Employee Handbook for

Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. (2012-SC)



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Dave and Cheryln McMeekin, Owners

Revised 2025



Employee:

Welcome to Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. ! We are the leader in the upstate for school photography.

I am glad you have accepted a position with our company. This handbook is designed to give guidance to you when questions arise. It is also a guide to many company policies.

While every effort was made to include as much information as possible in this handbook, it is possible that something may have been left out. Should you have an issue that is not addressed in this handbook please let me know as soon as possible so that I can address your issue.

Thanks again for accepting your position and I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Dave McMeekin

Absence Policy

Your timely attendance at work is crucial to making the business run smoothly. We must meet production requirements to satisfy our customer's demands. You need to do your part in achieving this goal, and one way is to maintain your part is a good attendance record. Any absence or tardiness becomes a part of your employment record.

Punctuality requirements. Employees are expected to be at their work assignments on time. Tardiness is defined as being at your assignment at least 10 minutes past your scheduled starting time. You should also notify the appropriate person when you know you may be late for work. Being on time makes it easier for all of us because tardiness hinders teamwork among employees. Being tardy for work or leaving the job assignment before quitting time will be considered cause for corrective action.

Counting absences. Here are the rules for how absences will be counted:

- An unscheduled absence for at least one-half the workday will be counted as one occurrence.
- An absence for one or more consecutive workdays will be considered one occurrence. For example, if you're out two consecutive days, that will count as one occurrence.
- If an employee returns from an absence (due to an illness) and goes out again due to the same illness after being at work for no more than one day, then the absence will be counted as one occurrence.

Repeated occurrences will result in verbal counseling, written counseling, and/or suspension or termination of employment.

Procedure. In the event that you are unable to come to work, be sure to call in and let the appropriate person know, in advance where possible, but no later than your regular starting time, so that arrangements for other help can be made.

Vacation days must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance except in cases of emergency.

Employees may be granted excused absences for sickness/illness when the appropriate person is notified prior to the start of work. Pre-scheduled medical/professional appointments (lawyers, clergy, counselors, etc.) or other compelling reasons, with prior supervisory approval, may also be considered as excused absences.

Absence of three or more consecutive scheduled working days without notifying the appropriate person will be considered as a voluntary termination, and you will be removed from the payroll.

Authorized absence documentation. We may require documentation of authorized reasons for absence, such as sick leave or jury duty, and may also verify the documentation where appropriate.

Inclement weather. During inclement weather, you should call to find out whether to report to work. Also, while the weather may be nice where you are, hazardous weather conditions could exist at or near the workplace. If you know hazardous conditions have been reported in the area, protect yourself and call work first. Management will determine final decision.

Failure to notify. If you don't come to work and don't call in, at some point we have the right to determine that you're not coming back. Thus, our rule is that unauthorized absences of three or more consecutive days without notice will be considered as a voluntary termination, and we will remove you from the payroll.

As an employee, you will be treated as a professional, which means that you will be expected to complete your work on time and at the expected level of quality.

Absences. Employees are expected to be at work and to work a full workweek, except for authorized absences. Consideration for an absence includes the following and addressed further within this manual.

Vacation time scheduled in advance

Sick leave

Time off for a workers' compensation injury

A death in your family

Jury duty

Time off to vote

Military leave

Emergency situations beyond your control

Notification procedure. To obtain an authorized absence, call in, where possible, and let the appropriate person know that you are unable to come to work. The call should be made, if possible, no later than your regular starting time.

As for notifying someone that you will be late to work or will be leaving early in the event your work has been completed, we ask that you use your best judgment. If you know someone is likely to need to know that you will be coming in late or leaving early, you should call that person and let him or her know.

Dress Code for **Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc.**

It is policy of Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. that all photographers shall represent Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. in a professional well groomed manner. Wearing the appropriate clothing at all times.

Shirts should be neat and for men and appropriately arranged and neat on women at all times.

Beards and mustaches should be neat and trimmed, not looking rough on the edges of the face or growing into the mouth.

