
 - Country entry/exit fees (if necessary).
 - Any other cost as deemed allowable by the Finance Officer.
9. The following travel-related expenses will not be reimbursed.
 - Fees and tips to waiters, porters, baggage handlers, bellhops, hotel stewards, and similar employees.
 - Telephone calls of a personal nature.
 - Billings for secretarial or clerical services unless authorized in advance in writing by the Supervisor.
 - Laundry, dry cleaning, and pressing.
 - Cost of a personal nature not directly related to the assignment.

For Non-Employees

The following guidelines are to be followed for project-sponsored events such as meetings, seminars and workshops in which government stakeholders and other invitees from the federal, provincial and district level are invited to attend.

- a. Forum will cover the travel and lodging expenses of government representatives from other cities. In addition per diems @ Rs. 2500/- will also be provided. Government representatives from same city where event is arranged are not eligible for either.
- b. Participants from sub recipient/partner/donor organizations shall cover their own travel expenses, unless otherwise agreed in writing. Lodging related expenses will be covered by the Forum. No per diem will be provided.
- c. If an invitee opts not to avail Forum's provided accommodation, Forum shall reimburse the actual lodging expense upon submission of paid invoice. This amount should not exceed the established maximum lodging rates as per the approved budget for that event.
- d. The guidelines given above for Forum's employees regarding allowable and unallowable costs shall apply to invitees attending Forum's events.
- e. Participants will be paid on the standard Payment Form (Form HR000) and the receiving will be obtained on the Disbursement Sheet (Form HR00) with payment details.

International Travel

1. Nomination of an employee for participation in an international event will be finalized by the CEO in consultation with the BoD.
2. At least 8 to 12 weeks before the commencement of the international event, the nominated employee will be informed through his/her Supervisor. At the same time the Admin and Finance Sections will also be intimated for making required travel arrangements.
3. All official travel bookings will be made through the Admin Section. The employee will fill out the Travel Authorization Form (HR-000) and have it approved by the Supervisor and CEO. This form will be accompanied with the following:
 - Invitation to attend the event;
 - Invitation or any document that explains the costs to be borne by the sponsor and that to be paid by the employee and/or by Forum.
4. On receipt of this form, the Admin Section will arrange to obtain the travel documents such as Passports, Visas etc. Expenses incurred on such documents will be reimbursed to the employees.
5. Obtaining the "Health Certificates" will be the responsibility of the employee. Cost of required vaccination for this purpose will be reimbursed to the employee on production of the receipts.
6. Direct route Economy Class will be the preferred medium of travel for all employees embarking on international travel. For travel with 10 hours or more of direct flying time, employees will be entitled to break journey and avail an overnight stay.
7. If hotel/stay, food and ancillary expenses are not sponsored/covered under the project then Forum will provide DSA as per UNDP rates for Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA). The DSA covers such charges as meals, lodging, and other such

payments made for services rendered during official travel. As per adopted UNDP rates, Room entitlement shall be a percentage of DSA for cities and countries defined by UNDP. The Remaining portion of DSA shall cater for food and ancillary expenses.

8. No DSA shall be charged to Forum in case the entire cost is borne by the sponsor/covered under the project and all such payments made by the sponsor shall be payable to the employee. However if the payable amount is less than the actual incurred amount, this difference will be paid by Forum up to UNDP rates.
9. In order to compensate the travel time, terminal expenses or other miscellaneous expenses, one additional day DSA at the rate of the meeting location shall be paid by the Forum/Sponsor.
10. An employee undertaking international travel is required to submit the fully completed Travel Expense Report (TER) (Form HR-00) within 15 working days of completion of travel. The complete TER shall include:
 - Invitation to attend the event;
 - Travel authorization form duly filled in and approved by the Supervisor & CEO.
 - Trip report
 - Original receipts for all expenses, initialed by the employee
 - Used Airfare ticket stub/boarding pass/receipt

6.12. VEHICLES POLICY

Official Use of Forum Vehicles

- a. The authorized staff will maintain a vehicle logbook and that would be subject to review by the Administration Office.
- b. All POL consumed, and other expenditure incurred on vehicles shall be properly recorded in logbooks maintained with each vehicle.
- c. It will be the responsibility of the official using the vehicle to ensure that the vehicle logbook and expenditure incurred on repairs and maintenance is recorded in the logbook and is verified by him/her.
- d. All repair and maintenance bills would be routed through the Admin Officer who will ensure that these bills are properly checked/verified/entered in the vehicle logbook.
- e. All vehicles shall be parked at Forum's own or approved premises at night-time.
- f. Vehicles shall not be sent out of city, region or project area limits without approval of the Administration Officer, except in dire emergencies, which will be reported in writing immediately on return.
- g. Personal use is discouraged. However personal use of official vehicles may be authorized by CEO. In such cases it will be charged on rates specified in this regard by the Administration Section.
- h. In case any staff gets the services of a Forum driver for driving the vehicle for personal use, he/she shall be charged for the TA/DA of the driver;
- i. Forum shall not pick up the following:
 - Toll tax for personal visits
 - Parking fee for personal visits
 - Traffic Challans
 - Any other fines/penalties due to traffic violations during use of the assigned car
- j. In case of any mishap (i.e. car accident, theft or car snatching), the matter should immediately be reported to Administration Section through phone, fax, email or any other available means.

- k. The matter should also be reported to 15 (police help line) and/or a police station in close proximity, as the case may be.
- l. Forum will not be responsible to pay third party claims in case of a road accident, e.g. damage to other vehicles, deaths claims, injuries and hospitalization or any claim of third party would be the responsibility of an employee.

7. EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

7.1. PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

Objective

Forum intends to be clear and explicit towards its employees in matters that concern them directly or indirectly. All employees therefore have the opportunity to develop a thorough understanding of the performance review process beforehand.

Through evaluations, supervisors will communicate to individual employees their performance expectations and project goals. They will assess the employee's job-related performance and work annually to enhance overall job performance by providing direction and identifying training needs. Performance reviews and performance improvement plans may also be used when considering the career path of the employees.

