# Welcome

The information in this handbook is intended to provide guidance on the expectations, policies, and procedures for employees at Aspen Dental. It is not intended to create an employment contract or to guarantee any specific terms or conditions of employment. This handbook is subject to change at any time without notice. These policies are in addition to our Employment Policies (EdM4000) and Employment and Pay Policies (EdM4001), as well as the Human Resources Policies (EdM4002) and other applicable policies.

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Welcome to Aspen Dental Services. Our organization has been in the dental business for more than 20 years. It is always a pleasure to extend a word of greeting to a new employee. Over the years our goal has been to provide excellent service to our patients, and you have our best wishes for success as you join us in those efforts.
This handbook briefly describes our policies, benefits, and work rules and is intended to serve as written notice of what we expect from our employees. **It is not to be construed as an employment contract. In this state, the employment relationship is “at will,” which means that either the employer or the employee can end the relationship at any time for any reason or for no reason.**

Please keep this handbook as long as you are employed with us. It supersedes any previously issued handbooks and policy memoranda, and the policies, rules, and benefits contained herein may be updated, modified, amended, or deleted at any time.

We look forward to a mutually beneficial working relationship and encourage you to bring any questions, concerns, and suggestions to our attention.
POLICIES

Equal Employment Opportunity

This company is an equal-employment-opportunity employer to qualified individuals regardless of their race, color, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, citizenship status, religion ancestry or military service. This policy of Equal Opportunity includes all aspects of the employment relationship including recruitment, hiring, upgrading, promotion, transfer, termination, training, and wage and salary administration.

Immigration Law Compliance

All employers are required to comply with the federal immigration laws. In keeping with this obligation, all new employees must fill out an I-9 form and provide satisfactory evidence of identity and eligibility to work in the United States no later than three (3) business days after beginning the new job. All offers of employment and continued employment are contingent upon presenting such proof.

Harassment

Aspen Dental will not tolerate harassment of any employees. Any form of harassment that violates federal, state, or local law is a violation of this policy and will be treated as a disciplinary matter. This includes, but is not limited to harassment relating to race, color, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, national origin, religious creed, ancestry or military service. Violators of this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including possible termination from employment.

The term harassment includes slurs, offensive remarks, jokes, and offensive graphics or physical conduct that may be deemed inappropriate in the work place. Harassment also includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, unwelcome or offensive touching, and other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct of a sexual nature by someone of the same or opposite sex.

Following is an illustrative list of the types of conduct that are considered sexual harassment:

- Unwanted sexual advances.
- Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors.
- Threats of reprisal after a negative response to sexual advances.
- Visual conduct such as leering, sexual gestures, and displaying sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters.
- Verbal sexual advances or propositions.
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic verbal commentaries about an individual’s body; sexually degrading words used to describe an individual; suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations.
- Physical conduct such as touching, assaulting, or impeding or blocking movements.

Harassment by non-employees in connection with an employee’s work may also be a violation of this policy. Any employee who observes harassment of another employee by a non-employee should
immediately report such harassment to his or her supervisor. Appropriate action will be taken for violation of this policy.

Management will be receptive and responsive to all complaints of harassment. If employees feel that they or another employee may have been subjected to harassing behavior they should report all concerns immediately. Timely notification to management of improper behavior is essential. Prompt reporting will enable management to properly investigate the facts, determine the issues and provide a swift and appropriate remedy. Employees will not be penalized in any way for honestly reporting harassment. It is unlawful for an employer or another employee to retaliate against employees that report harassment. Similarly, the company will not tolerate employees hindering our own internal investigation and our internal complaint procedure.

The company has adopted two options for resolving claims of harassment: Early Resolution and Formal Investigation. If an employee believes they, or another employee may have been subjected to harassing behavior, they should read each option carefully, consider the facts of each option and determine what they believe to be their best course of action. Keep in mind that Early Resolution does not preclude a complaint from eventual Formal Investigation, when deemed appropriate.

**Early Resolution**

The goal of Early Resolution is to resolve concerns at the earliest stage possible with the cooperation of all parties involved. Early Resolution may be appropriate for responding to anonymous reports, reports made by a third party who may have witnessed the incident and reports of first time questionable behavior that has created an uncomfortable or hostile work environment. Early Resolution typically provides options such as discussions, mediations between the parties, targeted policy education and steps for follow up to ensure the behavior has not continued. All discussions and agreements using Early Resolution efforts are to be documented and carried out under the direction of the Human Resource Department. Early Resolution may not be deemed appropriate in all situations, furthermore should the Early Resolution process be unsuccessful in resolving a complaint a Formal Investigation will commence.