Hair should be combed and neat at all times.

Comfortable shoes should be worn for standing and looking professional. NO flip flops, blue jeans or tennis shoes are allowed to be worn on school campuses. Toes should be well maintained if wearing sandals.

Personal hygiene is a necessity in t his business- Clean, well groomed hair and clothing is a must. These are paramount in representing this company professionally.

Studio or office work is the only exception to some these policies. Judgement should be used when dressing for the day at the office. Various duties will arise that require different type of dress.

Office personnel shall adhere to the same dress code as photographers.

When required to wear a long sleeve shirt for sales calls, a neck tie should accompany the shirt and a blazer is highly recommended.

Violation of these requirements will result in disciplinary action.

Nondiscrimination / Anti Harassment

An image by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. is committed to a work environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work in a professional atmosphere that promotes equal employment opportunities and prohibits unlawful discriminatory practices, including harassment. Therefore, Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. expects that all relationships among persons in the office will be business-like and free of bias, prejudice and harassment.

An image by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. has developed this policy to ensure that all its employees can work in an environment free from unlawful harassment, discrimination and retaliation. Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. will make every reasonable effort to ensure that all concerned are familiar with these policies and are aware that any complaint in violation of such policies will be investigated and resolved appropriately.

Any employee who has questions or concerns about these policies should talk to the owner of Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc.

These policies should not, and may 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 social activities or discussions. In other words, no one should make the mistake of engaging in discrimination or exclusion to avoid allegations of harassment. The law and the policies of Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. prohibit disparate treatment on the basis of sex or any other protected characteristic, with regard to terms, conditions, privileges and perquisites of employment. The prohibitions against harassment, discrimination and retaliation are intended to complement and further those policies, not to form the basis of an exception to them.

Equal employment opportunity

It is the policy of Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. to ensure equal employment opportunity without discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, marital status, citizenship, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law. An image by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. prohibits any such discrimination or harassment. Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. reserves to hire persons based on experience in the field or potential in the field.

Retaliation

Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination or harassment. It is the policy of Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. to promptly and thoroughly investigate such reports. Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports discrimination or harassment or participates in an investigation of such reports.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment constitutes discrimination and is illegal under federal, state and local laws. For the purposes of this policy, “sexual harassment” is defined, as in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines, as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when, for example: a) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment, b) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or c) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 recognizes two types of sexual harassment: a) quid pro quo and b) hostile work environment. Sexual harassment may include a range of subtle and not-so-subtle behaviors and may involve individuals of the same or different gender. Depending on the circumstances, these behaviors may include unwanted sexual advances or requests for sexual favors; sexual jokes and innuendo; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; commentary about an individual’s body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiencies; leering, whistling or touching; insulting or obscene comments or gestures; display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures; and other physical, verbal or visual conduct of a sexual nature.

Harassment

Harassment on the basis of any other protected characteristic is also strictly prohibited. Under this policy, harassment is verbal, written or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his or her race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age,

disability, marital status, citizenship, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by law, or that of his or her relatives, friends or associates, and that: a) has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment, b) has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, or c) otherwise adversely affects an individual's employment opportunities.

Harassing conduct includes epithets, slurs or negative stereotyping; threatening, intimidating or hostile acts; denigrating jokes; and written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group that is placed on walls or elsewhere on the employer's premises or circulated in the workplace, on company time or using company equipment by e-mail, phone (including voice messages), text messages, social networking sites or other means.

Individuals and Conduct Covered

These policies apply to all applicants and employees, whether related to conduct engaged in by fellow employees or by someone not directly connected Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. (e.g., an outside vendor, consultant or customer).

Conduct prohibited by these policies is unacceptable in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as during business trips, business meetings and business-related social events.

Reporting an Incident of Harassment, Discrimination or Retaliation

Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. encourages reporting of all perceived incidents of discrimination, harassment or retaliation, regardless of the offender's identity or position. Individuals who believe that they have been the victim of such conduct should discuss their concerns with their immediate supervisor, any member of the personnel practices committee, human resources or any ombudsman. See the complaint procedure described below.

