



# Employee Manual

## OFFICE PHILOSOPHY

Our office has been dedicated to serving its patients with utmost QUALITY, CARE AND SINCERITY for over 20 years. We want our office to be at the forefront of our profession and a standout in the community. Every decision and every action by our employees should be aimed toward these goals.

We believe that our patients are very special. They have selected us over many others. We place great importance on remembering our patients' names and on treating them with COURTESY, FAIRNESS, RESPECT, AND COMPETENCE.

We believe that our employees are the heart of the practice. The skills and attitudes which they convey to our patients have a much greater impact than our office décor, our building, or our state of the art equipment.

We expect our staff to be punctual and at their work stations **at least ten minutes** prior to their starting time. We expect our staff to provide our patients with a level of care and concern above and beyond what they expect. Extending ourselves this extra-measure is what will set our practice apart from all the others. Every member of our staff shall strive to communicate concern and sensitivity in a pleasant and professional way, while functioning as a member of a team which exemplifies excellence.

We will not tolerate rudeness, neglect, or indifference by any member of our staff. The ability to remain composed under pressure is equally important as attaining technical expertise.

Since it is not possible to devise a set of policies to cover every action and situation expected to arise in the course of a practice, every employee must expect to assume the responsibility of exercising discretion and sound judgment in the performance of their duties in instances where no specific policies have been developed.

It is our desire to have only staff members who will work together with a sincere spirit of cooperation, team work, and mutual respect. We believe these are the key ingredients not only in the success of our practice but in promoting a pleasant, rewarding and stimulating work environment for our employees as well.

## OFFICE PEARLS

LITTLE THINGS CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE. Dozens of little details added together can produce a wonderful impression or a disappointing one. Let's make our office sparkle with those small extras that convey QUALITY!

- ❖ Give a friendly, professional, and enthusiastic greeting to everyone in person and on the phone.
- ❖ Prompt attention must be given to each patient who enters the office.
- ❖ Take pride in your appearance. Work attire should be clean and wrinkle free.
- ❖ Never conduct personal business in front of patients (cell phones, lunch, gossip, etc.)
- ❖ Never COMPLAIN in front of patients.
- ❖ Never ignore bits of trash on the carpet.
- ❖ No food or drinks should be visible to patients.
- ❖ Do not chew gum in front of patients.
- ❖ If you see a building maintenance need or unsightly conditions around the office that you cannot solve, please report these to the office manager immediately.
- ❖ All trash cans should be emptied daily.
- ❖ Don't try to explain things that you do not understand.
- ❖ Don't be satisfied with your present technical skills -- insist on learning more.
- ❖ Every item in the office should have a proper place and should be kept there.
- ❖ Express appreciation to each patient for their patronage.

## CARE OF THE OFFICE

All employees are required to care for the contents and the furnishing of the office as if it were their own. Much pride, time, and great expense has gone into the design and contents of our office to create a special environment for both patients and staff.

### THE FOLLOWING ARE A FEW EXAMPLES OF REQUIRED OFFICE CARE!

- ❖ EACH EMPLOYEE IS EXPECTED TO ORGANIZE AND MAINTAIN THEIR RESPECTIVE WORK AREA. This includes counter tops being cleaned and wiped down weekly.
- ❖ Office décor is not to be rearranged without approval of the Administrators.
- ❖ Trash collection is the daily responsibility of each employee.
- ❖ The reception room and optical rooms get special attention on a daily basis from all staff members.
- ❖ If a staff member walks by a small piece of paper on the floor, it is expected that the staff member will dispose of it.

## CARE OF OFFICE INSTRUMENTS

Our office contains the most sophisticated examination instrumentation, computers, and laboratory instrumentation available. These special tools allow us to examine eyes, run our office efficiently, and fabricate eyewear precisely. These instruments are very costly, very delicate, and they REQUIRE EXTRA-SPECIAL CARE.

All employees are required to care for and maintain all office instruments as if it were their own. ABUSE and/or NEGLECT of any office instrument will not be tolerated.

