

Swiss Family Treks & Expedition and Swiss Himalayan Family Treks & Expedition Pvt. Ltd

Human Resources Employee Handbook

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1. INTRODUCTION

This employee handbook is a summary of policies, procedures and practices related to human resource management at Swiss Family Treks & Expedition and Swiss Himalayan Family Treks & Expedition Pvt. Ltd.

The **Managing Director (MD)** is accountable for leading an effective staff team and is thereby accountable for the development and implementation of the policies outlined in this manual. Managers are responsible for human resource management within their own staff teams and should reference this manual to ensure company consistency in the application of these practices.

The **MD**, under supervision of the **company owner(s)** is responsible for maintaining the procedures and systems that support human resource management for the company and is available to answer any questions or provide clarification on any content of this manual.

Who we are

The company is a Trekking Agency, formed in 17th July 2015 under registration with 136973/072/073. The overall aim of the company is of providing family trekking and tours mostly to European markets and other markets in all over the world. We are aiming to offer the best possible services in affordable prices according to the need of our valued customers. We are focusing into eco friendly and sustainable tourism in the Himalayas. We are, we think, being very responsible towards the society by creating direct and indirect jobs to the local people and being fare in paying right revenues to the country. Our products are catering to the general market to our valued traveller through internet markets of distributing both internal and external tourists. We are providing quality services for the traveller in the fields of tourism industry in Nepal with exploring all new destinations in the cities and Himalayas for all tourist activities. Our products are managing to become a leading provider of all tourist activities in Nepal. At the same time, our qualities of products are satisfied to the travellers. The overall strategy of our company are maintaining and providing our products present market share in the local market and business growing with development of new products throughout expanding into the international market.

Mission

Our company's mission is:

As Mountain, Nature and Culture lovers of Nepal having all our own families here in Nepal and deeply interested and connected in the development of this Himalayan country we carefully plan and execute our Treks with love and passion. We aim to offer the best possible services with affordable prices according to the need of our guests. We are also focusing into Eco friendly and sustainable tourism in the Himalayas, providing water filters for all Treks and in consequence

reducing the use of plastic bottles up to 100% at all treks.

All trekking crews also have to bring back 1 bag of garbage collected on the way

At the same time we are responsible towards the people of Nepal by creating direct and indirect work assignments for the locals and being fair with their salaries. And which is not just common in Nepal we pay taxes to the state of Nepal.

We are providing high quality service for all travelers during the Trek and in the City. Every year we explore 2-3 new destinations, trail and climbs all over Nepal to even make the visit of our guests more exciting. Our aim is also to become a leading provider of the different tourist activities in Nepal. Continuously adding new eco-friendly -equipment for our Treks we can even make the visitors of Nepal more satisfied booking with us.

Code of Conduct

Our Mission and general rules are doing fair business only. Nobody from all our staff is left out and all services we use in the field are carefully examined.

All our employees are committing to social and moral rules. They are regularly sent to receive training in different sectors of the tourism industry in Nepal. That is why we can guarantee for our company as a fair business.

Preamble

This Policy shall apply to all employees of Swiss Family Treks & Expedition and Swiss Himalayan Family Treks & Expedition Pvt. Ltd except for those whose appointment has been made under a contract basis where a separate terms and condition for employment is applicable for specific case and for those whose engagement has been made on a temporary basis under wage basis for any specified work.

In case the provisions mentioned in the appointment letter are found to contravene National Law, due to amendment made on Act and Policy, the provisions of amended Act and the Policy, shall be applicable.

HR Management Policy Framework and Employment Legislation

- HR management policies are formalized, documented and approved by the MD.
- HR management policies comply with employment, workplace health and safety, and other related legislation as is applicable in the jurisdiction in which the company operates.
- HR management policies are reviewed on an annual basis and revised if necessary under the final approval of the MD.
- HR management policies are made accessible to employees. One hard copy is available in the office.

2. EMPLOYMENT

Getting the Right People

Recruitment is through an objective, consistent process and an approved job description is completed for all positions.

All individuals external to the company, who are offered a position, sign a letter of employment that outlines the working relationship between the individual and the company.

Employment Equity

The company is an equal opportunity employer and employs personnel without regard to race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, language, citizenship, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, physical and/or mental handicap or financial ability.