**Formal Investigation**

Immediate Formal Investigation is appropriate when complaints involve serious misconduct, when reports involve individuals with a pattern of inappropriate behavior or when an alleged criminal act such as stalking or physical abuse is made. Individuals filing Formal Investigation complaints will be urged to file their complaint in writing. All discussions during a Formal Investigation are to be documented. The Human Resource Department will conduct all Formal Investigations.

All complaints (Early Resolution and Formal Investigation) of harassment that are reported will be investigated as promptly as possible and will be treated as confidentially as possible. If management finds that an employee has violated company policy, appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination, will be taken. Furthermore, as part of our attempt to remedy a complainant’s concerns, the complainant will be informed of remedial measures that are taken.

Management cannot resolve a harassment problem if it is not reported. Therefore, it is the responsibility of each employee to bring all matters of this nature to management’s attention so that all necessary steps are taken to correct the situation.
Employees have several options as to how to report claims of harassment. You may speak with your immediate supervisor or another manager, and to a member of the Human Resources department. Alternatively, you may choose to report the incident directly to the Human Resources department. Your Human Resource contacts include:

- 315-454-6000 option 4 or 800-965-6470 option 4

Once the Company receives your report, it will investigate the complaint through either the process for Early Resolution or Formal Investigation. In conducting all investigations the Company will disclose the nature and parties involved in the complaint only on a limited, need-to-know basis. Additionally, after an employee files a report of harassment, follow up will take place to help ensure that employees are not subjected to any form of retaliation. Retaliation, like harassment, violates Aspen Dental policy, and will not be tolerated.

**Ethics and Compliance Hotline**

Aspen Dental belongs to all of us. It is important that when you witness, or somehow hear about behaviors that you believe are unethical, illegal or immoral, you take action. We strongly urge you to talk to any member of your management team, human resources, or a member of the leadership team. When you have knowledge of behaviors that may include theft, the falsification of records or documents, blatant HIPAA violations, or the fraudulent use of patient information, you have the power to act.

We understand that having these kinds of conversations can sometimes be difficult. If you witness or somehow hear about behaviors that you believe are unethical, illegal or immoral such as falsification of records or documents, blatant HIPAA violations, or the fraudulent use of patient information you may also contact:

- The Network - Ethics and Compliance Hotline 855-315-7455 (available 24/7)

When you call the hotline, a member of the Network’s customer service team will listen to your concerns and submit a report for follow up and resolution. And while you have the option of remaining anonymous, we believe that when you provide your name, you not only support a speedy resolution, but you strengthen our ability to hold each other accountable for doing the right thing.

**Hepatitis B Vaccination**
Hepatitis B vaccination is made available to employees who are reasonably expected to be in contact with blood (or its products) in the performance of their duties. The vaccination is made available within 10 days of the initial assignment to employees who have not already been vaccinated. Aspen Dental will pay the immunization expense. Employees who decline to have the vaccination must sign a formal statement of declination but may later change their mind. For more information on bloodborne pathogen compliance refer to the OSHA Guard Manual or the Risk Manager.

Open Door Communications

We encourage all employees to bring any problems or complaints to our attention immediately. The procedure for doing this is as follows:

1. Discuss the situation first with your immediate supervisor.

2. If you have a problem with your immediate supervisor or if you do not receive a satisfactory response, bring it to the attention of the District Manager or to the Director of Human Resources at the Corporate Office.

3. Any such reports shall remain confidential and shall be discussed with others only as necessary to investigate activity or the appropriate action.

Your success on the job is a prime objective of Aspen Dental, and we look to you for help in carrying out company policies and procedures. If you have a problem or question, we trust you will give us the opportunity to resolve it in the best interest of all concerned.

Another part of our communications process is the Bright Idea program. As Patient Service Representatives, Billing Specialists, Dental Assistants, Accounting Professionals, Lab Techs, Dentists, Office & Department Managers – we’re certain you can teach us a thing or two! Give us an idea, a suggestion or a thought towards Continuous Quality Improvement. Help improve operational / clinical efficiencies by sharing your ideas to better our day-to-day operations. You’ll receive special recognition for Quality Improvement ideas that make-sense, ideas that we can implement to improve the level of patient care we provide.

Your Supervisor

The person you report to on the job is your immediate supervisor. In the beginning, your supervisor will work closely with you to help you learn the job and understand our policies and procedures. We encourage you to ask questions and seek whatever help you need in order to succeed in your position. Your co-workers will also be available to help you, but your supervisor is the best source of accurate information and assistance.

As you become accustomed to your job and to Aspen Dental’s procedures, you will probably find that you need less guidance from your supervisor. This is perfectly natural and acceptable, but keep in mind that your supervisor is there to help you, and he or she should be kept informed of problems or circumstances that affect your job performance.
Should a situation arise that your supervisor is unable to resolve, or if you have a problem with your supervisor, we remind you of our Open Door Policy for bringing your concerns to the attention of someone who can help you.