Policy

Performance Appraisal is a step-by-step, practical and planned approach to help employees develop result-oriented performance plans that are supportive of organizational goals and strategies and are linked to performance evaluations and rewards.

7.2. REVIEW COORDINATION

Primary responsibility for initiation of a performance review shall lie on the supervisor.

- a. Each employee shall be offered an opportunity to discuss his performance with his supervisor.
- b. The supervisor shall forward all completed evaluations of his/her staff to the Human Resource Section by the 15th day of the first month of each year. This is applicable to all employees who have completed one year of service at the Forum.
- c. The Human Resource Officer shall ensure that the evaluation results are made part of the employee's permanent personnel file.

7.3. RESPONSIBILITIES DURING PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

- a. Each supervisor is responsible to set and communicate clear performance standards for his/her supervisee and to observe and discuss employee performance at the beginning of and throughout the review period. Evaluations are based on job-related performance during the review period. Supervisors may use, as the basis for performance evaluation, all information believed to be relevant to foster an understanding of work performance and that is consistent with the scope of the job description.
- b. The employee is responsible for understanding the duties and responsibilities required of the position, their respective work plans, goals, measures, core competencies and for asking any questions concerning those expectations and/or the evaluation process.
- c. Employees are responsible for contributing to the development of performance objectives and for providing performance input throughout the evaluation period along with providing an explanation of actions occurring during the rating period.
- d. Employees are encouraged to record their perceptions of their working environment as well as their performance, accomplishments, training requests, future goals and

objectives. Supervisors should review and incorporate these into the evaluation as appropriate.

- e. The employee shall receive a copy of their performance evaluation delineating goals, objectives and core competencies to be evaluated and the year-end evaluation delineating performance. The employee's refusal to sign the performance evaluation form does not make the performance evaluation unofficial.
- f. At the end of the performance evaluation cycle, the supervisor will meet with each employee under his/her supervision and evaluate performance, discuss training needs and establish goals and objectives for the next evaluation cycle.

Periods of Review

- a. A formal performance evaluation will be completed:
 - 1) At the completion of the probationary period;
 - 2) During the last month of each year for all staff; and
 - 3) An interim evaluation if applicable.
- b. If an employee changes assignment, position, or section during the performance cycle, performance up to that point will not be disregarded. The current supervisor shall complete an interim evaluation of the employee's performance. The interim evaluation should be completed by the supervisor prior to the employee's departure and sent with the Personnel Action Notice denoting the change in status to the Human Resource Section for retention in the employee's personnel file.

7.4. COMPLETION OF APPRAISAL INSTRUMENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY

The appraisal form is to be completed by the immediate supervisor to whom the employee reports in consultation with the next level supervisor. These processes must be done in complete confidence and the form should be seen by no one. The transfer of these documents to Human Resource Section and the comments of the employee must remain confidential.

7.5. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION DISPUTE RESOLUTION

If an employee can demonstrate that the evaluation was arbitrary, capricious, illegally discriminatory, or baseless, the employee can appeal to the second reporting officer who is next in line from his/her supervisor.

7.6. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCEDURE

The following steps need to be followed for performance appraisal;

- a. At the beginning of the process, the supervisor and employee will jointly define key performance objectives and job responsibilities to be undertaken by the employee during his/her employment. If this has not occurred, the position description responsibilities are to be used as a base.
- b. The supervisor will set aside adequate uninterrupted time with the employee to discuss and rate these according to his/her understanding of the employee's performance.
- c. The Performance Evaluation Report (HR-018) has a five -level scale for assessment. Supervisor will assign one of the ratings below to each job:
 - **Exceptional:** Constantly exceeds expectation and bring innovation in the existing

- system
- **Outstanding:** Often exceeds expectations and best performer within the given JD
- **Meets Expectations:** Fully meets expectations/Above Average performance within the given job responsibilities
- **Satisfactory:** Average performance within the given job responsibilities
- **Unsatisfactory:** Performance below expectations
- d. Supervisor will write his/her comments for responsibilities that are rated as zero.
- e. Supervisor will discuss with rated employee his/her determination regarding continued employment or termination. At the end of the appraisal discussion, the appraisal form will be signed and dated by the employee and the supervisor, and then sent for review and signature by CEO

7.7. ASSESSMENT MECHANISM

Performance ratings will be awarded as per following patterns and the overall performance results are categorized into 5 ratings with following forced ranking distributions.

Rating		Description
A+	Exceptional	Constantly exceeds expectation and brings innovation in the existing system
A	Outstanding	Often exceeds expectations and best performer within the given job responsibilities
B+	Meets Expectations	Fully meets expectations/Above Average performance within the given job responsibilities
B	Satisfactory	Average performance within the given job responsibilities
C	Unsatisfactory	Performance below expectations

1. The Appraiser only evaluates the Appraisee as per given above ratings. The appraiser individually analyzes the performance against job tasks and rates them accordingly.
2. All cases rated A+ or C are subject to providing proper documentary evidence by the Appraiser and review by HR
3. It is absolutely important to note that to track performance, line managers can hold interim performance reviews.
4. However such interim ratings are only for tracking of performance during that interim period, the last performance review rating will be considered as the final rating.
5. Therefore all line managers and employees must exercise utmost care while holding performance reviews at the end of the performance year and consider the performance of overall year only and not of the interim period.

7.8. THE INCREMENTS

Standard operating procedures for proposing and awarding increments to Forum staff members are as under:

- a. The CEO shall approve a performance based increment for each employee category.
- b. No increment will be given to an employee who has completed less than 6 months service with Forum.
- c. No increment shall be awarded in case performance is below average.

- d. Increments will only be awarded to an employee upon recommendation by his/her supervisor and following approval by the CEO.
- e. Cases for promotions shall also be considered at the time of increments. These cases shall be referred to the CEO for approval.
- f. The Human Resource Officer issues increment/promotion notices for staff.
- g. Increments on salaries will be awarded from the start of financial year.