The company will only employ candidates above the age of 18 for full time engagement. The company may engage candidates above the age of 14 and under the age of 18 through internship or temporary part-time work contract (maximum 36 hours a week).

Orientation

All new employees to the company shall receive an orientation session, which will encompass an overview of general policies, procedures and operations. They will have access to a copy of this Employee Handbook and will be expected to understand its contents.

Employee Duties

Attached to an Offer of Employment, is a description of the job and the associated responsibilities, along with any additional tasks possibly required. From time to time, it may be necessary to amend an employee's job description.

Probation

The first two (2) months of employment are probationary. During this time both parties may assess suitability for employment with the Employer. At the completion of the probation period, the employee and employer shall meet and review progress to date. At this time one of three things will occur:

- i. Probation will end
- ii. Probation may be extended for an additional two months
- iii. Employment will end

Annual Salary

The MD, based on the company's set standards, budget considerations and commensurate with the experience of the successful candidate, shall determine salaries. The company shall pay employees on a **monthly** basis, less the usual and necessary statutory and other deductions payable in accordance with the Employer's standard payroll practices. These payroll practices may be changed from time to time at the Employer's sole discretion. Currently, payday occurs in **every first week of the new month** and covers the pay period ended the previous month.

Hours of Work

The company recognizes a full time position as 48 hours per week and promotes flexible office time, due to the nature of the work. All employees are recommended to work on average 8 hours per day, Sunday through Friday, which includes a paid eating break of 40 minutes.

The management may change the standard working hour and holidays from time to time as per the need of the business.

Employees are each responsible for their own work hours and tasks. If an employee misuses the flexible office time, supervisor may intervene and pose restrictions or sanctions.

Employees are required to notify their supervisor, in advance, of planned days away from the office.

Lunch

The company will provide a proper lunch to all staff on a daily basis in the designated lunch hour. This lunch will either be cooked at the office, based on fresh (and where possible organic) products.

Statutory Holidays

The company recognizes **fifteen** (15) public holidays and other days for which staff will be paid. The company sets **twelve** of these. They are:

- **New Year's Day** (1)
- **Nepalese New Year** (1)
- **Ghatasthavana** (1)
- **Dashain** (5)
- **Tihar** (3)
- **Christmas Day** (1)

Recognizing the cultural diversity of Nepal, the company allows for the remaining 3 public holidays to be decided by each individual staff. These holidays can only be consumed on actual ethnic and public holidays and employees are required to notify their supervisor at least one week (7 days) prior to the occasion.

Overtime

Some hours of overtime may be expected due to the nature of the work, though this should not be a regular occurrence. Should staff be required to work overtime equivalent to one full workday (8 hours) in one week, a time in lieu entitlement may be taken either the week prior or week following the overtime. Time in lieu for overtime cannot be accumulated.

3. TIME AWAY FROM WORK

Vacation Time and Vacation Pay

Vacation will accumulate on the basis of 1.25 days per month to a maximum of fifteen (15) days per calendar year for full time employees. Employees working less than full time will have their rate of accumulation adjusted accordingly.

As vacation is designed to give employees a chance to rest and rejuvenate, the employer encourages taking vacation. For this reason, employees may only carry up to five (5) days from one year to the next.

Sick Leave

Employees will be entitled to seven (7) days of sick leave per calendar year. Sick leave can be used for personal illness, personal medical appointments, and visits to specialists. Upon the morning of their sick day, employees are required to notify their supervisor, as soon as could reasonably be expected.

Regardless of the amount of sick leave accumulated, sick leave will not be paid out upon resignation, retirement, or termination of employment for any reason. Furthermore, since Sick Leave has no cash value, employees may not use more than they have accumulated, without the express written permission of the MD. Employees working less than full time will have their rate of accumulation adjusted accordingly.

Compassionate (Kriya) Leave

The company will grant up to fifteen (15) working days per event on the occasion of a death in the staff member's immediate family. Immediate family is defined as: parent(s), children, sibling(s), and spouse. In the case of female employees, also father-in-law or mother-in-law.

Additional compassionate leave may be granted at the discretion of the Managing Director for reasons not covered elsewhere in this manual.