If any instrument fails to function properly, notify the Administrators at once. All instruments that have protective dust covers must be covered at the end of a patient day and uncovered at the beginning of the patient day.

All employees are urged to ask for assistance if they are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with operation and maintenance of an office instrument.

## HIRING POLICY

Tatum Eyecare is an EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY employer. We do not discriminate on the ground of race, color, religion, sex, marital status, age, handicap, or national origin in the hiring, retention, or promotion of employees, nor in determining their rank or the compensation of fringe benefits paid to them.

The first ninety days of your employment is considered a “PROBATIONARY PERIOD”. During this three month period, you will have the opportunity to determine whether you have selected an employment position that you like as well as feel comfortable with your co-workers and your employer. Conversely, your employer will have the opportunity to evaluate whether you are suited for your position and meet all requirements for permanent employment.

During this time, there is not any compensation for vacations. The employee will be eligible to take holiday pay after one month. No severance pay will be paid to any employee dismissed during or at the conclusion of the probationary period.

At the end of the three month probationary period, the employee’s performance will be reviewed and he or she may be hired as a regular employee or dismissed.

After the probationary period ends and by mutual agreement the employee is to stay employed with Tatum Eyecare, their anniversary date will be retroactive to the first day of their probationary period. At this point, the employee may also sign up for the office sponsored medical and dental plans.

**PROBATIONARY EMPLOYEMENT IS FOR THE MUTUAL BENEFIT OF AN EMPLOYEE AND AN EMPLOYER.**

## CONFIDENTIALITY

- A. All information gained during the course of employment regarding patients, office business, the doctors' personal and professional activities, and office strategies are considered privileged information and thus may not be revealed to anyone outside of the office staff. All staff members must adhere to strict standards of confidentiality.
- B. Salary information is an individual and personal matter. It is considered unprofessional to discuss salaries among staff members.
- C. Staff members should not discuss office business with friends, members of the media, government officials or others without the expressed permission of doctors.

### Patient and Business Records

- A. All patient and business records are confidential and are the property of Tatum Eyecare and or their doctors that performed services in our office. None shall be removed from the office without written permission from a doctor.
- B. Great care should be used in filing patient records to avoid misfiled charts.
- C. Every staff member should take efforts to safeguard all office records and documents, including returning them to their proper places after each use.
- D. A patient is entitled to a record of his or her own glasses prescription, insurance claim information, and financial account history. These may be given to a patient at any time, if requested. **However, if any entity requests a copy of a patient's record, that patient's chart must first be reviewed by any and all doctors that performed the exam(s) that are being requested.** In addition, no written description of a patient's ocular or medical records shall be given to anyone without either a signed patient records release form or the expressed permission of one of our doctors. In any case, the original copy of all patient records shall remain in our office. Never give copies or original office documents or patient information to friends, family members of the media, government officials or others without the expressed consent of the doctors.
- E. In case of termination, an employee must return all office documents and copies of documents in his or her possession to the office manager.
- F. Our office computers house protected patient information. We must limit the exposure of our data from threats arising from web browsing and personal emails. **Do not use work computers for these activities.** If you must look up something personal, do so on your personal cellphone during your break.

## EMPLOYEE WORK HOURS

At least one employee is expected to open the office at least 15 minutes before the arrival of the first patient. For example, if a patient is scheduled at 8 am, it is expected that there is at least one employee in the office at 7:45 am.

If your start time is 9:00 am, then you are expected to be at your desk / station prior to that start time, so that you are ready to begin work at your start time. It is our recommendation that all staff arrive to the office **at least** 10 minutes prior to their work time. If you arrive early, you may clock in up to 15 minutes before your assigned start time and begin working (we want to avoid running into overtime). With manager approval you may clock in earlier if needed.

An employee's shift ends at the time they are scheduled off or when patient care is over, whichever comes last. If patients are in the building and they need an employee's assistance, employees will stay until the patient leaves. If an employee is assigned to pre-testing and the doctors are finished, that employee will then assist the front office staff until their scheduled time off.