In addition, Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. encourages individuals who believe they are being subjected to such conduct to promptly advise the offender that his or her behavior is unwelcome and to request that it be discontinued. Often this action alone will resolve the problem. An image by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. recognizes, however, that an individual may prefer to pursue the matter through complaint procedures.

Complaint Procedure

Individuals who believe they have been the victims of conduct prohibited by this policy or believe they have witnessed such conduct should discuss their concerns with their immediate supervisor, human resources, any member of the personnel practices committee or any ombudsman.

An image by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. encourages the prompt reporting of complaints or concerns so that rapid and constructive action can be taken before relationships become irreparably strained. Therefore, while no fixed reporting period has been established, early reporting and intervention have proven to be the most effective method of resolving actual or perceived incidents of harassment.

Any reported allegations of harassment, discrimination or retaliation will be investigated promptly. The investigation may include individual interviews with the parties involved and, where necessary, with individuals who may have observed the alleged conduct or may have other relevant knowledge.

Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the investigatory process to the extent consistent with adequate investigation and appropriate corrective action.

Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or discrimination or for participating in an investigation of a claim of harassment or discrimination is a serious violation of this policy and, like harassment or discrimination itself, will be subject to disciplinary action. Acts of retaliation should be reported immediately and will be promptly investigated and addressed.

Misconduct constituting harassment, discrimination or retaliation will be dealt with appropriately. Responsive action may include, for example, training, referral to counseling or disciplinary action such as a warning, reprimand, withholding of a promotion or pay increase, reassignment, temporary suspension without pay, or termination, as Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. believes appropriate under the circumstances.

If a party to a complaint does not agree with its resolution, that party may appeal to Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc.’s executive director or the chief operating officer.

False and malicious complaints of harassment, discrimination or retaliation (as opposed to complaints that, even if erroneous, are made in good faith) may be the subject of

appropriate disciplinary action.

Holiday/Vacation Policy

Annual Holidays

Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. observes the following holidays: (9) days

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- Easter Monday or Good Friday (depending on schedule)

Paid Holidays

All full-time employees who are not considered seasonal employees will receive holiday pay as long the following requirements are met.

1. Work a full shift on the employee's last scheduled work shift prior to the paid holiday.
2. Work a full shift on the employee's first scheduled work shift following the holiday.
3. Should the employee be unable to work either of these two days because of illness, proof of illness will be required in order to qualify for the paid holiday.

Holiday pay will not be paid if:

1. The employee has been on the payroll for less than 120 days.
2. The employee is on lay-off status.
3. The employee is a temporary or seasonal employee.
4. The employee is on leave of absence when the holiday occurs.
5. The employee is requested to work during a paid holiday and the employee refuse to do so.

Employees who are requested to work during a paid holiday will receive holiday pay plus regular pay.

Paid Holidays during Vacations and Weekends

If a holiday occurs during the employee's vacation, and due to the nature of this business holidays will most always be during vacation periods and office closures. The holiday pay will be indicated as such during the agreed closure times. Office closures are determined by the

Management of Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. and their decision is final.

If any scheduled paid holiday falls on a Saturday, the holiday will usually be observed on the preceding Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday will usually be observed as the holiday.

Overtime

Holidays are not considered a day worked for purposes of calculating overtime unless work is actually performed.

Religious Holidays

Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. recognizes that there may be religious holidays (other than those already designated at holidays) that employees would like to observe. It may be possible to arrange these holidays as scheduled days off, authorized absences without pay or personal time off. Requests for time off to observe religious holidays must be approved by management.

Vacation Time

Vacation time at Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. is determined by the set closure of the business during the Christmas, Spring Break, Fourth of July and Thanksgiving school break. All Full Time non seasonal employees will get the same closure times.

Days off may be taken in increments of one full day but in all cases must be prescheduled and preapproved. An image by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. does not provide paid vacation time for part-time or seasonal employees.