**Substance Abuse Policy**

It is the policy of Aspen Dental to provide our employees with a safe and healthy workplace. In order to do so, the following policies will be strictly enforced:

- Employees are prohibited from being under the influence of alcohol or drugs during working hours.

- The sale, possession, transfer, or purchase of illegal drugs on company property or while performing company business is strictly prohibited. Such actions will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement officials.

- The use, sale, or possession of an illegal drug, alcohol, or controlled substance while on duty may result in discharge.

- Prescription drugs may only be brought on company property and used by the person to whom they are prescribed. Such drugs must be used only in the manner, combination, and quantity prescribed by a licensed physician.

Failure to adhere to these policies may result in immediate discharge.

**Smoking**

In consideration of our employee’s health and for the safety of our work environment, smoking is not permitted in any of Aspen Dental’s offices. Smoking is permitted outside the building away from the patient entrance.

**Right To Know**

You have the right to know about any hazardous substances that you might use or encounter on the job. Material Data Safety Sheets (MSDS) for each potentially hazardous chemical used in our workplace can be found in the Risk Management Department and through postings at each location.

If you are unable to locate MSDS for a particular substance, please ask the Office Manager for further information or contact the Risk Manager.

**Safety**

Safety is everyone’s responsibility. Please take precautions to use materials and equipment with care and do your part to keep the work site free from hazards. Safety rules are distributed or posted and
will be strictly enforced. Please report any unsafe or hazardous conditions to your supervisor immediately.

Every accident or injury that occurs during working hours, however minor, must be reported to your immediate supervisor. If he or she is unavailable, contact the Office Manager immediately. All accidents require that an accident report be filed with the Risk Manager. Failure to follow safety policies and procedures will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**Personal Telephone Calls**

We recognize that employees must sometimes place or receive personal calls on company telephones. However, the telephone system is intended primarily for the conduct of the company’s business, and it is imperative that personal uses not interfere with that purpose.

If you must make a personal call, do so during non-working hours. Ask callers to keep the number and length of calls to a minimum. Long distance personal telephone calls are not permitted.

**Cell Phone Usage**

In support of our ability to provide the highest level of care and attention to our patients, please contain the use of your personal cell phones to breaks and/or meal periods.

During working hours, please have your cell phones turned off, as not to create a disturbance in the offices and in the operatories.

As always, in emergency situations, family members may contact you by calling the main telephone number for your office.

**Your Personnel File**

You are responsible for notifying the Compensation Administrator of any changes in name, address, telephone number, marital status, number of dependents, or any other information in your employment records. Incomplete or outdated information may result in incorrect taxes being withheld from your paycheck, interrupted benefits for you and your family, and difficulty in notifying the appropriate person in the event of an emergency.

Personnel files are the property of the company, and access to the information they contain is restricted. Only those officials and representatives of the company who have a legitimate reason to review information in a file are permitted to do so. With proper notice an employee may review material in his or her file, but only in the company’s offices and in the presence of the individual appointed by the company to maintain the file. If there is a disagreement concerning the accuracy of information, the employee should submit a written statement to the Compensation Administrator. This document will then be included in the employee’s file.

Workers’ compensation records and medical records of employees are also required by OSHA to be maintained by Aspen’s Risk Manager. All records are strictly confidential.


**Employee Communications**

All notices that affect employment at Aspen Dental, including information regarding safety, labor laws, and policy changes will be posted on the bulletin boards located in each office.

It is the responsibility of each employee to be aware of all notices and to stay up-to-date on policy changes and regulations as they are posted or distributed.
EMPLOYMENT AND PAY

Employment Categories

It is the company’s intent to define employment classifications clearly so that each employee understands his/her employment status and benefit eligibility.

Every position is designated as exempt or non-exempt pursuant to federal and state wage and hour laws. Non-exempt employees are entitled to overtime pay under the specific provisions of these laws. Exempt employees are excluded from such overtime pay requirements.

Aspen Dental has established the following employment categories:

- **Full-time Regular:** Employees who regularly work at least 30 hours per week, effective 1/1/2013.
- **Part-time Regular:** Employees who regularly work fewer than 30 hours per week.
- **Temporary/Seasonal:** Employees who may work on a full- or part-time basis for a specific period of time not to exceed six consecutive months.

Work Schedules

Work schedules may vary throughout the company as staffing needs and operational demands require. As a result there may be differences in starting and ending times and in the total number of hours scheduled each day and week. The supervisor will advise employees of their individual work schedules. All employees are expected to be at their workstations and ready to begin work at their scheduled times and to return promptly from lunches and breaks.

Many of our projects require overtime work in order to meet patient needs. We expect our employees to be ready and willing to work overtime when requested. Hourly employees will be paid for any additional hours beyond the basic workweek, in accordance with federal and state laws. Aspen Dental reserves the right to require written verification before releasing you from necessary overtime work.