7.9. PROMOTION

The criteria for promotions are as follows;

- 1. Next level positions are vacant and available in the organization.
- 2. The employee has performed exceptionally in addition to the assigned responsibilities as per job descriptions and his additional efforts have contributed significantly to the betterment of the organization.
- 3. The employee has gained sufficient experience and job related new knowledge.
- 4. The employee has demonstrated an ability to take on significantly greater responsibilities through their current position.
- 5. The employee is recommended by the line manager

Any raise in salary upon promotion will be keeping in view the internal equity and external market factors in considerations. An employee meeting above criteria will be eligible for promotion to a post in the next higher level of which he belongs. Double promotions are not allowed. All promotions will be decided once a year.

7.10. MANAGING POOR PERFORMANCE(S)

- 1. When an employee's performance is found below expectations at any time during the performance review period, the relevant appraiser discusses, counsels, and if necessary, documents the performance deficiencies and suggests a Performance Improvement Plan, yet giving a reasonable time to the employee in improving his/her performance.
- 2. The Appraiser reiterates to the Appraisee, time and again, his/her expected performance level, the needed performance improvements, a time frame for further development, and the consequences of failure to improve or appreciates the improved performance.
- 3. HR Section follows-up on essential performance improvement cases as suggested by the relevant Appraiser.
- 4. If an employee's performance is persistently found 'un-satisfactory' even after providing the needed; support, tools and resources, Learning and Development opportunities, and/or supervision, he/she then may either be subjected to another Performance Improvement Plan, or subjected to disciplinary action(s) accordingly; leading to end of service.

8. EMPLOYEE’S RULES

Forum’s orderly and efficient operation requires that clear employee rules and procedures be established and notified to all employees. Such work rules covering personal standards of conduct as well as standard operating procedures are necessary to protect the well-being of all employees, maintain uninterrupted performance against targets, and safeguard Forum’s goodwill and property.

8.1. IMPLEMENTATION

The Human Resource Section shall be responsible for overall administration of the work rules, which includes recommending revisions, deletions, or adoption of new rules.

8.2. WORK RULES

The following work rules apply to all Forum employees without exception. These rules are not intended to be all inclusive and the CEO shall, as deemed appropriate, establish additional rules to ensure effective operation of the Forum.

8.3. PRESENCE AT WORKPLACE

Employees shall be at their designated workplace on time and ready for work. Employees shall remain at work until the officially notified office time is over unless permission to leave earlier is granted by their supervisor.

8.4. OFFICIALLY NOTIFIED WORK HOURS

At Forum the week runs from Monday to Friday, while Saturday and Sunday are standard holidays. The time schedule for the week is as follows:

Days	Official Timings	Lunch Break	Working Hours
Monday – Friday	9:00 – 5:00	1:00 – 1:30 (30 Minutes)	40 Hours (8 hrs. everyday)
Saturday – Sunday	Holiday		

It is mandatory for all staff to sign in and out the Attendance Sheet (Forum HR-000) on daily basis.

8.5. PERSONAL BUSINESS AT FORUM WORKPLACE

Employees shall not conduct any personal business on Forum premises, either individually or as a group, without prior authorization by the CEO.

8.6. PERSONAL SAFETY

Employees shall follow all personal safety regulations as intimated by the organization from time to time.

8.7. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

Forum will provide a healthy, safe and accident-free working environment for its team members. All Supervisors must take responsibility for the health, safety and general well-being of all team members and partners at all times.

Forum is a no smoking environment. Nobody is allowed to smoke within the Forum office premises.

8.8. OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Employee shall be responsible for any electronic item under his/her possession like digital camera, USB drive, laptop, internet sticks, etc. which is related to Forum.

If equipment becomes lost/damaged due to the negligence of employee, cost of the equipment shall be charged to the employee at remaining book value of equipment after depreciation plus 20% of the original purchase value.

If equipment becomes lost due to any accident (snatching, natural disaster etc.) then it will be written off from the Forum account, subject to the acceptable justification.

8.9. EMAIL POLICY

In no circumstances an employee is allowed to disseminate emails containing discriminatory messages in any form (e.g. political or religious) from his/her official account.

8.10. DRESS CODE

Forum maintains an informal but professional dress code. Staff members are requested to consider appropriate business appearance, and wear appropriate business attire, inclusive of proper clothing, footwear, and jewelry.

8.11. POWER/WATER SAVING

All staff is requested to turn off all the lights and power consuming equipment under their use before leaving the office. In addition, washrooms must be used with responsibility of keeping it clean. The taps should be closed before leaving the washroom and kitchen in order to not let the resources be wasted.

8.12. GIFT OR FAVOR

No gift or favor from any third party or contractor is acceptable. A strict action may be taken in case of violation.

8.13. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

If an employee feels that he/she requires a training or skill development which can help him/her improve effectiveness in assigned duties, he/she should fill a training and development form (Forum HR-000) stating and justifying the need. The requirement should be mutually agreed upon and signed by both the supervisor and the employee and sent to the CEO for approval. The CEO however reserves the right to disapprove the request without any justification.

9. EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT

9.1 INTRODUCTION:

Forum will not tolerate discrimination, harassment, abuse of authority, or bullying of employees. Forum absolutely prohibits retaliation against any person who, in good faith, reports a possible violation of this Code of Conduct or participates in an investigation into such behavior.

Discrimination, harassment, retaliation, abuse of authority and bullying violate Forum's values and threaten its credibility as an organization. They are unacceptable in the workplace itself and in other work-related settings such as business trips, board meetings, social events and similar situations connected with work. Such behavior is also prohibited whether it is conducted in person or virtually. Everyone at the Forum is entitled to work in a safe, professional environment and to be treated with dignity and respect.

Everyone at the Forum is responsible for creating an environment free of harassment, discrimination, retaliation, abuse of authority, and bullying. No employee or board member is exempt from the requirements of this Code of Conduct, regardless of their position in the organization.