Vacation Pay

Vacation pay is the employee's regular rate of pay, or average work week hours, excluding overtime or holiday premiums. If the employee's regular rate of pay varies from week to week, the employee's vacation pay will equal the employee's average weekly hours or scheduled hours in the previous calendar quarter not to exceed 40 hours.

Pay will not be granted in lieu of vacation time not taken.

Scheduling Vacations or Days Off

Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. will attempt to grant all employees vacation at the time they desire to take it. However, Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. must maintain adequate staffing at all times. Therefore, vacations must be scheduled in advance and with prior written approval. Where conflicts develop, they will be resolved as fairly as possible. Preference will be given to the more senior employee, the employee who can demonstrate the greater need for vacation at the conflicting time or the employee who makes the earliest request. Vacation days may not be taken in lieu of shutdown required vacation time. Additional days /time off -will be unpaid time off. Paid time off is during our shutdown periods.

When possible- Summer Fridays will allow photographers to be scheduled as a day off with pay. This is not a guarantee and may be revoked at anytime. These days off will be considered a benefit of employment.

Business Shutdown

It is Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. practice to have an annual shutdown of our business in coordination with the GCSD school calendar during the month of December/ January , Spring Break July 4th and Thanksgiving. All employees will take their normal paid vacations at this time. This averages to be a total of 27 annual paid days off- not counting the holiday days or paid Friday days off in the summer months. This is considered an employee benefit of employment.

Termination Pay

When employment ends for any reason, planned closures by Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. will not be paid time to the employee. At the same time, vacation time taken in advance will be deducted from the final paycheck.

All commissions from schools that are due an employee is deemed terminated with the departure of the employee from Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc.

Vacation Accrual for New Employees

Vacations are determined by the status of employment Seasonal or Full Time.

Funeral Leave Policy

Salaried Employees

The purpose of funeral leave is to provide you with time to attend the funeral of a member of your family and to handle personal affairs without disrupting your income. Only permanent full-time employees are eligible for funeral leave benefits, and the benefits become effective after you complete your training and as long as you are not considered a seasonal employee.

Time allowed: You may be granted up to a three-day leave (three consecutive working days) with pay in the event of the death of an immediate family member. Pay will be determined by employee status.

Definition of immediate family member: The term immediate family member is defined as:

- Brother
- Child
- Father
- Father-in-law
- Husband
- Mother
- Mother-in-law
- Sister
- Stepbrother
- Stepchild

- Stepfather
- Stepmother
- Stepsister
- Wife

Funeral pay: Your funeral leave pay will be figured at your regular rate of pay.

Leave without pay: If you are not eligible for funeral leave with pay, you may be given time off without pay in case of a death in the family. Time off without pay may be arranged to attend the funeral of a close friend. Each day off will be counted as an absence without pay. Funeral pay will not be paid or accrued during a period of leave of absence.

Forfeiture: You forfeit your rights to funeral leave benefits if you terminate employment before returning to your assigned position to work at least one workday after you have used funeral leave benefits.

When you are granted funeral leave benefits, it is mandatory that you attend the funeral of the relative for whom such funeral leave was requested. We reserve the right to ask you to supply the name and relationship of the deceased and the name of the funeral home that handled the arrangements.

Sick Leave Policy

Pay for Illness

Sick day pay is determined on a case by case basis. The operation of this business is determent on being at the scheduled event. There is no back up procedure because of the business we are providing. The events take priority and all sick days must be discussed with management.

Certification of illness. Certification of illness by a physician will not normally be required to qualify for payment under this program.

Effect on performance. While the company pays you for authorized sick days, we expect you to be honest with us in taking days off only when you are actually ill. Any abuse of this benefit will be taken into account in evaluations of your performance. The company reserves the right to require a statement from your doctor.

At termination. When termination of employment occurs, no payment for sick leave will be made or prorated.