Your supervisor must authorize all overtime worked in advance.

Time paid for vacation, holiday, sick or personal leave will not be taken into consideration when calculating overtime.

Breaks

Employees working at least six (6) hours per day will be given two fifteen minute breaks per day, one break in the morning and one in the afternoon, provided work load and patient needs are not compromised. We will try to provide these breaks, but if they are not taken, the time is not compensable, nor can it be accumulated past that working day.
**Pay Days**

The workweek at Aspen Dental extends from Sunday to Saturday. All employees will be paid every other week, on Friday, for hours worked during the previous two (2) weeks.

When a payday falls on a holiday, you will be paid on the day before or the day after the holiday at the discretion of management.

Paychecks will be released to employees appearing in person to the Office Manager. If you are unable to get your own check, we will release it to a relative, provided the relative shows written authorization from you and acceptable identification.

**Time Records**

Time records must be entered into the computer system each day showing the time you begin work, the time you leave for and return from lunch, and the time you quit work for the day. Be sure to mark any absences and indicate the reason for them on the comment line of your time record. Time spent receiving dental treatment must be recorded as personal time off.

Under no circumstances are you to enter another employee’s time record nor is another employee permitted to enter yours. Violation of this rule will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**Direct Deposit**

Your paycheck may be directly deposited into the bank account of your choice, following your first paycheck, if you provide authorization. Any amount can be deposited, with an actual check provided for any balance. A direct deposit notification is provided on payday, and you have access to the funds at the beginning of the business day on payday, which is every other Friday.

**Lost Paychecks**

You are responsible for your paycheck after it has been received. Please report lost checks immediately so we can initiate the “stop-payment” process. At the employer’s discretion, employees may have any related bank charges deducted from the following paycheck.
Emergency Closings

Aspen’s primary concern is the safety of our employees. When a short-term emergency situation (such as inclement weather, power failure, etc.) interrupts the normal workday, the following guidelines shall be followed:

When a full day closing is declared due to imposed travel restriction beyond our control, employees (those paid daily & hourly) shall not be compensated for the loss of time. Employees have the ability to utilize eligible vacation/personal time.

When the decision is made to close early during the workday, all employees who arrived at work shall be compensated for all scheduled hours they would normally have worked that day. Employees not reporting for work shall not be compensated.

When an office is open and an employee does not report to work due to inclement weather, the employee shall not be compensated for the loss in time. Lost time may not be compensated through the use of eligible vacation/personal time.

Tardiness during times of inclement weather shall be excused when affecting the majority.

Performance Evaluations

Aspen Dental makes every effort to recognize and reward the differences in job responsibilities and individual performance. Advancement in pay rate or job classification will depend in part on your own performance.

Performance is evaluated annually. Although, evaluations may be conducted anytime your supervisor deems it appropriate or necessary.

Your performance will be evaluated by your immediate supervisor, and will be reviewed by your Regional Manager, if applicable. The completed evaluation will then be discussed with you, signed, and placed in your personnel file. The written evaluation is conducted to assess work performance and progress and does not necessarily result in a wage or salary adjustment.
CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

**Discipline**

Disciplinary action will be taken when company policies, procedures, or work rules are violated. Such actions may include, but are not limited to, verbal warnings, written warnings, suspension, or immediate discharge. Disciplinary action will depend in part on the nature of the violation and on the employee’s work record.

**Employee Conduct and Work Rules**

Reasonable rules of conduct are necessary for the orderly, efficient, and safe operation of business. The list below is meant to serve as a guideline for identifying conduct that will result in disciplinary action. It should be noted that many of these standards of conduct are clarified in greater detail in the appropriate section of this employee handbook.

This list is not intended to be all-inclusive. Management reserves the right to modify work rules and regulations or to establish different or additional rules or regulations as it deems appropriate and necessary at any time.

The following conduct may result in immediate discharge:

1. Disclosing or making available to unauthorized persons any confidential or proprietary information.
2. Rude, abusive, or obscene language or conduct on company property.
3. Fighting or disorderly conduct.
4. Harassing, interfering with, or refusing to cooperate with co-workers in the performance of their duties.
5. Tampering, altering, or falsifying time records, or recording time on another employee’s time card.
6. Acts of dishonesty or theft.
7. Damaging machinery or equipment, wasting materials, or defacing company property.
8. Insubordination or refusal to follow a supervisor’s instructions or to perform assigned work.
9. Failure to adhere to company policies regarding harassment, alcohol and drug abuse, smoking, and safety.
10. Actions that result in complaints from patients, suppliers, or manufacturers and that affect the company’s reputation or business.

