

2025 Staff Handbook of Policies and Procedures

Best Buddies International Inc.

To establish a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment and leadership development for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

BEST BUDDIES®



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January 1, 2025

Dear Best Buddies Team:

2025 will be a year filled with challenges for every single one of us. We will only be able to accomplish the Best Buddies mission by being a cohesive group and a strong team. Each of us has the responsibility to be an excellent team player and operate under our Best Buddies' values every single day. I ask that you continue promoting and living our values as you carry on the Best Buddies mission:

We are **inspiring**. In the spirit of dedication and fun, we bring a contagious energy and enthusiasm to everything we do.

We are **empowering**. Through respectful teamwork, connection, and support, we empower people to create a world where individuals with IDD are valued for their abilities.

We are **excelling**. We strive for excellence and are driven to exceed all expectations.

Regardless of what position you hold within the organization or your physical location, know that you are an important part of this organization and that we cannot accomplish our mission without you. We hope that you can appreciate the updates made to the 2025 Handbook of Policies and Procedures and that you continue to provide us with your feedback regarding our policies.

We each play a vital role in our success. I applaud each of you for your immense effort and commitment. We are **Best Buddies!**

Warm Regards,



Anthony K. Shriver
Founder and Chairman

Staff Resources

Staff Portal: [Best Buddies has a staff portal dedicated to employees only.](#) This is the organization's staff portal and it offers a variety of information useful to the staff and managers. The following are some examples of information that you can find when you access the staff portal:

- Staff directory and office directory
- Organizational charts
- Human resources forms, guides, benefits information, and much more.

Staff members need a login name and password to access the website. Every staff member is given access to create a login and password at the time of hire. Issues with the portal should be directed to the HR team.

Summa: This is the link to the login page of Summa our database used to implement all thons, email campaigns, etc. Summa is a fundraising tool custom-designed for Best Buddies.

Salesforce: Best Buddies uses the Salesforce platform to manage our program data, including member contacts and program chapters, for the Friendship, Leadership, Living, and Family Support programs. This is our member and program database, which is used to capture, track, and report on all program engagements throughout Best Buddies programs.

BB360: This is the chapter management portal, built using Salesforce, for Best Buddies chapter officers and advisors. Replacing our legacy system, Best Buddies Online, BB360 streamlines administrative processes, improves user experience, includes easier access to data, and increases data security.

Best Buddies website: This is Best Buddies main website. Each state has a unique page, and links are available on the main site.

Best Buddies University (BBU): Best Buddies University provides a network of information, resources, and support tools for volunteers to advance the Best Buddies mission. On this site, volunteers will find the information they need to create and cultivate friendships, develop leaders to promote our mission, learn about integrated, supported employment opportunities, and explore how they can get involved or participate in Best Buddies events that further the mission in their community.

Buds: For development and success. This online training resource is populated with many required and voluntary training courses. Access is given to every staff member at the time of hire.

Expensify.com: This is the online staff reimbursement platform. Access via the web or download the app. Log in with your Best Buddies e-mail. Receipts can be e-mailed to receipts@expensify.com

Mission Memo (SharePoint): The Mission Memo is the one-stop-shop for staff for all things Global Mission, State Development, and Operations related. This SharePoint site includes a calendar of calls and important dates, news items, resources and how-to guides, and a comprehensive document library.

Raiser's Edge/Blackbaud hosting (RE/NXT): Raiser's Edge is the Best Buddies donor database of record. All donor information is managed on Raiser's Edge. Click on the link to download the application needed to access Raiser's Edge online. Please review the database policy stated in this handbook and the constituent and prospect guidelines available with the database team.

Office365/SharePoint: Used to access e-mail and files from a remote location. Use this to access SharePoint which is the all-staff file share. The SharePoint homepage is the location from which all departments (communications, data team, finance, etc.) share documents. The left page rail includes public department folders such as [Annual Reports](#), [Finance Documents](#), [Donations, Donors, Data & constituent Management](#), and other staff information.

Support desk: Request all I.T. help, new hire/separation e-mails, government requests, database, graphic, web, and merchandise projects must use this site and submit a ticket request. Log in with your Best Buddies e-mail.

Section 1: Welcome to Best Buddies

Disclaimer

This handbook has been designed to introduce you to Best Buddies International, Inc. It summarizes the policies, procedures, and benefits to which you are entitled, and the obligations you assume as an employee.

Please read this handbook carefully and keep it handy for future reference. One of your first responsibilities is to be familiar with its contents.

These policies and procedures establish employment guidelines only and do not establish an employment contract. Best Buddies recognizes and supports that all terms and conditions of employment are “at will”.

Changes in policy

The policies and procedures handbook will be reviewed on an annual basis and updated as needed. However, circumstances may arise throughout the year in which Best Buddies determines that changes are required in the policies, procedures, and benefits. Management reserves the right to unilaterally modify and change all policies, procedures, and benefits within this handbook at any given time. Employees will be notified of these changes via memo, e-mail, or any other appropriate means.

Mission statement

Best Buddies is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to establishing a global volunteer movement that creates opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development, inclusive living and family support for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). We accomplish our mission by:

- Establishing Best Buddies chapters in elementary school, middle school, high school, and college campuses worldwide
- Providing a safe place online to develop one-to-one friendships between people with and without IDD, through the e-Buddies program. Establishing friendships between people with and without IDD in the corporate and civic communities
- Helping people with IDD secure integrated, high-paying jobs
- Matching people with and without IDD in a residential experience
- Training people with IDD on leadership skills and self-advocacy
- Motivating our participants to take responsibility within their communities and advocate for an inclusive world.
- Offering families the support and resources needed to navigate the journey of raising a child with IDD.

Best Buddies Programs

Best Buddies is the largest organization dedicated to ending the social, physical, and economic isolation of the 200 million people worldwide with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Our programs empower people with IDD to form meaningful friendships with their peers, secure jobs, improve communication and advocacy skills, and live independently, while also offering support for their families.

Friendship Programs

- **Best Buddies Elementary Schools**
Builds connections and community between young students with and without IDD through inclusive activities and social-emotional learning tools that promote one-to-one friendship, acceptance, and interaction at an early age.
- **Best Buddies Middle Schools**
Fosters one-to-one friendships between middle school students with and without IDD, in which they share interests, experiences, and activities. Students with IDD are often isolated and left out of social activities. Best Buddies Middle Schools helps to create an inclusive middle school culture for all students early on in their educational development.
- **Best Buddies High Schools**
Fosters one-to-one friendships between high school students with and without IDD. In this time of heightened social and emotional development that can be difficult even for teenagers without IDD, the Best Buddies High Schools program helps break through social barriers at an important time in a young person's life.
- **Best Buddies Colleges**
Fosters one-to-one friendships between college students without IDD and their peers on campus or in the community with IDD. Young adults with IDD historically have been isolated at home or in work environments. The Best Buddies Colleges program is changing this by providing the opportunity for people with IDD to be involved in their local campus and community life.
- **Best Buddies Citizens**
Supports the development of friendships between adults with and without IDD in corporate and civic communities. Many people with IDD have limited opportunities for social interactions after they leave the school environment. This program helps people with IDD become part of mainstream society and creates an inclusive and diverse community for all.
- **e-Buddies®**
e-Buddies provides a safe place online to develop one-to-one friendships between people with and without IDD. By joining e-Buddies, participants become more comfortable using technology to communicate with friends, gain computer literacy skills, and are better equipped to socialize online in the future.

Jobs Program

- **Best Buddies Jobs**
Secures jobs for people with IDD, allowing them to earn an income, pay taxes, and continuously and independently support themselves. Matches skilled and qualified individuals with IDD with businesses seeking enthusiastic and dedicated employees. Through the Jobs program, Best Buddies develops partnerships with employers, assists with the hiring process, and provides ongoing support to the employee and employer.

Leadership Development Programs

- **Best Buddies Ambassadors**
Offers people with and without IDD the opportunity to gain the public speaking skills, self-esteem, and confidence needed to successfully advocate for themselves, their peers, and Best Buddies in communities, workplaces, and government.
- **Best Buddies Promoters**
It Empowers youth to become advocates for people with IDD and help open new Best Buddies chapters and programs by organizing special events that promote awareness of the disability rights

movement.

- **Best Buddies Transitions Program**
Offers a combination of classroom-based training, experiential learning, and corporate mentorship to help students with IDD explore post-secondary options, prepare for independent living, and identify career ambitions. Workshops and activities offer experiences that aid youth with IDD in their transition into adulthood. Best Buddies currently offers a combination of classroom-based training, experiential learning, and mentorship to help students identify and develop career ambitions, explore post-secondary options, and prepare for independent living.

Living Program

- **Best Buddies Living**
This program fosters an integrated experience for people with and without IDD to become active, contributing citizens who live independently in a dynamic environment where they can learn, grow, and thrive.

Family Support Program

- **Best Buddies Family Support**
Offers families the support and resources needed to navigate the journey of raising a child with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).

United States Programs

Best Buddies is active in each of the 50 United States. Access to the programs offered within our Friendship, Jobs, Leadership Development, Inclusive Living, and Family Support mission pillars will vary based on region. For more information on domestic programs, please visit bestbuddies.org/us-programs.

International Programs

Best Buddies offers accredited international programs in 45 countries and territories worldwide. Access to the programs offered within our Friendship, Jobs, Leadership Development, Inclusive Living, and Family Support mission pillars will vary based on region. For more information on global programs, please visit bestbuddies.org/international-programs.

History of Best Buddies

In the fall of 1987, while a student at Georgetown University, Best Buddies founder and chairman, Anthony K. Shriver saw the immense amount of talent existing on campuses that, if properly directed, could make a real difference in the community. Shriver conceived the idea of channeling the untapped desire for service that many college students possessed toward improving the lives of individuals with IDD. That first chapter provided an opportunity for 52 Georgetown students and 52 people with IDD from Lt. Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Institute to become friends. In 1989, upon graduation from college, Shriver incorporated Best Buddies into a national non-profit organization.