Sick Leave Days

Starting with the first day of employment, and after any probation period, sick leave will be allotted as (1) day per every 3 months. Sick leave does not accumulate, and can not be paid upon termination. Sick days expire on an annual rotating schedule. When the annual sick days are used, the accounting of days starts over.

Personal Leave Policy

A personal leave of absence without pay may be granted an employee at the discretion of the company. A personal leave of absence is defined as an absence of two weeks or longer. It is not our general policy to grant personal leaves of absence and such leaves will be granted only under unusual circumstances. A personal leave of absence is not available instead of medical leave.

Granting of such a leave depends on the review of the merits of each case, including the effect the employee's absence will have on the workload of the other employees. Probationary employees are not generally eligible for leaves of absence. An employee must have one year of continuous employment before such a leave will be considered.

Applications for leaves of absence may be granted or rejected as dictated by the judgment of Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc.

Salary and benefits are not payable to an employee while the employee is on a personal leave of absence. Should a leave of absence fall during the payment of commissions, the employee school commission due to employees will be paid after the return of the employee to full time work status.

Any employee insurance or supplemental insurance policy premiums that fall due with payroll deductions shall be paid by the employee to maintain the policy effectiveness and avoid lapse of coverage.

The employee's exact position, or work area may not be guaranteed upon return from a personal leave of absence; however, all efforts will be made to place the employee in the first available similar job with similar pay. The employee's date of initial employment will be adjusted to reflect the time spent on personal leave.

It is the employee's responsibility to return to work on the date the leave of absence expires. Should the employee fail to return and fail to notify Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. of a request for an extension, we will assume that the employee does not intend to rejoin the company and will consider the employee to have resigned from employment. A request for extension of a leave of absence must be in writing and must be received at least five working days prior to the expiration of a leave.

Jury Duty Policy

Time off taken for jury duty is treated as a paid absence. Employees are paid for the time they are absent for jury duty, less the amount they receive for performing jury duty service.

Advance Notice

Employees must give advance notice of the need for time off for jury duty. A copy of the summons should accompany the request.

Return to Work

If employees are dismissed from jury duty before the end of the workday, they must report to work for instructions on whether to return for work for the rest of the workday.

Military Leave Policy

It is the policy of Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. to permit employees to take military leaves of absence.

Military Activities

Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. will grant the employee's request for military leave of absence for 31 days per year to be used for military training, reserve duty, drills, maneuvers, etc. In addition, if the employee should be called to active duty, the employee may take active duty leave for up to 365 days. Military leave is only granted by Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. 's to permanent non seasonal employees.

Employment Rights

The employee's employment rights will be preserved while the employee is on military leave. Pay increases, vacations, and other benefits that would have accrued had the employee not been on military leave of absence will be given to the employee upon returning to Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. after the military leave is over.

Reinstatement

Unless circumstances at Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. change so drastically while the employee is on annual or active duty military leave that reinstatement is impossible or impractical, when the employee returns to Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. after military leave, the employee will either be reinstated to the position the employee held before taking military leave or be given a similar position with the same seniority, status, and pay, if in either case the following conditions are met:

1. Proof of honorable discharge from duty.
2. Proof of ability to resume the position.
3. Notice of intention to return is given.

If the employee is unable to return to the same position after annual or active duty military leave, Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. will arrange for another position at the same seniority, status and pay.

Notice of intention to return to work must reach Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. within 30 days of the employee's discharge from military duty.

Annual Vacation Leave

Annual military leave of absence is in addition to any annual vacation leave the employee is entitled to. Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. will not make deductions from annual vacation leave for time spent on annual military leave.

Nondiscrimination

An image by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. makes it a policy not to discriminate in any way against employees who are members of the military. The employee's job will not be in jeopardy if a military leave of absence is requested or taken. In addition, the employee will not be discharged by Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. for one year after returning from military leave without just cause.

Pregnancy/Maternity Leave Policy

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

Maximum Length of Leave

The maximum length of pregnancy leave allowed is 8 weeks. If the employee needs a longer leave due to medical complications, the employee should notify Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. as soon as possible. The additional leave will be treated the same as any other medical or disability leave.