The Code of Conduct applies to Forum staff and board members. It also applies to any other individual who has a relationship with the Forum that enables the organization to exercise some level of control over that person's conduct in places and activities that relate to its work. This includes staff employed by any of Forum's affiliate, outside vendors, donors, consultants, contractors, and others. Forum does not tolerate behavior that violates Code of Conduct whether it is committed by employees against non-employees, or by non-employees against employees.

Forum for Women Development and Research will support its staff if they are the Target of behavior that may violate this Code of Conduct no matter where in the world that behavior occurs, and no matter who is accused of the behavior. An employee who believes they are the Target of behavior that may violate this Code of Conduct is encouraged to report that behavior, even if the Accused is employed by an entity other than the Forum. Once Forum receives that report, the organization will investigate and coordinate with the entity that employs the Accused. As in any situation in which a Forum's staff member is a Target, when a complaint involves an individual from an entity other than the Forum, Forum's priority will be (a) to support its staff member and (b) to ensure the behavior stops and does not reoccur.

Forum will investigate every complaint promptly and thoroughly. Any violation of this Code of Conduct will be treated with utmost seriousness whether it is a singular incident or a pattern of behavior.

This Code of Conduct must not be used as a basis for excluding or separating individuals of a particular gender, or any other protected characteristic, from participating in business or work-related activities or discussions in order to avoid allegations of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, abuse of authority, or bullying.

Terms & Definitions:

In this Code of Conduct, the following terms apply:

- **Accused:** An individual accused of behavior that may violate this Code of Conduct.
- **Target:** An individual who experiences behavior that may violate this Code of Conduct.
- **Discrimination:** The treatment of one individual differently than another because of that individual's membership in, or affiliation with, a protected category, or that of the individual's relatives, friends, or associates.
- **Harassment:** Conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of that person's membership in, or affiliation with, a protected category, or that of the individual's relatives, friends, or associates, and that (i) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, (ii) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, or (iii) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.
- **Retaliation:** A punitive or negative response to an individual's assertion of their right to be free from behavior that violates this Global Code of Conduct, or to participate in an investigation into such behavior.
- **Sexual Harassment:** Sexual harassment is one form of harassment, and a form of sexual violence. It includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when that conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment. There are two primary types of sexual harassment:
 - **Quid pro quo harassment:** in which submission to or rejection of unwelcome sexual conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting that individual; and
 - **Hostile environment harassment:** unwelcome sexual conduct that unreasonably interferes with an individual's job performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.
- **Abuse of Authority:** Abuse of authority entails the improper use of a position of influence, power, or authority by an individual against a colleague or group of colleagues.
- **Bullying:** Bullying is typically understood as repeated incidents or patterns of behavior that are intended to intimidate, offend, degrade, or humiliate a particular person or group of people. Bullying is an assertion of real or perceived power through aggression.

9.2. DISCRIMINATION IS PROHIBITED

Discrimination contradicts the very nature of Forum's movement and violates the principles it stands for. Discrimination of any kind is illegal, and is prohibited at the Forum. Discrimination occurs when a person treats one individual differently than another because of that individual's membership in, or identification with, a protected category, or that of the individual's relatives, friends, or associates.

Protected categories include:

- Age;
- Family responsibilities: supporting a person in a dependent relationship which includes, but is not limited to, children, grandchildren, parent;
- Gender, gender identity, gender expression, transgender status or sexual stereotypes including behavior, appearance, expression or behavior that may be different than what you were assigned at birth;
- Marital status;
- Matriculation: being enrolled in college, university or some type of secondary school;
- Nationality, immigration status, citizenship or ancestry;
- Perceived or actual, past or present, physical, mental, learning or intellectual impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, genetic information or characteristics, and HIV/AIDS status;
- Political views or activity;
- Race, color, ethnic or national origin;
- Religion or religious creed or belief;
- Sex, including pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, reproductive health decisions, or related medical conditions;
- Sexual orientation;
- Status as a survivor or family member of a survivor of domestic violence, a sexual offence or assault, or stalking;
- Veteran status; and
- Any other basis protected by applicable national or local laws.

If an employee believes that he has been the Target of discrimination, he is strongly encouraged to report the incident using the procedures described below. Forum will investigate each report promptly, thoroughly, and impartially. Any retaliation against a person who reports behavior they believe is discriminatory or participates in an investigation into that behavior is strictly prohibited.

9.3. HARASSMENT IS PROHIBITED

Harassment is a form of discrimination. Harassment is unwelcome conduct directed towards a person because of that person's membership in, or affiliation with, a protected category or that of the individual's relatives, friends, or associates. Harassment is unlawful when:

- Enduring the offensive conduct becomes a condition of continued employment, or
- The conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create a work environment that a reasonable person would consider hostile, intimidating, or abusive.

Forum is committed to stopping, preventing, and correcting this behavior before it becomes severe or pervasive. Therefore, offensive behavior may violate this Code of Conduct even if it does not meet the legal definition of harassment.

Harassment can range from extreme behaviors, including violence, threats, or physical touching, to less obvious acts like ridiculing, teasing, repeatedly bothering individuals, or offering opportunities to one individual but not another based on a protected characteristic. Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to:

- accessing offensive materials online during work time;
- accessing offensive materials online using Forum's equipment;
- behavior perceived to be punitive in nature, such as ignoring;

- derogatory or insensitive jokes, pranks, or comments;
- derogatory statements not directed at the Target but that take place within their hearing;
- derogatory, offensive, demeaning, or belittling comments about an individual or one or more people;
- displaying or sharing belittling or demeaning images, objects, or written materials;
- innuendos or veiled threats;
- laughing at, ignoring, or otherwise retaliating against an employee who complains about harassing behavior’;
- microaggressions;
- non-verbal behavior such as staring, leering, or gestures;
- ridiculing or demeaning comments;
- slurs or epithets;
- teasing, mimicking, or repeatedly commenting on an individual’s disability, accent, or other protected characteristic; and
- unnecessary or unwanted physical contact.