Maternity, Parental and Adoptive Leave

All permanent women employee shall be entitled to maternity leave on full remunerations up to 52 days, but this leave will not be granted more than twice during the entire service period.

In the event that one or two children of a woman who has already utilized maternity leave twice do not survive and in the event that she becomes pregnant again, she may obtain maternity leave under this section upon the birth of one or two more children.

All permanent men employee shall be entitled to paternity leave on full remunerations up to 7 days, but this leave will not be granted more than twice during the entire service period.

Leave without Pay

The MD may approve requests for leave without pay on a case-by-case basis.

4. BENEFITS

Medical Insurance

The company offers its employees group benefits provided by Nepal Life Insurance. These benefits are 50% paid by the employer and 50% by the employee (deducted from monthly salary).

Provident Fund / Citizen Investment Fund

10% of an employee's basic pay shall be deducted from their salary each month. The company shall contribute a same amount towards the employee's provident fund. The fund will be deposited into Citizen Investment Trust or other approved Retirement Fund as approved by the MD. This provision is applicable only to permanent staff.

Loans and Advances

The MD may approve request for loans or advances from time to time and decision will be on case-by-case basis. Loans and advances cannot be claimed as a matter of right.

Performance Bonus

Management may develop and provide performance bonus scheme to reward and retain performing employees.

Festival Bonus

The employees who have completed six months of service with the company shall be paid their respective one month's gross salary per year and those who have less than six months of service shall be paid on pro rata basis to the number of months served as Dashian Festival Bonus.

Profit Sharing Agreement

5. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The company will strive to provide professional development opportunities that will give employees the chance to attain their maximum career potential.

Every employee's training and development needs are reviewed at least annually and plans established to address any gaps. During the development of the annual budget consideration is given to including appropriate resources to fund employee training and development.

Internal opportunities

The company will create learning opportunities for all staff on an annual basis to stimulate professional development. Internal learning opportunities can be provided in the form of:

- Peer-to-peer learning
- Responsible business / CSR learning day
- Bring in an external trainer

The company may decide to extend its internal learning opportunities to representatives of its contracted suppliers by including them in the program.

External opportunities

At the discretion of the MD, employees may be able to attend conferences, training courses, seminars and meetings, which may be beneficial to the employee's professional development. If these opportunities are directly related to the employee's position, or are suggested by the MD, then the company will cover the cost of registration, course materials and where relevant some travel expenses.

If the company has agreed to pay for a course, the fees will be paid on evidence of successful completion.

6. DEPARTURE

Termination for Cause

The Employer may terminate an Employment Contract at any time for cause, without notice or payment in lieu of notice or severance pay whatsoever, except payment of outstanding wages, overtime and vacation pay to the date of termination. Cause includes, but is not limited to, any act of dishonesty, conflict of interest, breach of confidentiality, harassment, insubordination, or careless, negligent or documented poor work performance.

Resignation

After completion of the first sixty (60) days of the probationary period, employees must give the Employer four (4) weeks' notice of resignation. The Employer may waive the resignation notice period in whole or in part at any time by providing payment of regular wages for the period so waived.

Layoff

Operation requirements are subject to change based on workload and the funding

levels received on an annual basis. All efforts will be made to keep staff in a position similar, in scope and salary, to that they have become accustomed to. If the company is unable to do this, then employees will receive one (1) week notice for each year of service.

Employer Property

Upon termination of employment for any reason, all items of any kind created or used pursuant to the employee's service or furnished by the Employer including but not limited to computers, reports, files, diskettes, manuals, literature, confidential information, or other materials shall remain and be considered the exclusive property of the Employer at all times, and shall be surrendered to the MD, in good condition, promptly and without being requested to do so.

7. CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

From time to time, employees of the company may come into contact with confidential information, including but not limited to information about the company's members, suppliers, finances and business plans. Employees are required to keep any such matters that may be disclosed to them or learned by them confidential.

8. WORK ENVIRONMENT

The company aims to provide an enabling work environment for its staff.

Freedom of association

All our staff is at liberty to decide whether they would like to join a trade union or not.