Written Requests

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

Medical Incapacity

At her option, the employee may continue to work up to the delivery date, depending upon the employee's medical circumstances and the nature of the employee's job. In the event the employee is physically incapable of performing her regular job duties at any time during her pregnancy, the employee may request that the employee be placed on pregnancy leave. An advance notice of a minimum of one (1) week should be given, accompanied by a statement from the employee's physician attesting to the employee's incapacitation.

Benefits

While an employee is away from work on an approved pregnancy leave of absence, she continues to participate in Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. company employee benefit programs. Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. will endeavor to return the employee to the same or equal job she had before taking pregnancy leave. Although Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. does not guarantee a return to the identical job, the employee will suffer no loss in seniority.

Time Off to Vote

The following policy contains clauses that you will need to address in your policy. Edit these clauses below to reflect the requirements of your state's laws regarding time off to vote.

It is the policy of Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. to give employees time off to vote.

Paid Absence

Time off to vote will be treated as a paid absence, and varies depending on job status.

Voting Hours

The employee is allowed 1 hours of time off to vote. Time off to vote is granted if the polls open fewer than 1 hour prior to work starting time or close fewer than 1 hour after quitting time. Time off to vote may be taken before coming in to work or at the end of the workday.

Covered Elections

This time off to vote policy applies to state and national elections.

Vacation Black Out Period

During the busy seasonal duration of the School Photography business, vacation time will not be granted to employees. Each employee is a valued employee and is needed for the full operation of the company during the season of school portraits.

Progressive Discipline Policy

Purpose. To establish rules pertaining to employee conduct, performance, and responsibilities so that all personnel can conduct themselves according to certain rules of good behavior and good conduct.

The purpose of these rules is not to restrict the rights of anyone, but rather to help people work together harmoniously according to the standards we have established for efficient and courteous service for our customers.

Reasonable rules concerning personal conduct of employees are necessary if the facility is to function safely and effectively. You will be kept informed of department rules and changes to those rules by your supervisor or department head.

The company believes that you want to, and will, do a good job if you know what is required to perform your job properly. Your supervisor is responsible for ensuring that you know what is expected of you in your job. Further, it is company policy that employees be given ample opportunity to improve in their job performance.

Policy. Degrees of discipline are generally progressive and are used to ensure that the employee has the opportunity to correct his or her performance. There is no set standard of how many oral warnings must be given prior to a written warning or how many written warnings must precede termination. Factors to be considered are:

- how many different offenses are involved
- the seriousness of the offense
- the time interval and employee response to prior disciplinary action(s)
- previous work history of the employee

Exceptions. For serious offenses, such as fighting, theft, insubordination, threats of violence, the sale or possession of drugs or abuse of alcohol on company property, etc., termination may be the first and only disciplinary step taken. Any step or steps of the disciplinary process may be skipped at the discretion of Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. after investigation and analysis of the total situation, past practice, and circumstances.

In general, several oral warnings should, at the next infraction, be followed by a written warning, followed at the next infraction by discharge. This is especially true in those cases where the time interval between offenses is short and the employee demonstrates a poor desire to improve his/her performance.

Penalties for Specific Offenses

Penalties for group 1:

- First offense: Oral or written reprimand
- Second offense: Suspension or termination

Penalties for group 2:

- First offense: Suspension or termination

Group 1: Offenses include:

- knowingly filling out time sheet of another employee
- having one's sheet filled out by another employee, or unauthorized altering of a time sheet
- being tardy habitually without reasonable cause
- being absent without notification or excuse
- leaving your job or your regular working place during working hours for any reason without authorization from your supervisor, except for lunch, rest periods and going to the restrooms
- disorderly conduct on company property
- immoral conduct or indecency on company property
- leaving work before end of shift or not being ready to go to work at the start of shift
- interfering with the work of other employees
- inefficiency or lack of application of effort on the job
- violations of company policies outlined in sections of this policy manual
- contributing to unsanitary conditions or poor housekeeping
- imperiling the safety of other employees
- malicious gossip and/or the spreading of rumors