Highlights

1989

- Incorporated as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, Best Buddies of America becomes the country's first national, unified, social and recreational program for people with IDD
- The Western Regional office was opened in Los Angeles, California
- 33 college chapters were chartered for the 1989-1990 academic year

1990

- In February, the Midwest Regional office was opened in Chicago, Illinois
- In July, a third office opened serving the Eastern Region. This office was first located in New York City and later moved to Washington, D.C.
- Best Buddies hosted the first National Leadership Conference at Pepperdine University in California, providing training to 100 carefully chosen student leaders from 100 campuses around the nation
- Best Buddies Art Company was created to garner the support and creativity of internationally renowned artists. The Images of Friendship series was developed, raising more than \$5 million to date, including masterpieces by Haring, Lichtenstein and Rauschenberg
- 66 colleges and universities were chartered for the 1990-1991 academic year

1991

- In April, the Southern Regional office opened in Atlanta, Georgia
- Best Buddies hosted two leadership conferences, one for college student leaders at Georgetown University in June, and another for leaders with IDD at Georgetown University in August
- 111 colleges and universities were chartered for the 1991-1992 academic year

1992

- In February, because of a grant from the Developmental Disabilities Council of Florida, Best Buddies opened our first state office in Miami, Florida
- March brought a name change to the organization, as Best Buddies of America became Best Buddies International, with the opening of an office in Athens, Greece
- In July, Best Buddies headquarters moved from Washington, D.C., to Miami, Florida to oversee the expansion of a statewide program. The Florida program would establish the groundwork for other statewide programs
- 138 colleges and universities were chartered for the 1992-1993 academic year
- Best Buddies hosted the first Unified Leadership Conference at Loyola College in Baltimore, Maryland. College student leaders and 50 people with IDD were provided intensive training in public speaking, volunteer management, public relations, team building, problem-solving, and leadership skills

1993

- After a review of Florida's successful state-based operation, an office was opened in Dallas, Texas in April
- In June, the Developmental Disabilities Council of Florida and Special Olympics Productions provided funding for the successful establishment of a new program to be piloted in the Miami area called Best Buddies Citizens
- 164 colleges and universities were chartered for the 1993-1994 academic year

1994

- In March, funding was secured to open an office in Salt Lake City, Utah
- March also saw the creation of a supported employment program in the Miami area, Best Buddies Jobs. The goal for the first year of operation was to provide job placement services for 24 individuals with IDD. The program was successful in meeting its goal
- In July, the Best Buddies Car recycling program began in the Miami area
- In September, a field office was opened in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, to manage Best Buddies Colleges throughout the state
- In December, the Pennsylvania state office was opened in Philadelphia
- 171 colleges and universities were chartered for the 1994-1995 academic year

1995

- In January, as a result of funding secured from the State of Connecticut Department of Mental Retardation, a state office was opened in New Haven, Connecticut
- Best Buddies High Schools began in Salt Lake City, Utah
- In July, a field office opened in Silver Spring, Maryland, through funding received from Montgomery County, bringing Best Buddies High Schools to this area
- Additional state funding was secured allowing a state office to open in Baltimore, Maryland, in September
- In continued efforts to expand internationally, Best Buddies Canada becomes the third country to launch Best Buddies programs, joining the United States and Greece
- Best Buddies' presence in Florida increased significantly as a result of a grant from the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. The grant facilitated the relocation of the Florida state office from Miami to Orlando. Also resulting from the grant, Best Buddies High Schools was expanded to include the Orlando and Miami areas, while Best Buddies Citizens expanded to include Orlando
- 177 colleges and universities were chartered for the 1995-1996 academic year
- 42 high school chapters were chartered for the 1995-1996 academic year
- 24 people with IDD were placed in competitive jobs

1996

- The Midwest Regional office became the Illinois state office in January
- Best Buddies became the first non-profit to have a national supportive employment program for people with IDD as services expanded to Southern California
- Best Buddies first Art Gallery opened to the public, to raise funds through the sale of its fine art collection called Images of Friendship
- In April, Lisa Derx was appointed as the first executive director of Best Buddies International
- In June, funding was secured to open a Massachusetts state office in Boston
- As a result of a grant from the Pennsylvania Developmental Disabilities Planning Council, Best Buddies High Schools expanded to southeastern Pennsylvania in September
- Best Buddies Middle Schools begun as a pilot program
- 187 colleges and universities were chartered for the 1996-1997 academic year
- 72 high school chapters were chartered for the 1996-1997 academic year
- 46 people with IDD were placed in competitive jobs

1997

- In August, the Eastern Regional office moved back to its original location in New York City and consequently, the Washington, D.C., office became a field office
- Also in August, the Southern Regional office was absorbed by the Florida state office, allowing for more effective management of both areas.
- The Texas state office moved from Dallas to Houston in November
- Best Buddies' official website went online
- Participants increased to 10,000 in one year
- 235 colleges and universities were chartered for the 1997-1998 academic year
- 112 high school chapters were chartered for the 1997-1998 academic year
- 64 people with IDD were placed in competitive jobs

1998

- The Western Regional office became the California state office, merging Best Buddies International programs and the Best Buddies Jobs program under one supervisor. The office remains based in Los Angeles
- Best Buddies Jobs began placement services in Boston, Massachusetts
- The Buddy Ambassador program began in August, training people with IDD for public speaking
- In 1998, more than 14,000 individuals participated in Best Buddies programs
- 265 college and university chapters were chartered for the 1998-1999 academic year
- 141 high school chapters were chartered for the 1998-1999 academic year
- 110 citizen buddy pairs were matched
- 76 people with IDD were placed in jobs in California, Florida, and Massachusetts

1999

- e-Buddies® launched as a cutting-edge online friendship program
- Celebrating ten years of friendships, the tenth annual Best Buddies International Leadership Conference returns to the founding place of Best Buddies, Georgetown University.
- The Suzanne Jovin Memorial Leadership Fund is established in memory of the Yale student leader who died in 1998
- In continued efforts to expand internationally, Best Buddies Egypt becomes the fourth country to launch Best Buddies programs, joining the United States, Greece, and Canada
- 298 college and university chapters were chartered for the 1999-2000 academic year
- 205 high school chapters were chartered for the 1999-2000 academic year
- 197 citizen buddy pairs were matched
- 100 people with IDD were placed in jobs

2000

- The inaugural Hyannis Port Challenge – a 90-mile fundraising bike ride from the JFK Library in Boston to the Kennedy Compound in Hyannis Port – was held in May.
- Best Buddies secured its largest-ever state grant, \$1 million in California
- Best Buddies International Leadership Conference brings over 350 college and high school students to Loyola University, Chicago
- The Arizona state office was opened in Phoenix in September 2000
- 300 college chapters were chartered for the 2000-2001 academic school year
- 373 middle and high school chapters were chartered for the 2000-2001 academic school year
- 405 citizen buddy pairs were matched
- 125 people with IDD were placed in competitive jobs
- 824 individuals were matched through e-Buddies
- Maria Shriver wrote a landmark book about friendships with people with IDD *What's Wrong With Timmy?* With proceeds from sales benefiting Best Buddies
- Volvo became Official Vehicle of Best Buddies and signed a three-year deal as the Title Sponsor of the Volvo Hyannis Port Challenge
- Best Buddies continued to expand and impacted the lives of more than 30,000 individuals in one year for the first time

- 316 college chapters were chartered for the 2001-2002 academic school year
- 448 middle and high school chapters were chartered for the 2001-2002 academic school year
- 245 citizen buddies were matched
- 125 people with IDD were placed in competitive jobs
- 2,130 individuals were matched through e-Buddies

2002

- Best Buddies launched new offices in Indiana, Iowa and New York
- Leadership Conference was held in Houston, Texas with approximately 700 students attending
- The e-Buddies® Training Corps expanded to 12 summer interns, who taught computer and e-mail skills to 251 individuals with IDD
- In continued efforts to expand internationally, Cuba, Ireland, and Sweden each initiated Best Buddies programs, joining the United States, Greece, Canada, and Egypt
- Best Buddies Jobs was accredited by CARF
- Best Buddies continued to expand and impacted the lives of more than 50,000 individuals in one year
- 338 college chapters were chartered for the 2002-2003 academic school year
- 522 middle and high school chapters were chartered for the 2002-2003 academic school year
- 268 citizen buddies were matched
- 3,473 individuals were matched through e-Buddies®

2003

- For the first time in its history, Best Buddies has participants in all 50 of the United States, bringing opportunities for friendship and inclusion across the nation, and serving more than 60,000 participants in one year
- Best Buddies established programs in eight additional countries
- A formal survey of Best Buddies participants established that students who participate in Best Buddies programs are an increasingly diverse group who spend more time with their buddies than ever before
- Volvo Cars of North America extended its national marketing partnership through 2009
- 39 middle school chapters were chartered for the 2004-2005 academic school year
- 483 high school chapters were chartered for the 2004-2005 academic school year
- 338 college chapters were chartered for the 2004-2005 academic school year
- 268 citizen buddies were matched
- 4,514 individuals were matched through e-Buddies®

2004

- For the first time, Best Buddies impacted the lives of more than 250,000 individuals
- Best Buddies programs are active on six continents
- Best Buddies annual Best Buddies International Leadership Conference, where student leaders are trained to lead Best Buddies chapters, exceeded 1,000 student participants for the first time from across the U.S. and six continents
- Best Buddies launched the most successful fundraising event in its history, the nationally televised inaugural Volvo Hearst Castle Challenge, chaired by California First Lady Maria Shriver, a 100-mile bike ride along the Pacific Coast Highway
- Best Buddies continued its commitment to financial integrity with a full 90% of Best Buddies revenue going directly into its six programs for people with IDD and only 10% allocated to administration and fundraising
- 4,329 individuals were matched through e-Buddies®

2005

- Best Buddies launched new offices in Virginia and Wisconsin
- Best Buddies International Leadership Conference has record attendance of more than 1,200 student leaders from across the U.S. and six continents
- In a major expansion effort overseas, Best Buddies programs expand to a record 22 nations, toward a goal of 50 countries by 2010
- Best Buddies volunteers contribute services to the community that equate to \$61 million in USD in

one year

- Best Buddies launches “I See You” bracelet and T-shirt, and launched a partnership with C.O. Bigelow as their official charity and had the Best Buddies candle sold around the country at Bath & Body Works
- Volvo retailers’ partner with Best Buddies on football promotions in Texas and Florida. During the year, over \$100,000 of new sponsorship money was secured on a local level
- Best Buddies appeared in more than 230 articles including The Arizona Republic, The Boston Globe, The Boston Herald, The Des Moines Register, The Miami Herald, The New York Times, The New York Post, The San Francisco Chronicle, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, People, TEEN & Teen Vogue. Coverage spanned the globe, with articles appearing in Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, and the Netherlands. In addition, Best Buddies was the subject of more than 115 television stories, with coverage on Access Hollywood, ESPN’s Sports Center, and the Today Show on NBC
- Best Buddies staff engaged in a community service project to beautify a host site in Miami for people with IDD which was later dedicated to Rosemary Kennedy
- 93 middle school chapters were chartered for the 2004-2005 academic school year
- 742 high school chapters were chartered for the 2004-2005 academic school year
- 430 college chapters were chartered for the 2004-2005 academic school year
- 4,732 individuals were matched through e-Buddies®

