QuEST Personnel Policies

1. **Hours of Work:** QuEST Fellows are expected to work full-time as defined by their agency. (If however, these standard work hours, plus the Fellow’s standard commuting time, is greater than 45 hours a week, the Fellow’s work week should be reduced to bring the total within that 45 hour window. Leisure time is one of the only compensations to the unpaid.) QuEST Fellows are not salaried employees and should not be pressured by supervisors or colleagues to work additional hours or attend extra events. Work in the office over forty hours per week is discouraged. If QuEST Fellows work over forty hours in a week, they will receive compensatory time off on an hour-for-hour basis. QuEST Fellows will arrange with their supervisors to use compensatory hours as soon as possible after working the extra hours, at a time mutually convenient to the agency and the Fellow. They should not work more than one evening shift per week, and if they regularly work on either Saturday or Sunday they need to have two consecutive days off for their “weekend” (i.e. Friday and Saturday or Sunday and Monday).

2. **QuEST Time:** The QuEST Program Director will set up a consistent time twice a month for “QuEST Time” which will not conflict with essential duties of the Fellow at the agency. This is a three hour discussion/training involving all Fellows twice a month. Three times during the year the Program Director will also come to take the Fellow out for lunch or coffee to do a one-on-one check in. Occasionally the QuEST Director will request that Fellows be released from work to attend special trainings or workshops only offered at a certain time.

3. **Sick Leave:** Since QuEST Fellows are volunteers, the concept of paid or unpaid sick leave does not apply. Fellows will not be required to use vacation leave when they are off work due to illness. They will promptly notify their supervisors when they are going to miss work and will make every effort to return to work as soon as possible. If either Fellows or agencies experience any concerns about excessive use of sick days, they should contact the QuEST Program Director.

4. **Vacation Leave:** QuEST Fellows will receive three weeks (15 days) of vacation leave during their program year (or more based on the agency’s policy). Vacation time will not be earned on an accrual basis. Instead, Fellows may use vacation leave at any point during the year, as long as their absence from work is negotiated for a time mutually agreeable to the agency and the Fellow.

5. **Holidays:** Regardless of any floating holidays policy the agency may have, QuEST Fellows should not be required to work on the date of holidays recognized by the agency, but the Fellow may do so if they agree to. They are to have the same number of holidays off as the agency gives its employees.

6. **No Payment for Work:** Except for the $150 monthly stipend, an agency will not pay its QuEST Fellow to perform work, including work outside the Fellow’s usual job description. It is important
for the equality and integrity of the QuEST volunteer program for all agency placements to follow the same compensation guidelines.

7. **Position Description**: Agencies are required to provide Fellows and the QuEST Program Director with a written, well-defined description of their position. Position descriptions should include general areas of responsibility, specific tasks, skills expected, and goals for the year. Lines of supervision and accountability should be outlined along with a schedule and method for evaluation. The position description will not be significantly changed without approval from all parties.

8. **Supervision**: Each Fellow should have one agency manager as a primary supervisor. Regular meetings between the Fellow and supervisor should be scheduled weekly in the early months. Even when a Fellow and supervisor work side-by-side on a daily basis, scheduled meetings to discuss work issues, provide training, and assess goals and progress are valuable.

9. **Orientation**: Agencies will provide QuEST Fellows with a structured orientation to the agency and its constituents. It is important to introduce Fellows to the personnel policies and organizational structure of the agency; to describe in-depth the issues and needs of the agency’s constituent populations; to offer training at the outset for working with clients or for specific skills needed for the job; and to give a sense of the broader context, networks, and communities which impact the agency. While “on the job” training is integral to a Fellow’s experience, it does not replace the need for a structured orientation program.

10. **Training**: A successful volunteer year includes aspects of both learning and regular employment. As such, agencies are encouraged to provide ongoing training opportunities to Fellows including both internally and externally organized workshops, conferences, classes, etc.

11. **Evaluation**: In addition to evaluation systems specific to the partner agency, the Program Director will have a joint meeting with the Fellow and supervisor in each agency in about November. This check-in provides an opportunity for the Fellow know how well they are doing in their new positions and whether they are meeting agency needs and expectations, as well as to express any concerns they have. The Program Director will also check in by phone or email with each supervisor quarterly. Towards the end of the year supervisors will complete a written evaluation to the program or have another in-person conversation with the Director.

12. **Grievance**: If the Fellow experiences problems with their placement site or in the house, they should talk first with the QuEST Director. If the Fellow wishes to leave the placement or the placement wishes to terminate the Fellow, the QuEST Program Director must first be notified and a resolution process must be utilized. If the issue involves the Director or for some reason the Fellow doesn’t feel comfortable addressing the issue with the Director, the Clerk of the QuEST Committee should be contacted. For significant issues, the QuEST Committee will then be notified. The QuEST Committee is the ultimate decision-making authority.

Revised June 2019