Group 2: Offenses include:

- gambling on company property
- possession of narcotics, or consuming narcotics on company property
- reporting for work in an intoxicated condition
- responsibility for instigating fighting on company property
- dishonesty or removal of another employee's property or company property without permission
- willful destruction of company property

- insubordination (Refusal to perform service connected with an employee's immediate supervisor or refusal to obey any reasonable order given by an employee's supervisor or by management)
- misrepresentation of physical condition or other important facts in seeking employment
- refusal to perform work assigned to an employee
- absence for two consecutive working days without notification to the company or without acceptable excuse
- any type of thievery to persons or company
- possession of firearms, fireworks or explosives on company property without permission from management

Probation.—You may be placed on probation in connection with the written warning for a period of time determined by Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. Wage increases, vacations and transfers will not be given during this period, but all other benefits will continue.

Investigative suspension. — An investigative suspension is a period, not to exceed three (3) working days, during which time an employee is relieved of his or her job because of alleged serious misconduct.

An employee may be placed on investigative suspension when it is necessary to make a full investigation to determine the facts of the case, as in a fighting, insubordination or theft incident or allegations from a client (school).

If after the investigation:

- discharge is warranted, the employee shall not be paid for the period of investigative suspension—the discharge shall be effective on the date of the termination interview.
- misconduct is determined, but not of a sufficiently serious nature to warrant discharge, the employee shall receive a warning notice and forfeit pay lost as a result of the investigative suspension and may be placed on disciplinary suspension
- if no misconduct is determined, the employee shall return to work within the prescribed period and be paid for the time lost as a result of the investigative suspension

Disciplinary Suspension

A disciplinary suspension is a period of not more than three (3) days and may be given in addition to the investigatory suspension or as punishment for the violation. The employee is relieved of his or her job assignment because of serious or repeated instances of misconduct and shall forfeit pay lost as a result of the suspension in situations where there is no specific instance of conduct that is so outrageous that justifies termination but there is a pattern of conduct where the employee has continually engaged in one minor infraction of the rules after another and has received a documented verbal and/or written warning for rule(s) infraction(s). Disciplinary suspension would generally not be used as a form of discipline for employees with attendance problems.

Crisis suspension

A crisis suspension is given at the discretion of the supervisor when action must be taken immediately.

Discharge

When the employee is discharged as a result of a serious offense, or as the final step in an accumulation of infractions for which a warning notice or notices have been written, the employee will be discharged for cause instead of being given the option to resign, be laid off, or retire

At Will Disclaimer for all positions

Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. is a corporation duly incorporated under the laws of the State of South Carolina and operates as an *at-will* employer. Accordingly, the employment relationship between Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. and its employees is strictly **at will**. Nothing contained in this handbook, whether expressed or implied, shall be construed to create a contract of employment or a guarantee of continued employment for any specific duration.

Supplemental Insurance:

Should you participate in any payroll deducted insurance such as AFLAC, and you are terminated or on a leave of absence, the premium of the policy becomes your responsibility. No payment will be made on your behalf by the company when either happens.

Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. Progressive Discipline Plan

Misconduct

Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. has a progressive discipline policy. The goal of Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. 's progressive discipline system is to give the employee an opportunity to correct employment problems that may arise, rather than to punish employees.

The employee will be kept informed of Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. 's rules and the employee is expected to follow them.

Immediate Disciplinary Action

Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. believes that engaging in certain types of misconduct should subject an employee to immediate suspension or discharge, rather than allowing opportunity for correction of behavior through progressive discipline steps. The following is a list of conduct for which immediate disciplinary action will be taken: [list of offenses that will be exempt from progressive steps (e.g., violent behavior)].