2006

- Best Buddies launched a new office in Long Island, New York
- The 17th Annual Best Buddies Leadership Conference at Indiana University was one of the largest to date, hosting over 1,200 students, including 25 international students
- Currently, 1,362 chapters are in existence
- More than 1,300 campuses – 300,000 lives impacted
- The International Programs Department experienced continued growth throughout the year, including the expansion of Best Buddies programs to such dynamic countries as England, Honduras, Israel, New Zealand, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Tanzania, and the United Arab Emirates
- Secured an increase of 22% in funding from states
- Secured \$4.9 million in state funding
- Nearly 60,000 e-mails exchanged by e-Buddies participants in 2006
- Secured \$125,000 in grant monies for “The e-Buddies® Guide to Internet Literacy Project”
- In June 2006, Best Buddies launched the inaugural Best Buddies Challenge: Ireland to support and expand the work of Best Buddies Ireland. More than 150 riders, including 50 people with IDD, raised funds to ride the 90 or 25-mile courses beginning and ending Dublin’s famed Phoenix Park
- Syd Lea, a participant with an intellectual and developmental disability from Maryland, rode 90 miles in the front pack of cyclists that included pros Frank McCormack and Mark McCormack. Pulling ahead at the end, Syd was the first rider to cross the finish line in Hyannis Port
- Best Buddies International enjoyed a spike in media coverage abroad, with notable concentrations in coverage by media in Colombia, Germany, Ireland, and the United Arab Emirates. In the U.S., Best Buddies was the focus of more than 350 news stories, including coverage by Access Hollywood, CNBC, NBC, The Today Show, ESPN.com, The Boston Globe, The Boston Herald, The Dallas Morning News, The Des Moines Register, Houston Chronicle, The Miami Herald, San Diego Union-Tribune, San Francisco Chronicle, South Florida Sun- Sentinel, Town & Country, and The Washington Post
- In 2006 Best Buddies also launched its new partnership with The Miss Universe Organization, making Best Buddies the official charity of Miss Teen USA. We produced our first-ever Spanish- language radio and television PSAs in the U.S. and we rolled out of our “I See You” public relations/marketing campaign and merchandise line

2007

- In 2007, Best Buddies International collected record revenues from sponsorship sales including new partnerships with Wal-Mart, Wachovia, AT&T, Countrywide, and CSC among others
- Best Buddies International and German luxury car manufacturer Audi launched a five-year, international partnership
- At the 18th Annual Best Buddies International Leadership Conference, the training for 50 leaders with IDD was divided into two tracks for the first time, Buddy Ambassador training for public speaking and Buddy Director training for chapter leadership
- Best Buddies International launched offices in seven new countries: Chile, Finland, Jordan, Lebanon, Malaysia, Panama & Qatar
- Best Buddies Germany became the first international office to offer e-Buddies to non-English speakers
- 3,688 children and adults were active members of e-Buddies®
- Congressman Steny Hoyer and Congressman Roy Blunt introduce the Best Buddies Empowerment for People with IDD Act of 2007
- State funding was secured through the Indiana Legislature for the first time
- In 2007, Best Buddies was the focus of almost 400 news stories in the U.S. and abroad, including coverage by the Associated Press, "Access Hollywood," CBS Network's "The Saturday Early Show," ESPN, E!, The Boston Globe, The Miami Herald, The New York Post, Ocean Drive, In Touch Weekly, The San Francisco Examiner, The Sydney Morning Herald, People.com, and The Washingtonian

2008

- Best Buddies launched new offices in Delaware and Hawaii
- Senator Chris Dodd and Senator Orrin Hatch introduced the Best Buddies Empowerment for People with IDD Act of 2008 in the United States Senate
- The Best Buddies Nevada office was launched due to a Federal Earmark. Best Buddies successfully secured a million-dollar individual gift which is the largest gift in the history of the organization
- The e-Buddies E-mail Trainer was developed and tested in classroom nationally
- Best Buddies International launched offices in Austria, Curacao, Denmark, Greece, Guatemala, Portugal, and Switzerland
- 19th Annual Leadership Conference had over 1,400 participants from around the world in attendance
- A deputy director was hired to coordinate The B.U.I.L.D. (Buddies United in Leadership Development) program. In 2008, 60 participants received in-depth training on public speaking, leadership development, and other important topics related to the role of Buddy Directors and Buddy Ambassadors in our programs
- Best Buddies reached over 623 Citizens matches
- In 2008, over 400,000 people were impacted by the Best Buddies mission
- Best Buddies celebrated the 20th and final Best Buddies Ball at the home of Sargent and Eunice Kennedy Shriver

2009

- Best Buddies launched a new office in Kentucky and New Mexico
- Best Buddies introduces a new mission and vision for the organization in celebration of our 20th anniversary
- Best Buddies International launched offices in Iceland, Peru, Poland and Russia
- The Best Buddies Empowerment for People with IDD Act of 2009 passes the U.S. House of Representatives on April 22, 2009
- e-Buddies had 2,731 members from all 50 States and the District of Columbia, as well as nine additional nations
- The 20th Annual Leadership Conference is held in Indiana University for the seventh year and over 900 participants from 13 nations around the world were in attendance
- Best Buddies goes paperless: Best Buddies Online is launched for school-based programs, allowing chapter participants to have a chapter portal, access all manuals and resources online and submit forms online
- Launched state major gifts program – The Rose Society

2010

- Best Buddies staff and volunteers trained more than 250 buddy ambassadors and buddy directors over the course of 23 trainings in 14 States
- Best Buddies participates in first Capitol Hill Day in Washington, D.C., in January 2010
- The Eunice Kennedy Shriver Act passes the U.S. House of Representatives on May 19, 2010, an act that authorized federal funds for Best Buddies
- Inaugurated the first annual nationwide EKS day including the Audi Best Buddies Eunice Kennedy Shriver Challenge
- Best Buddies and Special Olympics partnered to celebrate the first annual Eunice Kennedy Shriver Day on the last weekend of September. Participants of Best Buddies and Special Olympics commemorate the day through acts of unity nationwide
- Best Buddies launched a new in office in Tennessee and Rhode Island
- The “We are Best Buddies: Join our Global Movement” 50-week social media campaign celebrated amazing stories from Best Buddies chapters around the world. Launched the Best Buddies Friendship Walk
- BUILD changes its name to Best Buddies Ambassadors and becomes the seventh official program
- Best Buddies International partners with Special Olympics for the second annual Spread the Word to End the Word campaign, which successfully collected over 100,000 pledges from people around the world. As a result of our combined efforts on our Spread the Word Campaign, President Obama signs legislation around the “R” word
- International Programs were opened in France, India, Korea, Pakistan, St. Kitts & Nevis, Turkey, Venezuela, and Vietnam. In 2010, Best Buddies International achieves its global expansion goal and has active programs in 50 countries
- The 21st Annual Leadership Conference: Building Our Future is held in Indiana University for the eighth year with an attendance of over 900 participants from 13 nations
- e-Buddies had 2,116 members from all 50 States and the District of Columbia, as well as nine additional nations

2011

- Over 200 Best Buddies and Special Olympics supporters lobby more than 300 members of Congress for passage of the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Act in March 2011
- Best Buddies received a \$2 million USD gift in support of the organization’s Momentum Campaign. The grant has enabled the international programs department to expand its existing programs in Mexico as well as further support and develop programs in other Latin American countries
- The Best Buddies Friendship Walk had twenty-six events with over 9,000 participants resulting in a 172 percent revenue increase, included new national team partners, Miss USA organization and PKP Fraternity and developed the first National Student Walk Committee
- Champion of the Year event was launched in Kentucky and Tennessee
- For the first time in history, twenty advisory board chairs as well as middle school chapter presidents attended the BBI Leadership Conference
- Education and training team was added to centralize and coordinate training efforts for staff in the field
- The first promoter chapters were piloted in middle and high schools

2012

- Over 200 Best Buddies and Special Olympics supporters lobby more than 300 members of Congress for passage of the Eunice Kennedy Shriver Act in February 2012
- Best Buddies joined over 80 other disability organizations in sponsoring the National Forum on Disabilities to give both presidential candidates the opportunity to present their position on issues concerning people with disabilities
- Best Buddies joined a coalition of national and international disability groups in pressing for U.S. Senate ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Best Buddies Promoters officially launches as our 8th program for the 2012-2013 school year and opens the program up to elementary schools
- The 23rd Annual Best Buddies International Leadership Conference, Inclusion Revolution, sets an all-time attendance record of nearly 1,500 attendees at our tenth consecutive conference at Indiana

University

- The first Youth Leaders Council was launched. Consisting of 13 young adults with and without IDD that are participants and leaders in the Best Buddies movement, the YLC provides the student perspective on all initiatives, synthesizing feedback to present and develop student-driven projects for BBI
- Best Buddies partnered with Break Away®: the Alternative Break Connection, Inc. to begin running integrated service-learning spring break trips for the participants with and without IDD in college chapters
- True to the progressive nature of the Best Buddies organization, Best Buddies Online, the online programs database, went mobile, making it accessible through any smart phone.
- The Jobs program opened in San Francisco, CA and is providing supported employment services for individuals in the San Francisco Bay area, Silicon Valley, and Sacramento. The Hearst Foundation funded the first three years of the program
- Citizen chapters were formed at MGM properties in Nevada and through a multi-year gift from the Nina Mason foundation, the Middle School program expanded in Indiana. Tennessee expanded to include Citizens and serve additional school-based programs. In state expansion efforts are growing in the areas of Memphis, Reno and Honolulu through the efforts staff and local volunteers
- The Jobs program doubled in size in the Los Angeles area with the addition of a Project Search site at Kaiser Hospital, and a roving employment consultant in Northern California

2013

- The 24th Annual Best Buddies Leadership Conference held at Indiana University, hosted 1,750 total attendees, including our largest ever Ambassador class of over 100 participants. For the first time, the BBI Board of Directors held a meeting in conjunction with the conference at Indiana University. State advisory board members were again in attendance and joined for the first time by Friendship Walk committee chairs, making this the largest group of community leaders to attend the conference
- Two new Jobs programs launched in Chicago and Las Vegas, bringing the total to seven programs. The eighth program will be opening in Albuquerque in early 2014 and will partner with the University of New Mexico to begin a Project SEARCH program at the University of New Mexico Medical Center
- The Miami and San Francisco Jobs programs were listed by the US Department of Labor as high-achieving programs with an average of 20+ hours per week for their Jobs participants
- Best Buddies Ambassadors programming expanded to include advanced tracks, allowing the organization to serve more Ambassadors than ever before. Additionally, two elective courses were added: Advocacy through Writing and Conversational Advocacy

2014

- Best Buddies launched an office in Arkansas
- The 25th Annual Best Buddies Leadership Conference was held at Indiana University
- Following the Leadership Conference, 2,000 student leaders advocated for ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by calling their senate offices on the way from Indiana University to the airport
- Best Buddies launched the "I'm in to Hire" campaign to support an inclusive workplace for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- With more than 1,900 chapters around the world and programs in over 50 countries, Best Buddies International positively impacts the lives of more than 900,000 participants with and without IDD

Section 2: Employment Practices

Handbook of policies and procedures

The Best Buddies general employee handbook is reviewed on an annual basis and updated if needed. This handbook contains the organization's policies and procedures. If there are any conflicts between the policies appearing in the general employee handbook and any other documents, the below policies govern the employees of Best Buddies, except when it comes to a state addendum. As result of different state labor laws, some states may have a unique state addendum. If there are any conflicts between the state addendum and the general employee handbook, the state addendum will govern the state office.