Our posted Office Hours (at this point) are:

Monday	9:00am-6:00pm
Tuesday	9:00am-6:00pm
Wednesday	9:00am-6:00pm
Thursday	9:00am-5:00pm
Friday	9:00am-5:00pm
Saturday	8:30am-1:00pm

Please be aware that these are publicly posted office hours. We currently have doctors that will come in prior to 9:00am to see patients before the office officially opens. The office is generally staffed by only a few people for these early morning exams.

## ABSENTEEISM

For any reason, if you are unable to come into work at your scheduled time, you must contact the office manager ASAP to let them know. With the exception of an emergency, this must be done prior to your scheduled time to work so that other staff members can come in to cover your absence.

It is extremely disruptive when staff call out the morning of work. This puts a huge stress on the rest of the staff. Because of this, any absence with less than 24 hours' notice will be treated differently than if we are given notice of an upcoming absence.

If a staff member is out of sick leave hours, the absence will then be recorded as an unscheduled absence. If a staff member produces documentation that an absence was unavoidable (doctor's note, accident report, mechanics bill) then the absence might not be recorded. If a staff member accrues more than two unscheduled absences in a month, a meeting will be scheduled with the manager or doctors. Continued unscheduled absences will result in disciplinary action. Possible actions include, but not limited to: ineligible for raises, loss of bonuses, or reduction of scheduled hours.

## SALARIES / WAGES

- A. Starting salaries or subsequent raises will be set by the doctors according to the individual abilities and responsibilities of the employee.
- B. Paychecks will be distributed bi-weekly by direct deposit. If other arrangements need to be made, please talk to the manager.
- C. State and federal regulations, Social Security, wage and hour regulations, and withholding tax provisions will be enforced.
- D. Pay raises will not be automatic with longevity of service, but will be awarded at the discretion of the doctors, on the basis of conscientious service and loyalty.
- E. Overtime work is not encouraged. On occasion a staff member may be asked to cover a shift for an absent staff member and that will push them into overtime. Any hours a staff member works over 40 hours for a week will be paid at time and a half.

## PTO (Personal/Paid Time Off)

### SICK LEAVE

Sick leave is given to full and part time employees and will accrue from the hire date (including probationary period) at the rate of 1 hour of sick leave per 30 hours worked. This has a yearly cap of 40 hours sick leave per anniversary year for full time staff. Up to 40 hours of unused sick leave are eligible to be carried over to next year with a max of 80 hours. Unused sick leave is not paid out at termination of employment.

### PAID VACATION

Paid vacation is a benefit given to full time employees (30 hours or more a week). Vacation time is accrued throughout the year and is based on tenure with Tatum Eyecare.

Date of hire to 2 years	1 week/year
2 years to 5 years	2 weeks/year
5+ years	3 weeks/year

Please note, vacation allotments run from anniversary date to anniversary date as opposed to calendar year. One week of vacation refers to the number of hours the staff member is typically scheduled for during a week. For example, if a staff member usually works 35 hours a week, a weeks' vacation would correspond to 35 hours of vacation pay (their normal weekly paycheck).

An employee may bank up to one additional week of vacation pay. At no point can they have more than one week over their normal yearly allotment. For example, a 4<sup>th</sup> year staff member (earning two weeks of vacation) does not use any vacation time during the year. On their anniversary date, they can carry forward one week of their unused vacation to the following year (the one they carry over plus the two they would earn would give them a total of three weeks that year – one more than their allotted two). The other week of unused vacation time will be paid out to the staff member.

Staff will be eligible for vacation pay after they have accrued the required hours and after their probationary period. Unused vacation pay is paid out at time of termination of employment.

## PTO REQUEST FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates Requesting Off: \_\_\_\_\_

If I have PTO time available I would like to:

Be paid for \_\_\_\_\_ # of hours, or

Take without pay

Approval Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Employees must request approval to use PTO from the manager as far in advance as possible. PTO will be approved in consideration of business operations. Failure to notify management when missing work constitutes an unexcused absence and may result in disciplinary action, even if you have PTO available and whether or not PTO is used to cover the absence.