These are only examples and is not an exhaustive list of behaviors that may be considered harassment at the Forum. Behaviors such as these violate Forum’s values whether they are spoken or written and whether they occur within the workplace or in any other work-related setting, such as during business trips, business meetings, organization-led social events, or on social media.

If an employee believes that he has been the Target of harassment, he is strongly encouraged to report the incident using the procedures described below. Forum will investigate each report promptly, thoroughly, and impartially. Any retaliation against a person who reports behavior they believe is discriminatory or participates in an investigation into that behavior is strictly prohibited.

9.4. SEXUAL HARASSMENT IS PROHIBITED

Sexual harassment of any kind is never tolerated at the Forum. It directly contradicts the organization’s mission and values and is also illegal. Like other forms of harassment, sexual harassment can be extremely harmful, both to the persons subjected to it and those who witness it, and to the achievement of Forum’s goals. We are committed to intervening as early as possible to stop, prevent, and correct this behavior.

Sexual harassment occurs when one person makes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical acts of a sexual nature to another if that conduct:

- creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment;
- explicitly or implicitly affects an individual’s employment; or
- unreasonably interferes with an individual’s work performance.

Sexual harassment can be physical, visual, verbal, or nonverbal in nature. It includes non-sexual behaviors such as statements that demonstrate harassment on the basis of a person’s sex status, regardless of whether any sexual innuendo is used. This type of harassment occurs, for example, if a person is harassed either for exhibiting what is

perceived as stereotypical characteristics of their sex, or for failing to conform to stereotypical notions of masculinity, femininity, or other non-binary gender identity as determined by the individual only.

Sexual harassment can happen between persons of the same sex or gender, or persons of different sex or gender. Just like other forms of harassment, sexual harassment can occur through social media, the internet, and over phones and other devices. Forum recognizes that sexual harassment is a manifestation of power relationships and often occurs within unequal relationships in the workplace, for example between director or supervisor and employee. However, sexual harassment – just like other forms of harassment – can also occur between co-workers or between an employee and a nonemployee.

It is not possible to list all behaviors that may constitute sexual harassment. Whether or not a particular behavior constitutes sexual harassment will depend upon the particular circumstances. However, any of the following examples may constitute sexual harassment if the behavior is based on an individual's sex (including that person's gender, gender expression, gender identity, transgender status, etc.):

- assault or coerced acts;
- conducting prohibited behaviors online, over text, on social media, and the like;
- continuing prohibited behavior after a coworker has objected;
- direct or implied requests for favors in exchange for actual or promised job benefits such as favorable reviews, salary increases, promotions, increased benefits, or continued employment;
- displaying suggestive objects, pictures, photographs, or cartoons;
- language that is humiliating to an individual on the basis of their gender identity, expression;
- making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to advances;
- unwelcome advances, flirtations, or propositions – whether they involve physical touching or not;
- unwelcome leering or whistling;
- unwelcome or suggestive comments, jokes, teasing, or gossip including, but not limited to, comments about an individual's appearance, sexual activities, experience, deficiencies, or prowess;
- unwelcome physical contact such as patting, grabbing, massaging, pinching, brushing against the body, impeding or blocking movement, or making gestures; and
- using terms of endearment such as honey, babe, or stud when referring to co-workers.

Forum is committed to stopping this behavior before it becomes severe or pervasive and to creating a culture that is free of sexual harassment. Therefore, if an employee believes that he has been the Target of sexual harassment, he is strongly encouraged to report the incident using the procedures described below. Forum will investigate each report promptly, thoroughly, and impartially. Any retaliation against a person who reports behavior they believe is discriminatory or participates in an investigation into that behavior is strictly prohibited.

9.5. ABUSE OF AUTHORITY AND BULLYING ARE PROHIBITED

Forum does not tolerate abuse of authority or bullying. Abuse of authority entails the improper use of a position of influence, power, or authority by an individual against a colleague or group of colleagues. Bullying is typically understood as repeated incidents or patterns of behavior that are intended to intimidate, offend, degrade, or humiliate a particular person or group of people. Bullying is an assertion of real or perceived power through aggression. Any person at any level of the organization may be a bully or the Target of bullying behavior.

The following examples may constitute abuse of authority or bullying if they are sufficiently serious or demonstrate a pattern of behavior:

- asking a subordinate to cover up for unauthorized absences in exchange for promised or implied favors;
- belittling a person's opinions;
- blocking applications for training, leave, or promotion without justification;
- criticizing a person persistently or constantly;
- intentionally excluding someone from normal workplace conversations and making them feel unwelcome;
- intruding on a person's privacy by pestering, spying, or stalking;
- physical abuse or threatening abuse;
- spreading malicious rumors, gossip, or innuendo;
- tampering with a person's personal belongings or work equipment;
- unwarranted or undeserved monitoring and/or punishment;
- using workplace resources to threaten, harm, intimidate, embarrass, or otherwise harm another person;
- withholding necessary information or purposefully giving incorrect information; and
- yelling or use of profanity.

The following are examples of behaviors that do not constitute bullying:

- expressing differences of opinion;
- offering constructive feedback, guidance, or advice about work-related behavior; and
- reasonable action taken by a supervisor relating to the management and direction of staff or the place of employment (e.g., managing performance, taking reasonable disciplinary actions, or assigning work).

If an employee believes that he has been the Target of bullying or abuse of authority, he is strongly encouraged to report the incident using the procedures described below. Forum will investigate each report promptly, thoroughly, and impartially. Any retaliation against a person who reports behavior they believe is discriminatory or participates in an investigation into that behavior is strictly prohibited.