The following are existing state addendums:

1. [California](#)
2. [Indiana](#)
3. [Tennessee](#)
4. Nevada
5. New Mexico

Employment status

Best Buddies International, Inc. and Best Buddies Supporting Corporation, Inc. (collectively referred to as Best Buddies) are “at will” employers. This means that employees are subject to termination at any time for any reason with or without cause or notice. This is a reciprocal relationship, and the employee may terminate their employment at any time for any reason. At the time of hire, employees receive an employment offer letter which contains a written statement explaining that Best Buddies is an “at will” employer. Every new hire is required to sign the employment offer letter acknowledging that Best Buddies is an “at will” employer.

No representative of Best Buddies, other than the founder and chairman, is authorized to modify this policy for any employee, or enter into any agreement, oral or written, contrary to this policy. No statements made in pre-hire interviews or discussions, or in recruiting materials of any kind are to alter the “at will” nature of employment or imply that termination will occur only for cause.

Statements of specific grounds for termination set forth in this manual or in any other Best Buddies documents are examples, not all-inclusive lists and are not intended to restrict Best Buddies' right to terminate an employee's employment “at will”. To reiterate, this is a reciprocal relationship and both the employer, and the employee have the right to end the working relationship when chooses.

Compliance

Best Buddies complies with legal and regulatory requirements and maintains and updates its policies and practices to reflect changes. The organization has systems in place for ongoing review and monitoring of legal and regulatory requirements to ensure compliance. Best Buddies policies, procedures and practices are reviewed regularly to reflect changes in requirements. Information on legal and regulatory topics is provided to employees through training, meetings, alerts, and other communications to ensure accurate knowledge and adherence.

Non-discrimination

Best Buddies does not discriminate and conducts all internal and external operations and programs without regard to race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, ancestry, disability, marital status, pregnancy, political belief or affiliation, gender identity or gender expression or status as a disabled veteran in the provision of or access to services, employment, and activities, and will not knowingly violate the Non-Discrimination law of the United States and any state of the United States. Best Buddies believes that all employees are entitled to Equal Employment Opportunity, and that the success of the organization is primarily dependent on you, our employees. We do not discriminate against employees or applicants, please refer to the Equal Employment Opportunity policy under Policy Statements.

Non-discrimination on the basis of disability

Best Buddies is committed to providing equal access to employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. Best Buddies recognizes that individuals with disabilities may require reasonable accommodation to have equally effective opportunities within our organization. Best Buddies shall adhere to all applicable federal and state laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as necessary to afford persons with disabilities equal employment opportunity and equal access to programs.

New hire orientation and training opportunities

All employment offers are contingent upon the successful completion of a background check and may involve additional municipal, state, or federal background checks, including fingerprints, upon hire and at annual or multi-year intervals as required by contract or government agencies. Before the first day of employment, new hires will receive a memo from human resources explaining the new hire process and instructions on accessing new hire documents. This memo is sent to the newly hired employees via e-mail before their first day of employment.

All new hires are required to follow the instructions stated in their welcome email. On their first day of work, new employees are required to bring the original copies, when appropriate, of items that establish identity and employment eligibility consistent with form I-9 requirements, such as a driver's license and/or social security card. New employees will be instructed to upload certain documents on the staff portal. New hires who do not present the required documents within 3 days of their date of hire will be terminated in compliance with the Department of Justice's INS Employment Verification procedures.

The human resources department provides a comprehensive new hire orientation, and all new hires are required to complete the orientation within the first two weeks of employment.

New employees are responsible for thoroughly reading this handbook and understanding its content. Best Buddies will review the handbook with the new hires during the new hire orientation at the beginning of their employment. If you have any questions about the handbook content or if you need clarification regarding a policy, reach out to your supervisor or contact the human resources team.

The Best Buddies Policy and Procedures handbook can be downloaded, and it is available on the staff portal. Supervisors can find the new hire guidelines document on the staff portal as well.

Best Buddies training portal is named "Buds," and it is used to provide information and training for all staff. All staff will be required to complete any new all-staff training. Our goal is to create a foundation of knowledge and to ensure familiarity with new staff training.

Process for all-staff training rollouts

- Training will be created and tested with a select group of staff experts
- Training approved by the chairman
- New training requirement announced in an email from Director, Training and Development to all- staff which includes timeframes and deadlines. Staff should take note that training may have a quiz component which must be passed. Staff can retake the quiz, through the online system, if they fail
- Reminders may be sent if needed before the deadline. Regardless of any courtesy reminders sent, completing training is the responsibility of individual staff members
- Late Training: Written warnings will be sent to staff member and supervisor when training is past due: For every workday after receiving a written warning that staff fails to complete the mandatory training, they will be fined \$100 until they have completed

Process for Best Buddies Challenge attendance

Completion of challenge training videos is required for all staff to attend a Best Buddies Challenge per our chairman.

- Staff who have not attended a Challenge will receive the training notice in their information email from the Director, Special Events Finance & Logistics. Completion, before they fly to the event, is mandatory
- Challenge training will be updated regularly and may require re-attendance from existing Challenge staff

Process for new staff attendance

Upon being hired and set up in the staff portal, with a working email, a Buds staff log in is created so that new staff can quickly get up to speed on general Best Buddies information. New hires and their supervisor listed on the start paperwork will receive an email confirming a Buds log in on their first day. Entry into Buds is not contingent on that email, as staff just needs to go to Buds, enter their BBI email, and click 'forgot my password,' to get in. Staff will find required training in My Learning- listed as Assigned or In Progress. Simply start your New Hire Onboarding package. Our goal is to have all-staff training completed and signed off on at the 90-day review. A recommended timeline can be found in the staff portal/Resources/Tools/Reference. Required all-staff training includes:

- New Hire Orientation Recording
- Cybersecurity Baseline Training (in PII Protect)
- Introduction to BBI
- IT Call/Screenshare
- Diversity & Inclusion Training
- Sexual Harassment Training
- Introduction to IDD
- Development Sources of Fundraising
- Summa Nuts & Bolts
- RE/NXT (Raiser's Edge) Nuts & Bolts

New Hire Mentors

All Full-time staff will receive a new hire mentor from an available pool. This 6-week program matches a tenured staff member with new full time staff members to help to the Best Buddies culture. The mentor is not a job coach per se and is not responsible for new staff training. Once secured, supervisors will be copied on the introductory email to the mentor from HR.

Staff resources

Best Buddies has a resource site set up for staff members referred to as the staff portal. Staff members utilize the portal to manage personal and work information, benefits (time off, insurance, etc.), to keep up with monthly news, staff information, and to access many resources including, but not limited to, staff listings and directories, organizational charts, links to other sites, reimbursement system, reference guides, etc. Each employee is given access to the portal at the time of hire.

The staff portal is also a tool for staff management. Each supervisor has "manager access" and can access information and approve requests via the staff portal.

User guides, including "employee access" and "manager access" are available on the portal or by contacting human resources. The portal is updated as needed for news content, every 15th day for lists, charts, etc., and once a month for the monthly announcements. The staff portal is managed by the human resources and operations team. Best Buddies highly encourages each staff member to make the portal their home page.

2025 Office hours – office hours are evaluated each fiscal year

In 2025 Best Buddies will continue to honor a hybrid schedule. Employees may work from home on Mondays and Fridays. Office hours are 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM local time, Monday through Friday; excluding legal holidays (refer

to paid holidays). Employees may request to work from 7:00 AM to 3:00 PM, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, 10:00 AM to 6:00 PM, or 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM, pending approval from their supervisor. Please note that approvals are given based on business demands and some positions do not qualify for a modified schedule.

Best Buddies offers comp time to employees who are required to work outside of office hours to complete their job duties. If an employee is required to work past 9:00 PM, they may report to the office one hour late the next day. If an employee works past 10:00 PM they may report to the office two hours later the next day. The employee has the choice to report to the office at their regular scheduled time and leave early instead. If an employee is required to work past midnight, they may not report to the office but must work from home and be available throughout the day.

Any employee who has been traveling on Best Buddies business and whose return flight arrives later than 8:00 PM local time may report to work one hour late the following day. An employee taking an overnight flight (red eye) does not need to report to the office, however, they must be available via e-mail and phone. Employees are to advise their supervisors when this occurs. Comp time is for exempt employees only, non-exempt staff are paid for each hour worked.

Lunch breaks

Best Buddies provides a maximum of half-hour paid lunch each workday. Employees who wish to have a full-hour lunch are required to work an eight-and-a-half-hour shift. Lunch may be taken at the employee's discretion and as workflow dictates, except lunchtime cannot be used to come in late or leave early. Employees are to keep their lunch break predictable to facilitate their availability to volunteers and other staff members. Unused lunchtime does not accrue and may not be used as makeup for time off taken during the year. Best Buddies encourages every employee to take a lunch break.

Absenteeism and tardiness

Absenteeism and tardiness are unacceptable. Excessive absenteeism and chronic tardiness will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Any employee who will be absent from work for any reason, or who is going to be more than fifteen minutes late, must inform their supervisor and must account for the time off via the staff portal. If an employee is more than fifteen minutes late without taking the appropriate steps, they will receive a written warning. Chronic tardiness or absenteeism will result in written warnings that will be placed in the employee's personnel file at headquarters. No call/no show or three consecutive absences without contacting a supervisor result in immediate termination.

It is important to manage absenteeism according to labor laws. Every manager must communicate with the HR team whenever an issue arises and work together to assist in proper handling. Supervisors are required to report these issues in a timely matter.

Work from home

A work from home arrangement is a cooperative arrangement with existing employees or a new hire. If an employee resides or is transitioning to a location beyond 70 miles from a designated office, the employee or their immediate supervisor can propose a work from home arrangement. Recognizing the unique needs and situations of every individual, each request will be thoughtfully assessed on a case-by-case basis with their direct supervisor, the pertinent vice president, and the founder and chairman.