## MATERNITY AND BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

Employees may take up to three unpaid weeks off for maternity leave. If an employee desires/requires more time off, they must get approval from the doctors.

Employees may take up to one unpaid week off for bereavement leave. Additional time requests need to be discussed with the doctors.

The employee may use PTO and sick leave during these periods.

## CIVIC RESPONSIBILITIES

### JURY DUTY

Jury Duty is defined as a service or time spent away from the job as a result of a subpoena issued by the court. During the time you serve on jury Duty the office will pay you an adjusted salary. This is equal to your normal pay less dollars paid by the court. Employees will be paid up to 2 days per year for subpoena jury duty. Employees are required to return to work for the remainder of the work day after the dismissal from jury duty services.

### VOTING

Employees wishing to vote on election days must do so before or after normal working hours or during their lunch break.

## PAID HOLIDAYS

The following are paid holidays for our full time (30 hours/week) employees.

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

New Hires are required to have 30 days of service to be eligible for holiday pay. Holidays are paid at regular hourly wage. The below schedule is subject to change and is used as a guide.

**EASTER WEEK.** Easter is not a paid holiday. Full time staff will work M-F. The office will be closed Saturday and Sunday. If a full time employee normally works on Saturday, they will work their normal day off that week and take Saturday off.

**MEMORIAL DAY WEEK.** Memorial Day is a paid day off and the office is closed. If a full time employee is normally off on Mondays, they will take another day off that week.

**FOURTH OF JULY WEEK.** Fourth of July is a paid day off and the office is closed. If a full time employee is normally off on the day that the Fourth of July falls on, they will take another day off that week. If the Fourth of July falls on a Sunday, the staff will have their normal schedule but will receive an extra day paid that week.

**LABOR DAY WEEK.** Labor Day is a paid day off and the office is closed. If a full time employee is normally off on Mondays, they will take another day off that week.

**THANKSGIVING WEEK.** Thanksgiving Day is a paid day off and the office is closed. Full time employees will work M-W. Friday and Saturday the office is typically closed.

**CHRISTMAS WEEK.** Christmas Day is a paid holiday and the office is closed. In addition, on Christmas Eve the office will be closed. If Christmas falls on a Monday, full time staff will work Tuesday through Saturday. Staff will receive an extra day paid that week. If Christmas falls on a Tuesday-Saturday, the office will be closed on Christmas Day and Christmas Eve. Full time employees will shift their schedule to work the days that we are open that week. If Christmas falls on a Sunday, full time employees will work Monday through Friday (closed Saturday for Christmas Eve). Staff will receive an extra day paid that week.

**NEW YEAR'S WEEK.** New Year's is a paid holiday and the office is closed. The last week of December is a busy time for the office. The office schedule will vary from year to year and be determined in December. Depending on where the holiday falls, the staff will work either 4 or 5 days that week. Regardless, they will receive one day of holiday pay.

## EMPLOYEE VISION CARE

Staff can get their eyes examined at no charge once a year. This will be on a work in basis as to not take away from scheduled patients. Inform the manager or a doctor that you are requesting one.

Employees are entitled to one free pair of glasses a year on their anniversary date. Eyewear selection must be approved by the management or doctors and is subject to price restrictions. If at any time a staff member would like to purchase glasses or contacts for themselves or for their immediate family, they may do so at cost. Extended family or friends will receive 40% off glasses. No discount on contacts for extended family or friends as the margins are too low. Please talk to an optician. We can generally secure better deals with frame manufacturers and labs when we purchase for staff.

## MEDICAL AND DENTAL INSURANCE

We offer our full time employees (30 hours or more) both medical and dental coverage. Tatum Eyecare covers a portion of your insurance premiums and will payroll deduct your portion. If you would like more information about what our current plan covers and the associated payroll deductions, please speak with a manager.