9.6. RETALIATION IS PROHIBITED

Forum prohibits retaliation against any employee who participates in good faith in the processes outlined in the Code of Conduct. Retaliation occurs when a person is penalized for engaging in certain activities ("protected activities") including, but not limited to:

- answering questions during an investigation into an alleged violation of this Code of Conduct;
- asking directors or co-workers about salary information to uncover potentially discriminatory wages;
- assisting another employee in an effort to report a potential violation of this Code of Conduct;
- expressing an intent to report what they believe to be a violation of this Code of Conduct;
- filing or being a witness in a charge, complaint, investigation, or lawsuit relating to a violation of this Code of Conduct;
- refusing to follow orders that would result in discrimination, harassment, abuse of authority, or bullying;
- reporting behavior they believe to be a violation of this Code of Conduct, including communicating with a supervisor about discrimination, harassment, abuse of authority, or bullying;
- requesting accommodation because of a disability or for a religious practice; and
- resisting sexual advances, or intervening to protect others.

Some behaviors that may be retaliatory, if they are conducted in response to the types of activities listed above, include but are not limited to:

- blocking advancement or other employment opportunities;
- disclosing information the employee otherwise keeps private, such as immigration status or sexual orientation;
- excluding the employee from decisions or activities;
- failing to award an employee a raise or bonus;
- isolating the employee;
- negatively impacting the employee's terms or conditions of employment (e.g., increased hours, less pay, demotion, reassignment, reduction in responsibilities);
- poor evaluations; and
- removing perks granted to other, similarly situated employees.

Retaliation is illegal and it is absolutely prohibited at the Forum. If an employee makes a report or participates in another protected activity and believes that he is retaliated against as a result, he is strongly encouraged to report the behavior using the procedures described below. Each report of retaliation will be investigated promptly, thoroughly, and impartially. Any person – no matter their level of seniority – who retaliates against another will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

9.7. INFORMAL RESPONSES TO OFFENSIVE BEHAVIOR

If an employee believes that he has been the Target of conduct prohibited by this Code of Conduct, and he feels comfortable doing so, he may choose to communicate directly with the individual engaging in that conduct, informing them that their behavior is unacceptable and that it should be stopped.

Forum recognizes that it is not always easy to directly confront the Accused. If an employee chooses to pursue this option, it is often helpful to plan what is to be said, how it is to be said, and where and when to have the conversation. Alternatively, the employee might

choose to write a letter or email to the Accused, describing the behavior he finds to be offensive and asking him to stop.

Employees are not required to engage directly with the Accused and, even if they choose to do so, they are still encouraged to report the behavior to the Forum using one of the procedures outlined here. Reporting the incident will allow the Forum to support the concerned employee fully, ensure that the unwelcome behavior ceases, and prevent its future recurrence. Once informed, the organization can also make sure that the employee does not experience any retaliation – whether for making the report and participating in the investigation, or for responding directly to the wrongdoer.

9.8. REPORTING A CONCERN

Anyone can report behavior they believe may violate the commitments and standards Forum has set in this Code of Conduct, including behavior of employees and nonemployees anywhere in the country. All staff members are strongly encouraged to do so.

Forum absolutely prohibits retaliation against any person who, in good faith, makes a report or participates in an investigation. Any reported retaliation will be investigated and addressed promptly and thoroughly in accordance with the procedures detailed below.

It is important that employees have resources available to file a complaint in a manner that they are comfortable with. Forum has designated individuals who are accountable for receiving complaints filed and ensuring prompt investigation and appropriate action. Employees are encouraged to file complaints of behavior believed to be in violation of this Code of Conduct directly with these individuals by phone, in writing or in person. An employee may decide whether he wishes to identify himself as the complainant or not.

- **Discussion with supervisor.** Employees may be most comfortable discussing the behavior believed to be in violation of this Code of Conduct with their direct supervisor in advance of filing a complaint, or as a source of support for filing a complaint.
- **The National Coordinator, CEO or Directors of Forum for Women Development and Research .** You may file a complaint with any of these individuals, who are required to report this information on your behalf, but not required to provide your name.
- **Chair of White Ribbon Alliance Global Secretariat Board of Directors.** You may file a complaint with the Chair of White Ribbon Alliance Global Secretariat Board of Directors who will take appropriate action to initiate an investigation.

If an employee experiences conduct that he believes is contrary to this Code of Conduct, or has witnessed that conduct, he is strongly encouraged to report the incident promptly. Prompt reporting will allow Forum to provide active support to the employee and respond and address the behavior before it becomes severe or pervasive.

It is important that complaints filed include specific, actionable information that can be used during the course of the investigation. An employee should include key details to support an effective investigation to the extent that he is comfortable:

- Date of Report;

- Date(s) of Incident;
- Description of the incident(s) that is in violation of this Code of Conduct. Descriptions should be fact based and include as many relevant details as possible;
- If the employee is a witness, please try to make the report from one's own perspective and not presume the experience of others;
- Name of Accused;
- Name of Target;
- Specific Location of Incident;
- Witnesses and Potential Witnesses; and
- Name (if the employee chooses to provide it)

Employees can use one of the reporting avenues above whether the conduct he experienced occurred in the country or internationally. Employees are encouraged to make a report even if the behavior involves individuals from other entities, or individuals who are not employed by the Forum.

9.9. INVESTIGATIONS – WHAT TO EXPECT

Forum will investigate all reports whether the complaint conforms to a particular format or is made verbally or in writing. Every report of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, abuse of authority, and bullying will be investigated promptly, thoroughly, and impartially by a qualified Investigator. In most instances, Forum's CEO will serve in the role of Investigator, however, this determination will be made on a case by case basis to ensure an appropriate person is appointed to objectively assess each situation and make recommendations to the Review Panel.

All Forum staff members are required to cooperate and provide truthful information in an investigation. All individuals involved in the investigation – including the Target, the Accused, and any witnesses or interviewees – will be treated with respect and dignity. When participating in an investigation, there are several things you can expect:

Beginning of the Investigation

If the employee chooses to provide his name, the Investigator will reach out to him within three (3) business days from receiving the complaint report. In that initial contact, the Investigator's primary goal is to ensure the employee's wellbeing. The Investigator will provide information regarding staff support resources and discuss with the employee any arrangements necessary to ensure his safety and wellbeing. During this initial contact, the Investigator will also discuss with the employee the investigation process and confirm relevant details as outlined by the employee.