Employees who work from home must follow and sign off on the work from home guidelines available on the staff portal. Approval is required for any new hires or existing employees who are changing positions and approval must be in writing.

Work from home employees agree to utilize their home address as their Best Buddies business address and understand that the information will be handled the same way we manage state office information.

Payroll periods

Paydays occur on the 15th day of the month and on the last day of the month. Paychecks for salaried staff members consist of the hours worked during the current pay period. Hourly staff members will receive their first paycheck on the pay period following the completion of a timecard, which includes hours for two weeks of work; this being said, hourly employees will be paid one pay period behind. If a payday falls on a weekend or holiday, checks will be issued on the previous business day. If offices are closed due to a staff appreciation day, payday will remain on its original schedule.

Direct deposit is available to all employees. Employees who are interested in enrolling should fill out a direct deposit form and forward it to human resources. All forms are available on the staff portal. Live paychecks are sent out via 2-day FedEx according to instructions given by the employee to human resources.

Office attire

All Best Buddies personnel are expected to present a neat, well-groomed appearance during working hours. Professional attire must be worn during work hours and at any time an employee is representing Best Buddies. Attire, jewelry, makeup, and hair are to be *appropriate for the workplace*. Ties are not required but may be appropriate for some personnel at times and in certain situations. For those staff members who are in contact with the community, a more professional appearance may be appropriate.

Flip-flops, jeans, sneakers, shorts, leggings, denim, sweatpants, visible facial piercing, and extreme hair color (yellow, purple, fuchsia, blue, pink etc.) cannot be worn during working hours. Body work and/or tattoos must be covered during work hours or while on Best Buddies business.

Employees are welcome to wear Best Buddies T-shirts any day of the week. We also encourage employees to wear clothing items (and products) from our sponsors or with sponsor logos and Best Buddies merchandise items. Employees are allowed to wear nice, clean (not torn, inappropriately tight, or extremely worn) jeans and tennis shoes every Thursday.

Personnel records

Best Buddies keeps an individual personnel record for each employee in a secure, cloud-based staff portal. Employee information, such as emergency contact or employment history, is available to supervisors on the staff portal. Supervisors are encouraged to keep a paper copy of employee's emergency contact stored in a safe, easy to access location; however, supervisors are not to keep copies of new hire paperwork in the office. The human resources department maintains employment documents in the personnel file located at the headquarters office.

Each employee has the responsibility to update their contact information on the staff portal whenever necessary. Staff members are required to provide Best Buddies with an updated and accurate address, phone numbers, work information etc. and are responsible for making these changes directly on the portal. Personnel records are confidential and stored in a locked file. Access to personnel files will be restricted to the employee, their supervisor, and the appropriate vice president, senior director, director and/or founder and chairman. Employees may make an appointment to review their own files with human resources. Employees who examine their personnel files are to do so in the presence of a human resources representative who has custody of Best Buddies employment records. Employees are not permitted to remove or to copy any item from their file but may request a copy of their own resume from the file.

All employment records are the property of Best Buddies. Their contents are confidential and will not be released or made available to any person, including separated employees, except as required by law.

Limited employee information is transferred to Raiser's Edge (RE) at the time of hire (name and Best Buddies e-mail account). Some employees may update their information on Raiser's Edge directly or their information may be captured if they make a check or online donation.

RE, and the data it contains may only be used for business purposes. A personal holiday card is not an appropriate

use of contact information whether it is sent to an employee or donor. Employee information available on RE may only be used according to donor management guidelines and for Best Buddies business.

Supervisors may access employee information on the staff portal, however, only use it for human resources related needs. If a manager wishes to send a birthday card, holiday card or any other items, they should use the employee's office address, unless the employee provides the home address in writing. Employees who work from home agree to make their home address available and published as their business contact, therefore supervisors may use their home address as an office address.

Every effort should be made to protect the privacy and confidentiality of employee information and personal information should never be shared on paper or via e-mail.

Record Retention

All employment and personnel records and documents collected by Human Resources, regardless of format, will be retained for a minimum of seven (7) years from the date of collection, as required by legal and regulatory obligations. This includes, but is not limited to, financial records, employment records, contracts, and other documents deemed necessary for compliance and operational purposes.

Off-site storage is kept at a central location through Iron Mountain services; the inventory list and the off-site inventory is maintained by the Office Manager.

Driving for Best Buddies

Staff members required to drive for Best Buddies business must maintain a valid driver's license and, when using personal vehicles, must maintain auto insurance. Best Buddies staff and authorized individuals driving on Best Buddies business shall observe all applicable driving laws and shall not engage in text messaging or any other conduct that would constitute distracted driving. (Best Buddies business is defined as work necessary to carry out Best Buddies projects, programs, and responsibilities.)

Employees who drive rental vehicles are required to have the following included in their personnel file:

- Copy of valid driver's license.
- Copy of Motor Vehicle Record (pre-hire and annually thereafter) that has been reviewed based on company MVR acceptability standards.
- Those who occasionally drive personal vehicles on company business (10%-40% of the workday) are required have the following included in their personnel file:
 - Copy of valid driver's license.
 - Copy of Motor Vehicle Record (pre-hire and annually thereafter) that has been reviewed based on company MVR acceptability standards.
 - Proof of current insurance.

Best Buddies MVR acceptability standards are as follows:

To be considered an acceptable driver, a driver must maintain a valid driver's license and not have been convicted for any one of the following violations within the previous 36 months.

- Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Driving while ability impaired by alcohol or drugs.
- Leaving the scene of an accident.
- Reckless driving.
- Speeding over a posted limit by 40 or more m.p.h.
- Driving while license is suspended or revoked.

- Driving personal vehicle without adequate insurance.
- Attempting to elude a police officer.

Auto accidents must be reported to human resources as soon as possible by the staff member or anyone with knowledge of the accident. Incident forms are available on the staff portal and should be submitted whenever the staff member is able to fill it out. Staff members involved in any accidents must seek emergency medical assistance as needed.

Salary determination

All Best Buddies employees are either exempt or non-exempt from federal wage and hour laws. Employees are notified of their status when hired. Non-exempt employees will be paid overtime in accordance with these laws. Best Buddies pays each employee based on performance, salary history, job duties, and length of service. Salaries are set according to the level of education required, experience, qualifications, degree of responsibility, state requirements, department, state budgets, and supervisory duties.

Performance reviews

All Best Buddies employees are initially evaluated by their supervisor during a 90-calendar day introductory period and thereafter on an annual basis. Detailed performance evaluation information and guidelines for staff members and supervisors are available on the portal.

Human resources will schedule all introductory and annual reviews on the staff portal at the time of hire and each year following. Performance evaluation records are uploaded on the portal and available to the staff members and supervisor.

Staff members and supervisors are required to understand the Best Buddies performance evaluation process and must adhere to the process and all deadlines accordingly. Note that it is important for performance evaluations to be completed in a timely manner. Salary increases connected with performance evaluations will not be approved until the evaluation is uploaded on the portal and the salary request is submitted via the portal as well. All evaluations are to be submitted within 30 calendar days after the employee's anniversary and retroactive pay will not be processed for more than 30 days.

Transfers

When staffing vacancies occur, Best Buddies strives to recruit and hire the most qualified individuals for its openings. All open opportunities are posted on our internal career center job board for at minimum two weeks, allowing all interested staff to have the opportunity to apply for an available role and a chance to be considered. Internal candidates, as well as candidates from outside the organization, will be considered for all positions. Employees interested in being considered for other positions within the company are required to follow the Internal Candidate procedure and inform their current supervisor of their interest and intention to begin the interview process. The internal candidate application can be found on the staff portal. When current employees are chosen to fill vacant positions, the new supervisor will coordinate the transfer with the existing supervisor and human resources. Employees are asked to remain in their current position for at least nine (9) months before applying for or transferring to another position within Best Buddies. Employees with disciplinary issues such as warnings will be reviewed for transfers on a case-by-case basis. Furthermore, transfers may affect an employee's review date and consequently any increases due to the employee prior to the transfer. This is in part due to different state/region budgets. Employees are encouraged to discuss this with the hiring manager early in the transfer process.

Disciplinary actions

Violations of Best Buddies policies and procedures or areas of performance that need improvement may result in verbal or written warnings. Disciplinary action usually begins with a verbal warning from the employee's supervisor. If improvement does not occur a formal written warning will be issued by the employee's supervisor and/ or respective director, senior director or vice president. If improvement still does not occur, a final written

warning will be issued prior to separation. Certain violations of policies or failure to perform up to standard may be grounds for separation without any warnings or notice.

Separations

Staff turnover is disruptive, and we strive to make it possible for each employee to realize their career goals within our organization. Best Buddies encourages all its employees to commit to programs for the duration of the academic year since we ask our program participants to make the same commitment.

Separations can be “voluntary” or “involuntary.” A voluntary separation is when the employee initiates the separation process by his or her own will. It is requested that employees who desire to voluntarily end their employment give two weeks’ notice of their intent to resign; more is valued. Employees who engage in any misconduct after they have given notice of their intent to resign will be terminated without notice.

An involuntary separation is when Best Buddies initiates the termination process. Involuntary separations require prior approval from human resources.

Human resources will prepare separation paperwork for every employee leaving the organization. Final pay is issued on payday following the last day of employment. Every effort is made to pay the employees all their wages on their last paycheck. However, at times, an employee may owe the organization for stipends, used/un-accrued vacation/sick time, the replacement of access cards/keys or other expenses such as ticket airlines tickets etc. If you have any questions regarding final pay, you may reach out to human resources. We recommend that you review your time off balances with human resources prior to any resignations.

Any employee who chooses to end their employment with Best Buddies prior to the staff leadership conference and/or leadership conference, staff retreat, external conference or any other travel arrangements but AFTER their flight has been ticketed and paid for, will be responsible for reimbursing Best Buddies for the cost of the airline ticket and any applicable taxes or any other travel related costs.

Most separating employees will be given an exit interview form to be completed and discussed during a formal exit interview, conducted by human resources. During the interview, employees will have an opportunity to discuss the reasons for leaving and any problems they may have encountered. The information obtained in the interview will help Best Buddies grow as an organization.

Employment verifications

All employment verification for current or former employees must be handled appropriately to avoid legal issues. Therefore, all requests for verification of employment are to be directed to human resources at the headquarters office.

Best Buddies supervisors, including senior management, are prohibited from giving out recommendation letters to any employees. A manager who wishes to give a personal recommendation to a staff member for employment, school programs, etc. may do so but not on Best Buddies stationary.

Best Buddies founder and chairman is not able to give references, either personal or professional.