## TARDINESS

Patients are asked to show up early for their scheduled appointment times. We expect our staff to demonstrate the same courtesy when they show up for their shift. It is imperative to have the office open and staff in place when patients arrive. If a staff member is more than 5 minutes late, they will be marked as late for the day. If the staff member has a valid reason for being late (flat tire, car accident, pre-arranged appointment), they must let the manager know immediately (not when they arrive late to the office). In these instances, they will not be marked as late. If a staff member is marked late more than 5 times in a month, a meeting will be scheduled with the manager or doctors. Continued abuse will result in disciplinary action. Possible actions include, but not limited to: ineligible for raises, loss of bonuses, or reduction of scheduled hours.

## LUNCH POLICY

Work Schedules for staff normally include an unpaid 30-60 minute lunch. The duration depends on your work schedule and lunch requirements. Lunch time will be scheduled by the manager. We often see patients during lunch time so please coordinate with the manager. If an employee is working with a patient and it goes into their scheduled lunch time, let the manager know and they will try and extend the lunch period. Staff must finish up with patients before going to lunch. When going to lunch, staff must coordinate any patient care that is currently ongoing. As an example, if staff pretested a patient and the patient is sitting in the lobby and the staff member goes to lunch, they must inform the appropriate staff member about the status of that patient. We try and avoid it but occasionally we have to disrupt an employee's lunch to help a patient. In this case we will try and extend your lunch period.

Unfortunately we have outgrown our breakroom and sometimes space is at a premium. However, food may not be eaten at your desks or anywhere within view of patients.

The breakroom is in close proximity to the optical dispensary and exam rooms. Please be aware of food smells wafting through the office and keep conversations with coworkers at an appropriate volume. Patients can hear your conversations. Please make sure the conversations are suitable for the office.

## OFFICE DRESS CODE

We expect our employees' appearance to enhance the health care image of the office, Employees' attire shall be clean, neat, pressed, and consistent with the professional atmosphere.

As the trends change and mainstream culture adapts to new fashion trends and movement, we will also adapt in our policy, but we will lean toward a more conservative dress code. We understand that there is a large cultural gap as to what is acceptable between our younger and older patients. A clean-cut professional look will not offend any age group.

Employee attire is defined as business casual or medical scrubs. Both are allowed but traditionally, those at the front desk and in pre-testing gravitate toward scrubs and the opticians who are on the retail side lean towards business casual. Scrubs should be either gray or black in color.

Occasionally, the office might have a theme day such as costumes on Halloween or jerseys during football season. Participation during these days is optional. If any outfit is deemed not adequately professional, you may be asked to return home and change.

Personal jewelry must be worn in a more conservative fashion. This can be a very subjective area and what may seem conservative to one person may seem radical to others. Nose piercing jewelry is allowed but needs to be discrete in size and appearance. Lip, tongue and nasal septum jewelry are not allowed while at work. Ear gauges are not allowed.

Tattoos need to be covered by clothing at all times during work. An exception may be made for tattoos that are discrete and not offensive on a case by case scenario as this can be a very subjective matter.

Many staff have enjoyed expressing their individuality through hair color. Colors that are extremely bold or shocking could be construed as inappropriate. Please use discretion.

Employees must refrain from wearing overpowering cologne or perfume.

## CELLPHONES AND TEXTING

Personal cell phones are allowed to be with the employee and turned on in order for the employee to be available to be reached in case there is an emergency that needs their attention. **It is the employee's responsibility to let their friends and family know that they should only be called on their cell phone in emergency or special need situations.**

A patient should never see a staff member texting or talking on the phone. If you have to make/take a call, go to the break room. Please remember, their use is to be limited to urgent calls/texts while on the clock. They may be used freely outside of patient areas during breaks.

Texting on the cell phone is permitted to quickly communicate with a friend or family. More than 4 texts within 2 minutes is considered a conversation and should be restrained.

Surfing the internet and watching videos on your phone is not allowed while on the clock and especially in patient care areas.

Continued abuse of cell phone calls and texting will result in that staff member leaving their phone on the doctor's desk for the day.