The following conduct will result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination, depending on the seriousness of the offense under the facts and circumstances as determined by management:

1. Repeated absences or tardiness.
2. Failure to follow all work rules or procedures, including State and Federal regulations such as HIPAA and OSHA & safety regulations.
3. Failure to complete assigned work in a timely manner.
4. Wasting time, loafing, loitering.
5. Leaving the work area during working hours without permission.
6. Negligence or carelessness.
7. Unauthorized or improper use of property or machinery, including company telephones and computers.
8. Abuse of break or meal period privileges.
9. Refusal to accept assigned overtime.
10. Unsatisfactory work performance.
11. Interfering with other employee’s(s)’ ability(ies) to work effectively and efficiently.
12. Disrupting the work environment.

Depending on the nature of an offense, discussions will often be held between the supervisor and the employee in order to give the employee an opportunity to correct the situation before it becomes necessary for management to issue a written warning. These discussions will be documented and become part of the employee’s record.

A written warning notice becomes a permanent part of an employee’s record and will be taken into consideration when evaluating an employee’s performance for purposes of promotion, transfer, future disciplinary action, and continued employment.

**Employee Conduct Statement**

Our reputation for integrity in our dealings has been carefully built. We are recognized as much for our image as we are for the quality of our services. Your conduct outside the company reflects on our reputation to the same degree that your performance on the job does, and employment at Aspen Dental carries with it the responsibility of representing us favorably at all times.

We expect our employees to show concern and consideration for co-workers, patients, and for the community at large, and we encourage your participation in activities that bring credit to our organization.

Employees who engage in activities that are illegal will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate dismissal.

**Outside Employment**

Employees are discouraged from engaging in outside employment. However, if an employee is engaged in outside employment and it is determined that the outside employment is adversely affecting the employee’s work performance or that the outside employment is in competition with Aspen Dental, the employee shall be requested to discontinue the outside employment or forfeit employment with Aspen Dental.
Fraternization Policy

The purpose of this policy is to insure that Aspen Dental’s work environment is free of potential disruptive influences caused by personal relationships between management and employees, or between co-workers.

If you have a personal relationship with another Aspen Dental employee, that relationship must not interfere with your job performance. Employees must not allow personal relationships to result in preferential treatment or otherwise negatively affect their judgment or decision-making on the job.

Any behavior that would expose the company to claims of discrimination or harassment will result in disciplinary action. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Confidential Information

In the course of your work you may acquire information that is confidential. You are not to discuss this information with other employees or with anyone outside the company. Even casual conversation with other employees may be overheard and thereby violate our patients’ right to privacy. Be particularly careful about your conversation in dining areas and other public gathering places within the company. Do not give personal opinions to anyone regarding a patient’s condition or treatment. If you are questioned by anyone, you must say that you are not authorized to discuss the matter, and tactfully explain that someone in charge will be glad to talk with the person.

A breach of confidentiality is a violation of company policy and could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination, without prior warning.

Appearance

Staff members are expected to be well groomed, present themselves in a professional manner, and to wear neat, clean, and tasteful clothing that is safe for the type of work performed. Immoderate hairstyles or colors, tattoos and excessive piercing are unacceptable. Close contact with patients necessitates meticulous attention to personal and oral hygiene. Any request for a deviation in this Appearance or Uniform Policy must be submitted in writing. However, such requests are not likely to be approved if they cause any potential undue hardship to the business, or do not meet the Safety or the Uniform Policy requirements of the practice, or might infringe on other employees’ rights.

Women: It is preferred that hair be worn short or shoulder-length. If hair is longer, it is to be tied back in a neat manner so as not to interfere with the performance of duties.

Nails are to be manicured and their length should not interfere with the execution of duties.
Dental Assistants and Hygienists: For sanitary reasons, nails are to be short, and nail polish or fake nails are not permitted unless gloves are worn.

Makeup and perfume are to be kept to a minimum.

Men: Face to be shaved and/or mustaches, beards, and sideburns neatly trimmed. Hair is to be clean, well trimmed, and well groomed.

It is preferred that hair be worn short. If hair is longer, it is to be tied back in a neat manner so as not to interfere with the performance of duties.

Cologne is to be kept to a minimum.

Men and Women: Light jewelry is permitted; unusual or large jewelry is not.

Shoes should not be made of cloth, but of real or synthetic leather that can be scrubbed, sprayed, polished, and buffed. No open-toed sandals or shoes or sneakers are allowed at any time. Socks or stockings must be worn underneath shoes. Shoelaces should be clean and in good condition.

Shorts (regular or walking), halter-tops, low cut or off-the-shoulder shirts, cropped or half shirts that show visible skin, or the like are not permitted as proper attire at any time.

For certain positions, the company may approve exceptions to this policy.

Uniform Policy

We will provide, replace, and launder all uniforms that fall in the category of “personal protective equipment” as required by OSHA.