Subpoena and other legal processes

If a subpoena, search warrant, investigation, or other legal action is served upon an employee for business-related records containing confidential information, the employee should immediately notify HR. Human Resources is the record keeper for all legal matters and will handle all requests according to legal requirements.

Mandatory retirement age

Best Buddies’ mandatory age for retirement is 80 years of age. Employees who reach the age of eighty (80) shall retire at the end of the month in which their eightieth birthday occurs.

Section 3: Compensation and benefits

Group health insurance

Best Buddies provides excellent group medical and dental insurance plans and voluntary benefits to full-time, salaried and hourly employees who work a minimum of 40 hours per week. The human resources team will conduct a benefit meeting once a month and for those who elect. Coverage is effective on the first day of the month following the completion of 60 days of employment. If an employee does not enroll at the time of hire, they will have the opportunity to enroll during open enrollment, held in December.

Employees who experience a “life changing event” such as the birth or addition of a child, marriage, divorce, or loss of coverage elsewhere will become eligible to enroll in the Best Buddies group insurance. Employees have 30 days from the date of the qualifying event to update the information on the staff portal. Once the information is updated and approved by human resources, the employee will be given permission to elect or make changes to the coverage via the staff portal.

Medical, dental and vision coverage are available to eligible employees and their dependents. Employees may choose coverage for employee only, employee and spouse or domestic partner of same or opposite sex, employee and children or family coverage. Best Buddies makes additional contributions to assist with coverage cost for employees enrolled in the family or employee and child plans based on tenure (2 years and 5 years). Please reach out to human resources for additional information on rates and cost.

The detailed provisions and benefits of the group insurance plans are contained in the certificate of coverage booklet. Please contact human resources for a certificate of coverage.

Group life and accident insurance

Best Buddies provides group life and accident insurance to all full-time employees. Coverage is effective on the first day of the month following the completion of 60 days of employment. This coverage is provided to full time employees at no cost.

Flexible spending plan

Best Buddies offers a flexible spending account (FSA) to assist staff members with their medical and dependent care expenses. Full-time employees are eligible to enroll in the Best Buddies flexible spending plan during open enrollment, upon completing six (6) months of employment. Information regarding this benefit is available on the staff portal. Employees who wish to enroll should contact human resources.

Commuter benefits

Best Buddies offers pre-tax commuter benefit. A commuter benefit program allows employees to pay for parking or other transportation costs using pre-taxed dollars directly from their paycheck. No waiting period required to start a commuter benefit account. Detailed information is available on the staff portal and by contacting human resources.

Parking benefits

Best Buddies will reimburse employees with 20 years of tenure and over for expenses incurred for parking in and/or commuting to a Best Buddies office location. The employee must be a full-time employee and be required to work out of an office on a full-time basis. Best Buddies will reimburse up to \$155.00 for either parking or transit expenses.

Supplemental insurance

Best Buddies provides a variety of supplemental insurance options through Colonial Life and Aflac, including

accident, cancer, critical illness, hospital confinement, short and long-term disability, term and universal life. Detailed information is available on the staff portal and by contacting human resources.

Cobra

The Consolidated Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) requires that most employers sponsoring group health plans offer employees the opportunity for a temporary extension of health coverage at group rates. Employees are eligible under COBRA if health insurance coverage is lost due to a reduction in hours or termination of employment. The maximum length for continuation of coverage is 18 months. The terminated employee is responsible for payment of the premium under COBRA.

Upon separation, the employee's coverage will be effective until the last day of the month in which the employee is separating. Human resources will send information directly to the employees concerning COBRA coverage and the COBRA process, including the enrollment form.

Savings and retirement plan

The savings & retirement 401(k) Plan is designed to help employees prepare for retirement and a secure future. Full-time employees are eligible to enroll in the Best Buddies 401(K) plan after six (6) months of employment. The 401(k) Plan is administered by John Hancock through Best Buddies human resources department. Human resources will notify the employee when he/she becomes eligible to enroll on a quarterly basis. Employees will be notified within the quarter in which they become eligible and have until the last day of the quarter to enroll. New accounts or changes are effective on the 1st day of each quarter.

Employees may contribute the maximum allowed by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) per calendar year (on a pre-taxed basis). Best Buddies matches 50% of an employee's contribution up to 5% of the employees' wages per pay period. It is important to note that the employer match is made on a pay period basis (not annual).

The savings & retirement 401(k) Plan allows for employees who are 50 and older, to make catch-up contributions. Effective 2018, Best Buddies contributes a match to catch up contributions as well.

Following the completion of each year of employment, employees are vested as follows: less than 2 years – 0%, 2 years – 20%, 3 years – 40%, 4 years – 60%, 5 years – 80%, 6 years – 100%.

Best Buddies 401(K) is set up to allow participant loans. All loans are managed directly by John Hancock and you may request one via your John Hancock online account or by contacting a John Hancock representative.

Best Buddies summary plan description containing all details of the plan is available on the staff portal. For questions regarding eligibility, enrollment, or details regarding the plan, you may contact human resources or John Hancock directly by calling 1-800-395-1113. Best Buddies highly encourages staff members to participate.

Leave policies and disclaimer

Vacation, personal time, sick leave, extended sick leave, and family leave are managed via the staff portal (requests, cancellations, changes, past records, etc.). All requests require supervisor and human resources approval. Requests for time off must be submitted in advance and before the time is utilized. Human resources reserve the right to inquire about time off requests and ensure that employees utilize time off appropriately, not exceeding their allowed time off. Any approved time off that is found to have exceeded the allowed time off or that is utilized inappropriately will be unpaid. The allowed time off to individual employees will be determined per the guidelines established in the sections that follow.

Vacation

All employees who work a regular schedule of at least 40 hours per week are given paid vacation time, based on length of service, and measured by the date of hire. Employees who worked for Best Buddies for at least one full year before leaving and return to Best Buddies within eighteen months of the date employment ended will

have their benefit reinstated based on their original date of hire.

Best Buddies chairman and founder truly believes in work life balance and our time off policies are designed to make work life balance possible. For this reason, Best Buddies fronts vacation and sick time to the employees, however, expects that if an employee leaves the organization prior to earning the time off, the employee will repay Best Buddies. In other words, Best Buddies makes available to the employee time off that would be accrued based on a full year of work instead of a monthly accrual. If an employee separates from Best Buddies and has used vacation time that was not accrued, the employee will owe Best Buddies for all the un-accrued vacation days taken. Approving time off that is not accrued is at the discretion of the supervisor.

Vacation time is given at the rates outlined below:

Tenure	Vacation days per year	Monthly accrual rate	What does accrual mean?
One - Three years	14	1.17	Employee accrues 1.17 vacation day per month
Four - Six years	17	1.42	Employee accrues 1.42 vacation day per month
Seven - Ten years	20	1.67	Employee accrues 1.67 vacation day per month
Eleven or more years	23	1.92	Employee accrues 1.92 vacation day per month

Employees must submit time off requests *prior to* taking the time. Employees must submit requests for more than three consecutive vacation days at least one week in advance, and requests for more than ten consecutive vacation days two weeks in advance. There are no exceptions to this advanced notice policy requirement. Vacation time requests are to be submitted via the staff portal.

Vacation time renews each year on the employee's anniversary date and starts over with an available balance of zero (0) (unless the employee has rolled over unused days; please see vacation carryover below).

Pay is not given in lieu of vacation at the time of separation; except for the states that require it by law.

Vacation carryover

Employees are strongly urged to utilize their vacation time during the year! However, due to changing business needs, employees may carryover unused accrued vacation to the following year. Once vacation days have been carried over to the following year, they must be utilized during that year.

Employees may carryover vacation days per the following schedule:

Tenure	Vacation Carryover
One - Three years	2 days per year
Four - Six years	3 days per year
Seven - Ten years	4 days per year
Eleven or more years	7 days per year

Unused vacation time will be carried over automatically according with the schedule above.

Paid time off for part time employees

Part-time employees who work at least 5 hours per week will receive 40 hours of paid time off each year. Part time employees can utilize paid time off for vacation, personal, holiday and sick time as needed. Paid time off for part time staff does not carry over from one year to another. Paid time off must be requested and approved through the staff portal.

Leave for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking

An employee who is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking may take time off from work to: (1) obtain or attempt to obtain any relief, including, but not limited to, a temporary restraining order, restraining order, or other injunctive relief, to help insure the health, safety, or welfare of the employee or his or her child; (2) seek medical attention for injuries caused by domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking; (3) obtain services from a domestic violence shelter, program, or rape crisis center as a result of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking; (4) obtain psychological counseling related to an experience of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking; (5) participate in safety planning and take other actions to increase safety from future domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, including temporary or permanent relocation. An employee taking time off for purposes under this section must give the Company reasonable advance notice of the employee's intention to take time off, unless the advance notice is not feasible. The Company may ask the employee to provide (on a confidential basis) certification of the reason for the absence. Certification may be: (1) a police report indicating that the employee was a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking; (2) a court order protecting or separating the employee from the perpetrator of an act of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking; (3) evidence from the court or prosecuting attorney that the employee has appeared in court; (4) documentation from a licensed medical professional, domestic violence counselor, licensed health care provider, or counselor that the employee was undergoing treatment for physical or mental injuries resulting in victimization from an act of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Paid holidays

Best Buddies provides paid holidays as listed below. Any changes will be noted in advance. If an employee is absent the day before or the day after a holiday without a doctor's note, he/she will not be paid for the holiday or the sick day.

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Presidents' Day
- Good Friday*
- Memorial Day (observed)
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Juneteenth
- Rosemary Kennedy day**
- Columbus Day or Veteran's Day. (This requires supervisor's approval.)
- Thanksgiving Day
- The Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day*
- New Year's Day

*These are floating holidays and employees may utilize these days to observe the religious holidays of their choice.

** Founder and chairman established a new Best Buddies holiday – Rosemary Kennedy Day, in honor of his aunt Rosemary Kennedy's birthday. This official holiday will be celebrated annually on Rosemary Kennedy's birthday, September 13th. For employees to participate in the observance of this holiday, they must be a contributor to the Staff Team Rosemary [giving campaign](#).

Sick leave

All employees who work a regular schedule of at least 40 hours per week shall be given .50 days of sick leave per month (6 days per year). Employees are to notify their supervisor before the beginning of the shift if they will be out sick. Sick time is to be used for illness and medical appointments only. Sick leave is not for non-medical needs; employees may draw from their available vacation days for such purposes. Extended absences (three or more consecutive days) will require a doctor's note.

Unused sick time at the end of each year will accrue for use as extended sick leave; up to a maximum of 17 days (refer to extended sick leave below). Unused sick time will rollover to extended sick time automatically. No pay will be given in lieu of sick leave time, either during employment or at time of separation.