Harassment

The company wants to provide a harassment-free environment for its employees. Mutual respect, along with cooperation and understanding, must be the basis of interaction between members and staff. The company will neither tolerate nor condone behaviour that is likely to undermine the dignity or self-esteem of an individual, or create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

Complaints / Dispute Procedure

Regrettably, conflict can occur in any working environment. In an effort to resolve conflict in an expedient, yet fair manner, the company recommends the following process for conflict or dispute resolution.

- > Speak to the person you are having the dispute with. Many times disputes arise due to misunderstandings and miscommunications.
- > If speaking to the individual does not work, speak to the Managing Director. The MD will arrange a meeting between those involved in the dispute, to determine a resolution.
- > If the MD is unable to resolve a workplace dispute, the parties may be referred to mediation by an outside third party. The resolution of the mediator is binding on both parties of the dispute.

Representation to the Company

The company will have an annual all staff meeting in which staff members could present important work related matters to the management. During these meetings, employee satisfaction is measured and suggestions are taken into account.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The company, along with its employees, must take reasonable precautions to ensure that the workplace is safe. The company complies with all requirements for creating a healthy and safe workplace.

Employees who have health and safety concerns or identify potential hazards should contact the MD.

Safe Work Environment

To ensure a safe work environment for all staff, the company will ensure:

- Daily cleaning of the work establishment with water, and use of disinfectants in toilets, sinks, drains, etc. according to need.

- Adequate hygienic water where staff can fill cups, glasses and reusable bottles during the period of work.
- Sanitary toilet in easily accessible place.
- At least one accessible fire extinguisher in the office. Offices with multiple floors will have one fire extinguisher on each floor.
- Accessible first aid kit.
- Repair and repainting from time to time, ensuring that dirt and filth do not cause any stench, and thus maintaining the establishment in a neat and clean condition.
- Declaration of all or any part of the establishment as a non-smoking zone, according to the nature of the establishment.
- Office establishment will be checked for hazard safety (including earthquake and fire) at least once every 10 years by a professional advisor and recommendations for procedures will be documented and communicated to all staff.

Guidance on Health and Safety

All staff members receive periodic guidance and training regarding their roles, rights and responsibilities regarding health and safety issues. This includes fire and relevant natural disasters (earthquake, floods). These topics will at least be included in the annual all staff meeting.

10. ETHICAL CODE

- Employees shall not engage directly or indirectly in any activities, which are against the interest of the company.
- Employees shall not engage directly or indirectly in any transactions with the guests / vendors / agents / customers in which they have personal / financial interest. Where the employees have personal / financial interest in any guests / vendors customers, the information of such interest must be immediately disclosed to the Managing Director.
- This policy shall not prohibit employees of the company (1) holding board membership for not-for-profits or (2) directorship of subsidiary company established by Swiss Family Treks & Expedition and Swiss Himalayan Family Treks & Expedition Pvt. Ltd, which is subject to approval of the Managing Director.
- Employees are prohibited to accept gift, charity, present or gratification of any kind by themselves or through their family, which may create an undue influence on the function of the company. During festivals or special occasions small gift items may be accepted, given they do not have any influence on the function of the individual staff and/or the company.
- Employees may represent the company in external forums only with prior approval of the MD.

11. DISCIPLINARY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Disciplinary situations include misconduct and/or poor performance. If employers have a separate capability procedure they may prefer to address performance issues under this procedure. If so, however, the basic principles of fairness set out in this Code should still be followed, albeit that they may need to be adapted.

Grievances are concerns, problems or complaints that employees raise with their employers.

These procedures do not apply to redundancy dismissals or the non-renewal of fixed-term contracts on their expiry.

Elements of Fair Procedures

Fairness and transparency are promoted by developing and using rules and procedures for handling disciplinary and grievance situations.

Where some form of formal action is needed, what action is reasonable or

justified will depend on all the circumstances of the particular case.

- Employers and employees should raise and deal with issues promptly and should not unreasonably delay meetings, decisions or confirmation of those decisions.
- Employers and employees should act consistently.
- Employers should carry out any necessary investigations to establish the facts of the case.
- Employers should inform employees of the basis of the problem and give them an opportunity to put their case in response, before any decisions are made.
- Employers should allow employees to be accompanied at any formal disciplinary or grievance meeting.
- Employers should allow an employee to appeal against any formal decision made.