During the Investigation

Throughout the investigation, the Investigator will conduct individual interviews with the parties involved and, where necessary, with individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or have other relevant knowledge. Prior to a meeting, the Investigator will contact the concerned by email to coordinate schedules. As outlined, every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality of investigations. All Forum's staff members are required to participate in the investigative process if asked.

There will likely be two Investigators in the meeting with the employees. One will be there to take notes. The employee will be asked a variety of questions about a particular topic. It is important that the employee is open and honest and provides as much detail as possible in his responses. If there are particular individuals an employee believes the Investigator should speak with, these may identify them. The employee may also recommend particular questions to be asked of those individuals. However, the final decision of who to interview and what questions to ask is in the discretion of the Investigator(s). If allegations have been made against an employee, he will be advised of them during the meeting and given an opportunity to respond.

Following the Investigation

Once the investigation is completed, the Investigator will draft a confidential report summarizing the investigation's findings. The Review Panel will be comprised of the CEO and other members of the Board of Directors. They will review the investigation report and determine whether a violation of Code of Conduct has occurred. The Review Panel will make an appropriate determination as to the sharing of this information based on essential business need for the information.

In making its determination, the Review Panel will analyze, among other things, whether a reasonable person would find the environment or behavior hostile, abusive, or unacceptable, as well as whether the Target viewed it as such. This determination will be based on both subjective and objective factors, considering the totality of the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, including, without limitation, the frequency, duration and severity of that conduct.

The Review Panel will determine the appropriate responsive action based on all facts and circumstances uncovered during the investigation. While the criteria used to determine responsive action will vary for each unique set of circumstances, in all cases responsive action will be designed to meet three (3) criteria.

1. The severity of the responsive action is appropriate to the severity of the behavior the employee is found to have conducted.
2. The responsive action is sufficient to end the behavior that is in violation of this Code of Conduct.
3. The responsive action is consistent with previously imposed action(s) for similar conduct by other employees.

Based on the results of the investigation, responsive actions may include, but are not limited to, mediation between the parties if it is considered an appropriate path to resolving the issue and can be done in a manner that feels safe for all involved, training, required coaching, verbal and written warnings, withholding of a promotion or pay increase or bonus, reassignment, temporary suspension without pay, and/or dismissal. Other responsive actions may be implemented as appropriate, depending on particular circumstances.

Forum will follow guidance for responsive action as outlined in this Code of Conduct, but some common factors considered in making this determination include:

- The immediate physical and emotional safety of Forum's employees;
- Whether the individual is a present or potential risk to the organization;

- The seriousness of the actions that the Accused is found to have committed;
- Facts and circumstances, derived from the investigative process, including preceding events, complete context and evidence provided;
- Accused employee's response, including comprehension of the allegations and or Code of Conduct violation, demonstrated commitment to correct the behavior, complete responsive action requirements (mediation, training, required coaching, etc.) and evidence provided during the investigative process; and
- Employee history of behavior, including patterns of conduct, disciplinary action and/or complaints.

Following the Review Panel's determination, a written copy of the disciplinary decision will be provided to the Accused. The Review Panel is responsible for implementing the disciplinary actions chosen in a timely manner. The Investigator will also reach out to the Target to inform them that the matter has been investigated, addressed and concluded. To protect confidentiality and ensure fairness to everyone involved, Forum may not be able to provide specific details about an investigation or its outcome.

As a general rule, Forum will endeavor to complete its investigation within sixty (60) days of receiving a complaint. If an investigation takes longer than thirty (30) days, the Investigator will inform the Review Panel and the Target. If an employee needs support at any point prior to, during, or after an investigation, he may contact any of the individuals designated as resources above.

9.10. APPEAL OF THE DECISION

If the Accused is dissatisfied with the decision of the Review Panel, he may appeal the decision. Appeals may be directed to the CEO and must be done in writing and within five (5) business days.

All complaints and appeals will be taken seriously. The appeal document will be considered carefully and in relation to the evidence and information obtained during the investigation. It may be required for additional interviews to take place, with the Accused and others, before a final determination is made. If an employee fails to appeal within the time limits set forth above, the problem should be considered settled on the basis of the last decision, and the problem should not be subject to further consideration. Exceptions to the timeline will be extended for individuals who are traveling.

9.11. INTENT

In order for Forum to take actions necessary to cultivate a workplace culture that is respectful, safe and inclusive it is critical to be informed of behavior that is in violation of this Code of Conduct. All staff who, in good faith, believe they have witnessed or experienced behavior in violation of this Code of Conduct should come forward even if he is unsure if something meets the criteria. No employee will ever be penalized for filing a complaint that is not found to have merit as long as the complaint was filed with honest intention.

Under no circumstances will Forum tolerate filing of complaints with malicious intent – complaints known to be false, filed to discredit or otherwise harm another individual. All complaints will be presumed to be in good faith until and unless contradictory information becomes available.

9.12. TRANSPARENCY AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF COMPLAINTS AND INVESTIGATIONS

Forum understands that every staff member – including those who report behavior they believe violates this Code of Conduct, those who are accused of such behavior, and those who witness the behavior – has a need for confidentiality and autonomy. Forum cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. However, disclosure of information will be made on a strict need-to-know basis based on the obligations, legally and to our employees, to investigate and take prompt responsive action. For example, to fully investigate and respond to a complaint, disclosures may have to be made to particular individuals including, but not limited to, the Review Panel, the Accused, and individuals interviewed as part of the investigation.

At the close of an investigation, the Investigator will reach out to the individuals involved to inform them that the matter has been addressed and closed. However, to protect confidentiality, the Investigator may not be able to provide details, such as particular discipline implemented, or responsive actions taken.

All persons involved in an investigation are asked to do everything reasonably possible to keep the investigation confidential. Confidentiality allows the organization to preserve the integrity of the investigation, to ensure fairness to all involved, and to protect the privacy of employees who have brought complaints or who are accused of wrongdoing. This request for confidentiality is not meant or intended to curtail employees' rights under the law to discuss work related matters but rather to protect all employees involved, including active prevention against retaliation.