To protect employees from exposure to blood and/or other potentially infectious materials, Aspen Dental requires all lab coats to be long sleeved. Lab coat must be removed if leaving the premises for any reason and placed in the appropriate bin. If you are required to wear a lab coat, Aspen Dental will provide one, times the number of days worked in any average week, per year.

Appropriate shoes are to be purchased by the employee. Cloth shoes or sandals are not allowed in operatories and sterilization areas. For your protection and in accordance to OSHA regulations, you are required to wear real or synthetic leather only. (Please refer to OSHA regulations in the OSHA Guard Manual).
Property Removal

All materials and equipment issued to you for use in performing your job are considered the property of Aspen Dental. They are not to be removed from the premises without the written permission of your supervisor.

Removal of any property without permission is a violation of company policy and may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

Attendance and Punctuality

To ensure that our patients receive the proper treatment, it is important that you come in on time every day. In the event that illness or injury delays you or prevents your coming in, the call-in procedure described below must be followed:

In case of absence:

   It is your responsibility to notify your immediate supervisor personally each day before your starting time. If your supervisor is not available, leave a message in his/her voice mail. When leaving a message, please advise us of the reason for your absence and when you expect to return to work. Also leave a telephone number where you can be reached.

In case of tardiness:

   You must personally notify your supervisor before your scheduled starting time. If your supervisor is not available, leave a message in his/her voice mail. State the reason for your tardiness and your expected time of arrival.

Failure to call in personally to report an absence or tardiness is a violation of company rules, and the absence or tardiness will be considered unauthorized. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Calls from friends or relatives on your behalf will not be accepted as an authorized notice of absence or tardiness, except in emergency situations.

In the case of repeated absence or tardiness, you may be required to submit evidence verifying the reason for your absence or tardiness. Failure to provide the requested substantiation will result in discharge.

An absence of two (2) or more consecutive workdays without notifying the company will be considered a voluntary quit.
Leaving Premises

If you have to leave the premises for any reason during the regular work period, be sure to get permission and record your departure on the time clock system.

Solicitations or Distribution of Literature

We do not allow the distribution of brochures or literature by outside organizations or individuals in any areas of our building or on the surrounding grounds.

Employees may only distribute information during non-working hours in non-work areas.

These rules apply to all forms of solicitation and distribution and are established to protect the privacy of our employees and the productivity of our organization. Any questions regarding these rules should be referred to your supervisor. Violations of these rules may subject non-employees to arrest. Employees will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Responsibility for Other Procedural Standards

While this employee handbook describes the personnel policies and practices of Aspen Dental, employees are also responsible for adhering to the operational and procedural standards of their respective jobs and departments, whether these policies are communicated in writing or through on-the-job instruction. Failure to comply with or to meet existing standards will be considered reason for disciplinary action and may result in termination of employment.
COMPANY BENEFITS

Malpractice Insurance (Dentists/Hygienists Only)

All Dentists and Hygienists employed by Aspen Dental are immediately covered under Aspen’s Comprehensive Professional Liability program. The program is managed and paid for in full by Aspen Dental.

Workers’ Compensation

If you suffer a work-related injury or illness, you may be eligible for income replacement and for payment of medical costs incurred as a result. Aspen Dental pays the full premium for this coverage as part of our employee benefits program.

If a work-related injury or illness occurs, Aspen Dental will pay the employee for the day of the injury. The Workers’ Compensation Carrier may reimburse any additional time after the day of the injury.

While you are out on workers’ compensation, it is your responsibility to make arrangements with the Benefits Administrator to continue paying your share of the health insurance premium. You are also responsible for reporting your status to the Risk Manager every two (2) weeks.

While you are out on worker’s compensation, the company will maintain its portion of your health insurance coverage for a period of twelve (12) weeks if you qualify for FMLA. If you do not qualify for FMLA, the company will maintain its portion of your health insurance coverage for a period of six (6) weeks. At the end of that time, you will be given the opportunity to continue your health insurance coverage under the COBRA regulations.

Vacations

Aspen Dental recognizes that employees need periods of rest and relaxation, and grants vacation pay to eligible employees.

Full-time regular employees are eligible for vacation on January 1st. New hires will accrue vacation time based on their hire date (schedule attached). New employees must complete their 3-month orientation period before using vacation time.

All vacation time granted on January 1st must be used in the calendar year granted. Employees cannot receive payment for unused vacation time. Unused time also cannot be carried forward into a new calendar year.

If a designated holiday falls during your vacation period, you may take additional vacation equal to the number of hours you normally work in a day.
Request for vacation must be submitted to your supervisor 30 days in advance or the requested time off. It is the policy of Aspen Dental, that unpaid time off requests should be approved only when all paid time off benefits (personal/vacation time) have been exhausted. Unpaid time off is not guaranteed. In case of conflicting requests, your supervisor will exercise his/her discretion in scheduling vacations, taking into consideration the date of your request, the length of your employment, and any other factors he/she deems appropriate.