If an employee leaves Best Buddies and has used more sick time than accrued, the employee will owe Best Buddies for all the unaccrued sick time taken. Sick time renews each year on the employee's anniversary date and starts over with an available balance of zero (0).

Pay will not be given in lieu of sick time at the time of separation.

Extended paid sick leave

Extended paid sick leave is afforded to assist full-time employees needing extended time off due to a serious illness or a health condition. If an employee wishes to take extended paid sick leave they are to contact human resources and must follow the procedures applicable for employees seeking to take medical leave under the family and medical leave policy, including the provision of a certification from their medical provider regarding the necessity for the leave.

Employees' unused sick leave at the time of their anniversary will be added to their extended sick leave balance automatically. During the 1st year of employment, an employee will have no extended sick time. Employees may accrue a maximum of 136 hours of extended sick leave.

Family and medical leave

Best Buddies is fully compliant with the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA). The FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to "eligible" employees for certain family and medical reasons. Employees are eligible if they have worked for their employer for at least one year, at least 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and work at a location in the United States or in any territory or possession of the United States where at least 50 employees are employed by Best Buddies within 75 miles. The FMLA permits employees to take leave on an intermittent basis or to work a reduced schedule under certain circumstances. Reasons for taking leave:

- birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care
- to care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) with a serious health condition
- to take medical leave when the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition
- for military-related leave; i.e. a "qualifying exigency" arising out of covered family member's active duty or call to active duty in the armed forces in support, for preparation of a contingency plan; and/or to care for a covered family member who has incurred an injury or illness in the line of duty while on active duty in the Armed Forces provided that such an injury or illness may render the family member medically unfit to perform duties of the member's office, grade, rank or rating

Please contact human resources for more information regarding FMLA and/or to apply.

Employees must apply for FMLA in advance. When the need for FMLA leave is foreseeable, employees are expected to complete a Leave of Absence Request Form 30 days prior to the leave. If the need for FMLA leave

is unplanned, an employee should provide notice of the need for leave as soon as possible and practical (normally this should be the same day the employee becomes aware of the need for leave or the next business day), With the exception of an emergency illness, approval is to be obtained prior to the start of the leave and failure to complete the necessary leave forms within the designated time frame could result in a delay of leave and/or benefits.

Best Buddies provides 5 weeks of paid Family leave once an FMLA request is approved. Staff members may also utilize their extended sick time and current paid time off as described below. Paid time off will be given in the following order:

- Family leave
- Extended sick leave
- Current year accrued sick leave
- Current year accrued vacation leave

Employees may not exceed 12 weeks of FMLA leave within a 12-month period. A 12-month period begins on the date of your first use of FMLA Leave. Successive 12-month periods commence on the date of your first use of such leave after the preceding 12-month period has ended. Once all available paid time off benefits are exhausted, pay will be discontinued and the employee will be placed on unpaid leave.

Under most circumstances, you will be reinstated to the same position held at the time of the leave or to an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions. However, you have no greater right to reinstatement than if you had been continuously employed rather than on leave. For example, if you would have been laid off had you not gone on leave, or if your position has been eliminated during the leave, then you will not be entitled to reinstatement.

Prior to being allowed to return to work, an employee wishing to return from medical leave relating to a serious health condition must submit an acceptable release from a health care provider that certifies the employee can perform the essential functions of the job as those essential functions relate to the employee's serious health condition. For an employee on intermittent FMLA leave, such a release may be required if reasonable safety concerns exist regarding the employee's ability to perform his or her duties, based on the serious health condition for which the employee took the intermittent leave.

Parental leave

Best Buddies has a parental leave guide available via the staff portal or by contacting human resources. This guide is a great resource for expectant parents, and we encourage you to review it. Expectant mothers or anyone looking to adopt, are eligible for leave under the FMLA are required to apply for FMLA leave and are entitled to use paid time off as stated under the family and medical leave policy.

Expectant spouses or adopting parents not seeking to take more than two weeks off relating to the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care need not to apply for FMLA, however, Best Buddies will pay paternity leave according to the family leave schedule. If an expectant father intends to take more than two weeks off relating to the birth or placement of a child, they will be required to apply for FMLA leave. See Family and Medical Leave policy for eligibility requirements.

Best Buddies offers 5 paid weeks of leave and WFH benefits for up to 6 months to allow for a gradual return to the workplace. For examples and additional information, please refer to the parental guide available on the staff portal.

Breastfeeding employees

Best Buddies recognizes the health advantages of breastfeeding for infants and mothers and strives to provide a supportive environment to enable breastfeeding employees to express their milk during work hours. Best Buddies employees are allowed to breastfeed or express milk during work hours using their normal breaks and mealtimes. For times that may be needed beyond the usual break times, employees may use paid time off such as vacation or sick time. A private room (not a toilet stall or restroom) shall be made available for employees to breastfeed or

express milk. The room will be private and sanitary, located near a sink with running water for washing hands and rinsing breast pump parts, and have an electrical outlet.

Supervisors are responsible for supporting pregnant and breastfeeding employees and will work with human resources to help facilitate each employee's goals. It is expected that all employees will assist in providing a positive atmosphere of support for breastfeeding employees.

In Addition, supervisors will work with all breastfeeding employees who are required to travel to accommodate individual needs and should an employee be required to travel when breastfeeding, Best Buddies will reimburse full time employees for the cost of shipping breastmilk. Best Buddies will reimburse up to \$200.00 for each shipment.

Jury Duty and National Election Day

Best Buddies believes that each citizen has a civic responsibility to serve on jury duty and to vote. In support of this policy, Best Buddies will pay regular wages to employees during jury service per the requirements of state and local laws.

The employee is required to call their supervisor (or human resources, if applicable) daily and report on the expected term of service. In addition, if the employee is excused for the day (or a portion of the day); he/she is required to report to the office.

Upon completion of service, the employee is to obtain a Certificate of Juror's Attendance from the court and forward it to human resources no later than 2 days after returning to work.

To encourage all employees to vote, Best Buddies allows employees up to four hours of time off during Statewide and National Election Days. The time off may be used any time during the day.

Compassionate leave

Any employee who has a death in the immediate family is eligible for compassionate leave. Up to three days will be granted; up to five days will be granted for out-of-town travel. Immediate family includes your spouse or domestic partner of same or opposite sex, children, siblings, parents, and grandparents of the employee or the employee's spouse. Compassionate leave will not be granted for other than immediate family members as described above. Please refrain from requesting compassionate leave for other than immediate family members; vacation time may be used for such purposes.

All requests for compassionate leave must be submitted via the staff portal and require supervisor and human resources approval. Staff members with unusual circumstances may contact human resources.

Worker's compensation

Best Buddies pays the entire amount of the worker's compensation insurance premium which provides benefits to employees who experience injury or illness connected with employment. To be eligible for worker's compensation benefits, the injury must be a direct result of the job. Benefit entitlements are governed by law, but it is essential that you report work related accidents, injuries, and illnesses immediately. Any accident occurring on the job, however minor, must be reported to a supervisor and to the human resources department immediately and an incident report must be prepared in accordance with worker's compensation laws. Incident report forms are available on the staff portal.

In case of accident, injury or illness, the employee should seek care immediately. Employees who have a medical emergency have to call 911. Once the employee is safe, the employee or the supervisor should notify human resources as soon as possible so the issue is reported to the worker's compensation carrier. Note: it is always a priority to ensure that the employee receives appropriate care.

Military leave

Any employee who is a uniformed service member will be granted up to two weeks of unpaid military leave annually.

If active duty is to exceed two weeks, advanced notice is necessary. Uniformed Service members who have missed less than 5 years of employment due to military service are entitled to reemployment, provided they comply with the provisions set forth in Uniformed Service Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). Compensation, benefit time, and other benefits will all be reviewed and adjusted in compliance with USERRA's requirements, as well as Best Buddies policies and procedures, upon reemployment.

Employee recognition programs

Employee of the month

A \$100 bonus will be paid to the employee of the month. This award is given to an employee who has performed exceptionally during the month. Nominations for this recognition are welcome and should be submitted via a survey link on the staff portal and on SharePoint homepage.

Employee of the year

The employee of the year award is given to employees who demonstrated outstanding service and dedication to the Best Buddies mission. The nomination form is available all year long on the Best Buddies SharePoint homepage. Employee of the year announcements are made during the Staff Leadership Conference and award recipients are recognized during that time.

Staff commitment bonuses

Best Buddies is invested in retaining talent. To encourage staff to commit to their positions on a long-term basis, Best Buddies offers a commitment bonus to the staff member who completes 2, 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years of service.

Upon completing two full years of service the employee is entitled to 40 hours of vacation (in addition to regular accruals). This time off bonus must be utilized within 6 months of the employee's two-year anniversary. Thereafter, Best Buddies recognizes employees who complete 5, 10, 15, 20 and 25 years of service to the organization. Employees are recognized during the staff leadership conference and receive an award for the following years of service:

- 5 years of employment
- 10 years of employment
- 15 years of employment
- 20 years of employment
- 25 years of employment
- 30 years of employment
- 35 years of employment

Note that upon the completion of two years of employment, employees also become eligible to submit proposals for tuition reimbursement. Proposed professional development courses or training must relate to the employee's job duties at Best Buddies. Appropriate proposals for seminars/conferences, professional membership, CFRE classes and College courses relevant to work will be considered on a case-per-case basis. Proposals must be approved by the supervisor for content approval, prior to being submitted to human resources for budget approval. Budget approval will be given based on Best Buddies financial circumstances at the time of request.

Tuition Reimbursement

Upon the completion of two years of employment, employees also become eligible to submit proposals for tuition reimbursement. Proposed professional development courses or training must relate to the employee's job duties at Best Buddies. Appropriate proposals for seminars/conferences, professional membership, CFRE classes and

College courses relevant to work will be considered on a case-per-case basis. Proposals must be approved by the supervisor for content approval, prior to being submitted to human resources for budget approval. Budget approval will be given based on Best Buddies financial circumstances at the time of request. Employees must write a request letter explaining course relevance and include course description and cost. Employees must submit a request to their supervisor for content approval and the supervisor will forward it to HR for final approval. Please allow a minimum of 2 weeks since this requires several approvals.

Employee referral bonus

A \$250 bonus will be paid to employees for each person referred to Best Buddies who successfully completes six months of employment. The employment application includes a line for the applicant to name the person making the referral; employees are to ask the applicant to complete this section.