All records collected or created during the investigation will be housed in Forum's confidential files. Access to these files will be limited strictly to the Investigator, CEO and members of Board of Directors.

9.13. HOLDING OURSELVES ACCOUNTABLE

Investigators are required to report all claims, allegations and complaints received, to the CEO or Directors within twenty-four (24) hours of receipt. Investigations, outcomes and follow up actions will also be shared with these persons.

Forum will report all claims, allegations and complaints received, investigations conducted and their outcomes, by type annually to White Ribbon Alliance. Specific information on each instance, as well as individual identities, will not be revealed as part of these reports.

10. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

PURPOSE: In order to safeguard Forum’s reputation and its creditability, all directors and employees must conduct themselves in accordance with the highest ethical standards and be perceived to be acting ethically at all times and they should avoid any conflict between their own interest and the interest of the organization.

SCOPE: This policy covers all the directors and employees engaged in conducting the business of the Forum and performing their duties.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS: In this policy:

- a. The terms ‘Conflicting Interest’ may be defined as an interest, direct or indirect, with any person(s) firm(s) or company(s) having business with the Forum and such interest might arise through:
 1. Owning stock or holding debt or other proprietary interests in any third party dealing with Forum.
 2. Receiving remuneration for services with respect to individual transactions involving the Forum.
 3. Using Forum’s time, personnel, equipment, supplies, or goodwill and other resources for activities, programs, and purposes not approved by the Forum.
 4. Receiving personal gifts or loans from third parties dealing or competing with the Forum.
 5. Acceptance of any gift of such value that can influence a decision.
- b. The term “affiliated persons” applies to and includes two of the following parties:
 1. Your spouse, child, mother, father, brother or sister;
 2. Any corporation or organization of which you are a board member, an officer, a partner, participant in management or are employed by , or are directly or indirectly, a debt holder or the beneficial owner of any class of equity securities; and
 3. Any trust or other estate in which you have a substantial beneficial interest or as to which you serve as a trustee or in a similar capacity.
- c. Other terms relevant to the policy are defined as under:
 1. “Responsible Person” is any person serving as an employee or a member of the board of directors of Forum.
 2. “Family Member” is a spouse, domestic partner, parent, child or spouse of a child, or a brother, sister, or spouse of a brother or sister, of a Responsible Person.
 3. “Contract or Transaction” is any agreement or relationship involving the sale or purchase of goods, services or rights of any kind; receipt of a loan or grant; or the establishment of any other pecuniary/financial relationship.
- d. Parties with whom a conflict may arise: Conflicts of interest may arise in relation to directors and employees with any of the following third parties:
 1. Individuals, firms and companies supplying goods and services to Forum.
 2. Individuals, firms and companies from whom Forum leases property and equipment.
 3. Competing or affinity Organizations.
 4. Donors and other Organizations supporting Forum.
 5. Individuals, firms and companies with whom Forum is dealing or planning to deal in connection with:

- a. Contract of project implementation.
 - b. Purchase or sale of real estate, securities, or other property.
 - c. Any other business deal.
6. Agencies, Organization and associations affecting the operations of Forum.
7. Family members and friends, having direct or indirect interest.

The areas of conflicting interest listed above and the relationships within those areas which may give rise to conflict are not exhaustive, and conflicts might arise in other areas or through other related parties as well.

10.1. DISCLOSURE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

a. Directors and employees at Forum must recognize that in the course of performing their duties, they may be put into a position where there is a conflict in the performance of such duty and personal interest. Such interest may be financial or may be based on their position or standing with any third party or entity. Such interest may not be held directly by the director or employee but may be held by his friend or family member. It is the overriding intention of the organization that all business contracts/ transactions be conducted at an arm's length basis.

Accordingly this policy requires that all such responsible persons should avoid any conflict between their own interests and the interests of the company in the conduct of their professional responsibilities and their personal affairs.

b. The existence of any of the interests described in the policy shall be disclosed before any contract/transaction is consummated. It shall be the continuing responsibility of the Board and employees to scrutinize their contracts/transactions and determine outside business interests and relationships for potential conflicts and to immediately make such disclosures.

If at any time a director or an employee becomes aware of an existing or a potential conflict between his professional responsibilities and his personal interest, he should, if he is a director, report this in writing to the Board of Directors, or, if he is an employee, to his supervisor. Forum shall then strive to determine whether such a conflict of interest in duty does exist. In the event that there is a positive determination: then the director/employee should take such measures as Forum may direct to remove such a conflict.

Directors and employees of the organization must recognize that it is an essential component of their office / employment that they are able to take independent decisions in the best interests of the organization without being perceived as yielding to their personal interests.

Each director and employee must avoid any investment, interest, or association that interferes or might interfere with the independent exercise of his or her own individual best judgment, and with such director's/ employee's obligation to perform his or her responsibilities in the best interests of the organization.

c. Transactions with parties with whom a conflicting interest exists may be undertaken only if all the following conditions are fulfilled:

1. The conflicting interest is fully disclosed;
2. The person with the conflict of interest is excluded from the discussion and approval of such a contract/transaction;
3. A competitive bid or comparable valuation exists to maintain transparency; and
4. The CEO or Board has determined that the contract/transaction is in the best interest of the organization.

11. ANNEXURE

Description	Number
Recruitment Requisition Form	HR-001
Employment Application form	HR-002
Interview Evaluation Form	HR-003
Consolidated Interview Evaluation Form	HR-004
Reference Check Form	HR-005
Employee Data Form	HR-006
Employment Contracts	HR-007
Probation Evaluation Report	HR-010
Move Order Requisition Form	HR-011
Clearance & Final Settlement Form	HR-012
Exit Interview Form	HR-013
Leave Application Form	HR-014
Travel Authorization	HR-017
Performance Evaluation Report	HR-018
Format of Job Description	HR-019