Unused vacation **will** be paid upon resignation of employment if 2-week notice is given and worked through (3 months notice is required for Doctors). Employees terminated from employment **will not** be paid unused vacation time.

**Please note that vacation time is pro-rated based on number of days / hours worked per week.**

**Personal Time/Sick Time**

Aspen Dental will also provide full-time regular employees up to three (3) personal days during a calendar year. On January 1st employees will be granted personal time off on the following scale:

- For each four (4) months actively employed in the previous calendar year the employee will receive one (1) personal day.

Personal days cannot be carried from one calendar year to the next and employees will not be paid for unused personal days.

Unused personal time will not be paid upon resignation or termination of employment.

**Holidays**

Aspen Dental observes the following holidays and is closed for business on these days:

- New Year’s Day
- Memorial Day
- July 4th
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

If a holiday falls on the weekend, the holiday may be observed on the day before or the day after the holiday, at the discretion of management. Aspen Dental may observe additional holidays. Management will provide a holiday schedule annually.

After three (3) months of continuous employment, all full-time hourly employees will be paid for designated holidays according to the following guidelines, salary employees will be paid for holidays the first of the month after date of hire:

1. Holiday pay shall be equivalent to the amount of base pay you normally would have earned on that day.

2. In order to be paid for a holiday, you must be at work on the scheduled workday before and the scheduled workday after the holiday.
3. Pay in lieu of holidays will not be granted.

**Bereavement Leave**

Aspen Dental provides employees up to three (3) days of paid bereavement leave to attend the funeral of a member of their immediate family. Immediate family is defined as a current spouse, mother, father, child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, or sister-in-law. (All in-laws would be in relation to current spouse.)

Employees should notify their supervisors and the Compensation Administrator as soon as possible of their need for a leave. Aspen Dental may require the employee to provide evidence of the need for bereavement leave.

**Jury Duty**

Absence for jury duty will be considered an excused absence. **South Carolina does not require employers to pay their employees for jury duty.**

The employee is required to report to work for the remainder of any day he/she is not required to serve.

Employees should notify their supervisors and the Compensation Administrator as soon as possible of their jury duty. Aspen Dental may require the employee to provide evidence of jury duty.

**Military Leave**

Employees who serve in the uniformed services of the United States will be given time off to fulfill the obligation and will retain all of their employment rights at Aspen Dental. They may use available vacation time during their absence, but are not required to do so.

You must notify your supervisor of the need for a military leave as soon as the need is known. Company benefits will continue during a military leave in the same manner that they are continued under the most generous leave of absence policy provided by Aspen Dental. At the time a leave is requested, you will be informed of your responsibilities for continuing company benefits during the leave.

In order to apply for re-employment, you must be discharged under other than disqualifying conditions as outlined in the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act, and submit a timely application. “Timely application” varies according to length of service and will be discussed with you at the time leave is requested.

The Compensation Administrator will be happy to answer any questions you may have about your rights and obligations during and following a military leave of absence.

**Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**
**State specific guidelines rule over this Federal policy. Please see the poster in your break room for State specific details.**

As required by the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, Aspen Dental will grant twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave per 12-month period to employees who have completed one (1) year of service and who have worked at least 1,250 hours in the last 12 months. Aspen Dental will use a 12-month period rolling backwards from the date leave begins as the FMLA year. Leave may be taken for the following reasons:

- The birth of a son or daughter.
- The placement of a son or daughter through adoption or foster care.
- To care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition.
- A serious health condition that renders an employee unable to perform his/her job.

**Military Family Leave Entitlements:**

Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active duty status in theNation Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings.

FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered servicemember during a single 12-month period. A covered servicemember is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard of Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the servicemember medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the servicemember is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list.

Because Aspen Dental has several locations that are widely dispersed, employees who work at some locations may not be eligible for leave. The only employees eligible for leave under this policy are those who work within a 75-mile area in which Aspen Dental has 50 employees.

Whenever possible, however, the company will attempt to provide leave to ineligible employees under the same conditions it provides leave for eligible employees. The company will take into consideration factors such as current business conditions, staffing levels, the difficulty of obtaining a temporary replacement, length of employment, and the performance record of the employee. If the company is unable to grant leave under the same conditions as FMLA leave, the employee will be informed of any limitations.