## STAFF MEETINGS

Staff meetings will be scheduled regularly and all relevant staff members are required to attend. These meetings are often scheduled before or after regular work hours. If a staff member is truly unable to attend, they are required to log in remotely either through speaker phone or by other means. There will be no excused absences without prior consent of the manager. All staff members will be paid for their attendance.

## DAILY OPERATIONS

### PARKING

Our parking lot fills up quickly with patients during the day. When available, staff must utilize the street parking on Aire Libre. Please pull up as close as possible to the staff member in front of you to allow more staff to park here. Try to avoid parking directly in front of our neighbor's homes.

### BEGINNING THE DAY

Be ready to work at your scheduled start time. This does not mean arrive at your scheduled start time, clock in and then have a cup of coffee, eat your breakfast and catch up with other employees. Patients, staff and the doctors need you ready to work at your scheduled start time.

### CLOCKING IN/OUT

It is the staff's responsibility to clock in and out each day. Your pay starts when you log into your computer and clock in. If you forget, tell the manager immediately and they can adjust the time clock. Also, remember to clock in and out for lunch. If the manager must manually edit your time clock, they will take their best guess at to when you arrived and left. This could result in an employee getting shortchanged on their hours. To ensure this does not happen, clock in and out yourself!

### END OF DAY

When staff are scheduled to close, this means when the last patient leaves. This may be later than our posted office hours. Staff will be paid until they are finished with patient care.

## GRIEVANCES

Harmony among staff members is an important goal of our practice. If any staff member has a conflict with a fellow employee, the two should “take a break” away from patient view or earshot and try to resolve the problem in a positive way. If the resolution is not satisfactory to either of the two staff members, then a time should be scheduled to discuss with the manager. If the issue cannot be resolved at this point, a time will be scheduled with one of the doctors.

Any employee who voluntarily instigates unnecessary office controversy, disrupts office morale, or treats any office person with disrespect, will be looked upon as having caused sufficient reason for disciplinary action or dismissal.

If you have a grievance with another employee, do not share your grievances with other staff. This is not their problem and only fosters a negative work environment.

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Our policy is to employ a work force free from alcohol abuse or the use of illegal drugs. Any employee who violates this policy will be disciplined. This may include termination, even for the first offense.

We strive to provide a safe and healthy work environment, free from the use of illegal drugs and abuse of alcohol and set forth the following rules:

- A. Employees may not engage in illegal drug use on our premises.
- B. Employees may not report to work under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

If you are convicted under any federal or state criminal drug statute, you must notify us within five (5) days. This will be grounds for termination.

*Legal drugs include prescribed and over-the-counter drugs which have been legally obtained and used for the purpose for which they were intended. Illegal drugs include any drug which is not legally obtainable, which may be obtainable but has not been legally obtained or which is being used in a manner of for a purpose other than as prescribed.*

## EMPLOYEE TERMINATION

A difficult part of any business is the occasional reality of employee termination. When an employee is terminated for any cause, two weeks advance notice **may** be given by the employer and the same two weeks advance notice is expected by the employee.

*\*Note that this only applies after the ninety-day probationary period has been completed.*

No additional compensation will be granted to an employee until all keys, handout materials, office policy manual, etc. are returned to the employer. The doctors have the right to terminate an employee immediately with no severance or advance notice.

The following may be cause for immediate dismissal. This list is **NOT** to be construed as all inclusive:

- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness
- Poor personal hygiene
- Dishonesty
- Breach of confidentiality
- Breach of professional ethics
- Refusal to perform assigned duties
- Inability to perform assigned duties
- Poor work habits or efficiency
- Inability to work in harmony with co-workers
- Inability to work in harmony with patients
- Inability to work in harmony with your employer
- Lack of enthusiasm
- Lack of inventiveness
- Lack of office loyalty
- Disruption of office morale
- Stealing
- Sleeping on the clock
- Alcohol/Drug Use or abuse

## SIGNATURE OF COMPLETION

I have read and understand completely the office manual.

\_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Employee.

\_\_\_\_\_ Printed Name of Employee.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this page to Dr. Fuller or the manager.