Disciplinary Steps

Should there be a problem regarding the employee's adherence to Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc.'s rules, the employee will be given three opportunities to change the unwanted behavior:

1. The employee will be given a verbal explanation of the errant behavior, including a reiteration of what Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. 's rule regarding that behavior is. In addition, the employee will be advised of the consequences of further infractions of the rule in question. If no further problems occur with regard to the issue raised at the verbal warning stage, no further disciplinary action will be taken.

2. If the problem persists, the employee will be given a written explanation of the errant behavior, including a reiteration of what Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. 's rule regarding that behavior is. In addition, the employee will be advised that continuation of the problem will lead to suspension without pay for a stated period of time. As before, the employee will be given an opportunity to change the unwanted behavior and, if the behavior does not recur, no further disciplinary action will be taken.

3. If verbal and written warnings fail to bring about a change in the undesired conduct, the employee will be suspended and will be informed that further occurrences of the conduct will lead to the employee's immediate discharge, without additional warnings.

Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. reserves the right to bypass the disciplinary steps and base its disciplinary action on the severity, frequency or combination of infractions when circumstances warrant immediate action.

Documentation

Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. will document a disciplinary process beginning with the first verbal warning. A report of the disciplinary action will be retained in the employee's personnel file, however, if no further disciplinary action is required after 3 years, the report will remain as part of the employee's personnel file but will no longer be considered a part of the employee's record.

Should a challenge arise regarding the disciplinary action in the report, the report may be used in the ensuing grievance proceeding or arbitration.

Simple IRA participation:

An employee is eligible for participation in the employee match simple IRA program if they are a non seasonal full time employee and have worked toward earning of at least $5,000.00. You may contribute to the program any amount you like of your pay. It is matched up to 3% of your pay by the company. This is done through payroll deductions only. You must participate in order to get the company match payment.

Pandemic Protocol:

In the event that schools are affected by a pandemic. Our protocol is to follow the district policy for the school it is in with the interaction we have with the students. We will adjust our schedules as needed and as a company will be on vigilant watch for ways that we can improve and assist the school with such incidents, while still providing photographic services to the schools.

General Work Rules

Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc. wants to encourage a safe and pleasant work atmosphere. This can only happen when everyone cooperates and commits to appropriate standards of behavior.

The following is a list of behaviors that the company considers unacceptable. Any employee found engaging in these behaviors will be subject to disciplinary actions including reprimand, warning, layoff, or dismissal from duties.

1. Failure to be at the work place, ready to work, at the regular starting time.
2. Willfully damaging, destroying, or stealing property belonging to fellow employees or the company.
3. Fighting or engaging in horseplay or disorderly conduct.
4. Refusing or failing to carry out any instructions of a supervisor.
5. Leaving your work station (except for reasonable personal needs) without permission from your supervisor.
6. Ignoring work duties during working hours.
7. Coming to work under the influence of alcohol or any drug, or bringing alcoholic beverages or drugs onto company property or on school grounds.
8. Intentionally giving any false or misleading information to obtain employment or a leave of absence.
9. Using threatening or abusive language toward a fellow employee.
10. Willfully or habitually violating safety or health regulations.
11. Failing to wear clothing conforming to standards set by the company.
12. Being tardy or taking unexcused absences from work.
13. Not taking proper care of, neglecting, or abusing company equipment and tools.
14. Using company equipment in an unauthorized manner or for personal benefit.
15. Negligently possessing firearms or weapons of any kind on company property or school grounds.

Verbal Warning Form **Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc.**

Employee's name:

Date of verbal warning:

Specific offense or rule violation:

Specific statement of the expected performance:

Any explanation given by the employee or other significant information:

_____
Supervisor

_____
Date

Written Warning Form Images by Piedmont Portraits, Inc.

Employee's name:

Date of conversation:

Specific rule violation or performance problem:

Previous conversations about the rule violation or performance problem:

Specific change in the employee's performance or behavior that is expected:

Employee's comments:

Supervisor's comments:

Employee's signature:

-or-

Employee was asked to sign this written warning on _____ but declined to sign.

_____

Supervisor

_____

Date