Employees must notify their supervisors and the Benefits Administrator of the need for leave as soon as the employee knows that leave time will be required. Whenever possible, at least 30 days’ notice is required if the leave is to be taken for the birth of a child, or for the placement of a child through adoption or foster care, or for foreseeable medical treatment. Aspen Dental will require certification of the need for leave. When leave is needed because of a serious health condition, the doctor who is
providing medical attention to the patient must furnish certification. The certification must include the following information:

- Date the condition commenced.
- Probable duration of the condition.
- Appropriate medical facts to support that the patient has a serious health condition.
- A statement that the employee is needed to provide care for a family member.
- An estimate of the time that the employee will be needed to provide care.

When appropriate, the following information is also required:

- A statement that the employee is unable to perform the functions of his/her job.
- An estimate of the duration of the condition that prevents the employee from working.

The company may require verification of the need for leave by requesting that the employee seek a second medical opinion. If the company requires a second medical opinion, the company will select a physician and pay for the cost of obtaining the second opinion. If the first and second medical opinions differ, Aspen Dental may require a third medical opinion. If a third opinion is necessary, Aspen Dental and the employee will jointly select a physician and Aspen Dental will pay the cost of obtaining the third opinion. Failure to obtain a second or third medical opinion when required would result in denial of the request for leave.

Leave will be granted on an intermittent or reduced-schedule basis if the nature of the medical condition and the scheduling of medical treatment require it (as might be required, for example, by chemotherapy or radiation treatment for cancer patients).

Leave to care for a new child must be completed within 12 months of the birth or placement of the child. If a husband and wife are both employed by Aspen Dental at the time of the birth or placement of a child, no more than a total of 12 weeks’ leave will be granted to the couple. This also holds true when the leave is required to care for an ill parent. If both husband and wife work at Aspen Dental, no more than a total of 12 weeks’ leave will be granted to the couple to care for ill parents.

While an employee is on leave, Aspen Dental will continue to pay its share of his/her health care premium. The employee must make arrangements with the Benefits Administrator to continue paying his/her share of the premium. Failure to pay his/her share of the premium could result in the loss of the employee’s health insurance benefits while on leave.

Vacation time earned or available for the following year will be pro-rated by the length of leave when more than four (4) weeks of leave is taken in any calendar/anniversary year.

Employees are required to use available vacation time while on leave to care for a new child or to care for a spouse, child or parent with a serious health condition. If leave is taken because of the employee’s own serious health condition for which he/she is receiving workers’ compensation, disability, or other income replacement benefits, vacation time cannot be used.

While on leave, employees are required to contact the Benefits Administrator at least once every two (2) weeks.
When leave is taken because of the employee’s illness, he/she must present a “release to work” from the attending physician in order to return to work.

Whenever possible, employees who return at the end of the approved leave will be reinstated to the position they held when the leave began. If the same position is not available, the employee will be reinstated to an equivalent position. The only exception to this policy of reinstatement may be made for salaried employees who are within the 10% most highly compensated employees of Aspen Dental.

Whenever there is a question of definition of a term used in this policy, the definitions used in the Act will apply.

**Leave of Absence**

Aspen Dental recognizes that under certain circumstances you may need time off from work beyond the period covered by sick pay, personal time off, or vacation. In such cases you may request a personal leave of absence in accordance with the following guidelines. Leaves of absence, not covered under FLMA, are granted at the sole discretion of management.

Whenever possible, a request for a leave of absence must be submitted to your supervisor in writing at least 30 days in advance. Your supervisor must approve the request before you will be placed on authorized leave.

Although leaves of absence are granted without pay, Aspen Dental will continue to pay its portion of your insurance premium for up to 30 days. You will be responsible for remitting your share of the medical insurance premium if you are participating in that program. Payment arrangements must be made with the Benefits Administrator at the time your request for leave is approved. At the end of the 30-day period, you will be given the opportunity to continue your medical insurance coverage under the COBRA regulations.

When you return from a leave of absence of more than four (4) weeks, the amount of your vacation will be pro-rated to reflect the period of absence.

Aspen Dental will make every effort to assign you to the same or similar position upon your return to work; however, we make no guarantee that a job will be available.
CONCLUSION

**Separation From Employment**

Should you decide to resign from Aspen Dental, we require at least two (2) weeks’ written notice, unless the employee has an employment contract, which supersedes this requirement.

Employees, who resign or are terminated, will receive their final paycheck on the next scheduled payday. Unused personal time will not be paid upon resignation or termination of employment. Unused vacation will be paid upon resignation of employment if a two-week notice is given and worked through (3 month notice for Doctors). Employees terminated from employment will not be paid unused vacation time.

All requests for references or verification of past employment should be directed to the Human Resources Department.

**Further Information**

Good communication is an important part of a company’s relationship with its employees. We encourage you to express your feelings and voice your ideas about our operations, and we will likewise keep you informed of developments and changes as they occur.

If you have a question that is not answered in this handbook, or if you would like further information, please speak with your immediate supervisor or with the District Manager. They will address your concerns or will direct you to someone who can.