Sabbatical leave

Sabbatical leave is a benefit available to staff members who have completed 15 years of employment with the organization. Sabbatical leave is granted for the express purpose of providing an opportunity for tenured staff members to enhance either personal or professional development through social activism or professional activities. A staff member who has completed 15 years of work may apply for a sabbatical of up to three months. Staff members will receive full pay and continuation of all benefits for the entire duration of the sabbatical. Proposals should follow a formal format and include detailed information regarding the purpose, length, and coverage plan for the sabbatical. Proposals must be submitted and approved by the supervisor and sent to human resources for final approval of the chairman.

Staff appreciation days

From time to time, the founder and chairman may award an extra day off in appreciation for the hard work our staff does. These are extra days off and are not charged to the employee's leave; they are bonus days, and they may not be substituted for another time. Advance notice is usually given; however, it isn't guaranteed. Staff appreciation is a gift of *time off* for employees who are working, if an employee is out on vacation, leave or are not working for some reason, the employee will not be able to take advantage of the time off. Often employees may not be able to take time off during staff appreciation time due to business demands. If the employee is unable to change previously scheduled appointments, he/she forfeits that staff appreciation day. Best Buddies expects that employees will prioritize according to their workload. Staff appreciation is a gift, it is not guaranteed that it will be given at any time, and it is not to be requested.

During staff appreciation time, employees are required to check their e-mails and be responsive. No "out of office" messages please, unless employees have scheduled vacation time.

Volunteerism

Best Buddies encourages each staff member to take time for volunteer work, included but not limited to work at a local institution, such as school, childcare center, hospital, hospice, recreation center, senior citizen center, adult daycare center, homeless shelter, indigent feeding program, cooperative food banks etc. Each member of staff is granted one full pay day for such activity per fiscal year. This can be taken individually or as a group and requires coordination with and approval from the supervisor.

Section 4: Policy Statements

Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation

Policy

It is the policy of Best Buddies that no employee shall be subjected to any form of harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or abusive conduct by any supervisor, manager, co-worker, other employee, or third-party (such as a guest, vendor, or other visitor to our workplace). This includes harassment, discrimination, or retaliation on the basis of race, age, creed, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, handicap, physical disability, mental disability, sex, gender identity, gender expression, or military and veteran status of any person, or other characteristic protected by law ("Protected Classes"). Best Buddies will not permit any form of conduct, verbal, physical, written, or visual, that violates the rights of other employees to work in a harassment-free and discrimination-free environment. The conduct herein proscribed is not only strictly prohibited by Best Buddies, but harassment or discrimination in employment because of any of the categories noted above is PROHIBITED BY LAW. The law expressly prohibits coworkers and third parties, as well as supervisors and managers, with whom the employee comes into contact from engaging in the conduct prohibited by this policy. Best Buddies does not tolerate any form of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, even when it does not rise to the level of a violation of law.

Best Buddies does not tolerate any malicious or false complaints of sexual harassment and will take legal action accordingly.

Purpose

This policy is formulated to protect our employees against any form of prohibited harassment, discrimination, retaliation, or abusive conduct, taking into account the unique sensitivities of the employee. As to Best Buddies' prohibition against sexual harassment, this policy is formulated to protect all employees, of any gender, against unsolicited and unwelcome sexual overtures and conduct, whether physical, verbal, written, or visual in nature. The policy applies even in the instance of same sex or gender harassment.

Definitions

"Harassment" is the creation of a hostile work environment due to severe or pervasive harassment of any employee on the basis of one or more of the Protected Characteristics of an employee as listed above.

"Discrimination" is unequal treatment of any employee on the basis of one or more of the Protected Characteristics of an employee as listed above.

"Abusive conduct" or "bullying" refers to an instance when an employer or employee conducts themselves in the workplace, with malice, in a manner that a reasonable person would find hostile, offensive, and unrelated to an employer's legitimate business interests. Such conduct may include (1) repeated infliction of verbal abuse, such as the use of derogatory remarks, insults and epithets; (2) verbal or physical conduct that a reasonable person would find threatening, intimidating or humiliating; or (3) the gratuitous sabotage or undermining of a person's work performance. A single act does not constitute abusive conduct, unless especially severe and egregious.

The following non-exclusive list sets forth examples of the conduct which violate Best Buddies' policy against sexual harassment:

- Any demand or subtle pressure for sexual favors that is accompanied by a promise or suggestion of favorable job treatment or threat against an employee's employment status; or
- Any behavior that is offensive to a reasonable person, including, without limitation, repeated sexual flirtations or propositions, comments or jokes of a sexual nature, suggestive gestures, leering, sexually degrading words, verbal or written comments about a person's body or other suggestive comments, the display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, and uninvited physical contact or touching; or

- Retaliation based rejection, in whole or in part, of sexual advances or for complaining about sexual harassment in the workplace.
- Sexual or discriminatory displays or publications anywhere in the workplace, such as displays of pictures, posters, calendars, graffiti, objects, books or other materials that are sexually suggestive, demeaning or pornographic.

Reporting of Violation

Any employee who believes they are a victim of a form of unlawful harassment, discrimination, or retaliation is to report the matter, either verbally or in writing, to a manager, Human Resources, or other Best Buddies' officer as soon as possible after an incident occurs. The employee is not required to report through any chain of command, and certainly is not required to report or discuss the matter with any manager engaging in improper conduct. Managers are required to report any complaints of misconduct to Human Resources, or other Best Buddies' officer as soon as possible after an incident is reported to the manager. When Best Buddies receives allegations of misconduct, it will conduct a fair, timely and thorough investigation that provides all parties with appropriate due process, and it will reach reasonable conclusions based on the evidence collected. The confidentiality and privacy of employees will be respected during the investigation to the extent allowed by law.

Retaliation

Best Buddies strictly forbids retaliation against anyone who reports discrimination, harassment, or retaliation to Best Buddies or any state or federal agency such as, but not limited to, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or who participates in any resulting investigation by Best Buddies or by any state or federal agency. Such conduct will itself give rise to appropriate corrective action which typically results in termination. Examples of strictly prohibited retaliatory action include but are not limited to:

- Disciplining, changing work assignments of, refusing to cooperate or discuss work-related matters with any employee because that employee has complained about or resisted harassment or retaliation; and
- Intentionally pressuring, falsely denying, lying about, or otherwise covering up or attempting to cover up conduct such as that described in any item above.

Disciplinary Action

Depending on the results of the investigation of a claim of unlawful harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, disciplinary action will be taken against any employee Best Buddies believes, in its sole discretion, to have violated this policy against unlawful harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, up to and including an unpaid suspension or termination of employment.

Equal Employment Opportunity

Best Buddies believes that all employees are entitled to Equal Employment Opportunity, and that the success of the organization is primarily dependent on you, our employees. We do not discriminate against employees or applicants for employment because of race, age, creed, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, handicap, physical or mental disability, veteran's and/or military status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state and local law. This policy applies to all employment practices of Best Buddies including, but not limited to, recruiting, hiring (or failure to hire), placement, promotions, transfers, training, compensation, fringe benefits, demotions, layoffs and harassment, sexual or otherwise, in the workplace.

Similarly, Best Buddies believes that all patrons and visitors are equally entitled to a courteous and enjoyable experience while at Best Buddies. As such, the organization does not in any way discriminate, nor allow its employees or others to in any way discriminate against patrons and visitors based upon the above-described legally protected characteristics.

In support of this policy, Best Buddies will not permit the use of racial, religious, age-related, sexual or ethnic epithets, innuendoes, slurs or jokes. Accordingly, epithets, innuendoes, slurs or jokes related to membership in

any of the above listed categories are prohibited, even though that conduct may not itself be unlawful. All employees shall conduct themselves in a professional manner and shall refrain from sexual advances, verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, or requests for sexual favors.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Diversity, equity and inclusion are foundational to Best Buddies International's core values and help the organization continue to achieve its mission of creating opportunities for one-to-one friendships, integrated employment, leadership development, and inclusive living for individuals with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities. Inclusion is how we live our commitment to fairness and diversity.

Here at Best Buddies, our goal is to lead and advocate for a more inclusive world. We value the full diversity of our staff, participants, volunteers, and supporters. It shapes how we honor the perspectives, abilities and identities of our colleagues; and how we listen to and engage those we serve.

Each of us has a role to play in advancing Best Buddies' mission of inclusion. Our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion progresses forward with emphasis on the important areas of culture, talent, education, external partnerships, and accountability.

In 2020, Best Buddies International's executive leadership team formed a Diversity & Inclusion committee that will enable and empower staff from all levels to engage with one another and help Leadership determine the best path forward for our organization.

Here are the steps we are taking in support of our Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) employees, participants, and communities as we continue to define our long-term goals:

I. Commit to increasing diversity among Best Buddies International's leadership team, Board of Directors and management positions. More specifically by 2022, we will have more BIPOC representation using data, analytics, and more importantly, leader accountability.

II. Implement Diversity & Inclusion training during the onboarding process and year-round with the required support.

III. Create a new position focused on diversity, equity and inclusion to combat implicit and explicit bias as we evolve our internal company policies. This position will manage the organization's long-term, wide-ranging DEI strategies to ensure that we are leaders in this space.

IV. Develop a strategic plan of action to expand Best Buddies programs into communities of color, schools in under-resourced communities serving predominantly students of color, and the nation's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

V. Create formal structures to ensure we are hearing from our staff by establishing greater transparency and clear channels of communications between organizational leadership and staff through virtual town-hall based formats, annual staff surveys, and other forms of communication. As an organization founded on the premise of inclusion for all, we must intentionally act to create a more diverse and inclusive workforce as well as more diverse and inclusive communities through our actions, our policies, and our culture.

We recognize and celebrate the fundamental value and dignity of all individuals and will continue to cultivate inclusive environments across the globe --- one school, one workplace, and one community at a time.

Representing Best Buddies

All Best Buddies employees have a responsibility to represent the organization in the most professional manner. The impression that the public will take away concerning our organization will be what impression they have of our employees. The issue of appropriate dress has already been mentioned. Other

considerations in dealing with the public include, but are not limited to, promptly returned phone calls, punctuality for appointments, appropriate thank-you notes, and correct spelling of names and titles.

Furthermore, employees are required to observe Best Buddies policies regarding harassment and discrimination when conducting Best Buddies business with third parties (such as donors, vendors and when visiting other workplaces.)

Personal conduct

Employees are to observe and comply with all laws applicable to Best Buddies' business and are to conduct the operations and affairs of Best Buddies with the highest ethical standards.

Code of ethics

Best Buddies expects all staff members, participants, and others, when acting on behalf of the organization, to maintain the highest standard of ethical conduct. All Best Buddies employees are expected to assume personal responsibility and accountability for their actions by refraining from participation in any of the actions described below:

- Abuse of power – Wrongful use of authoritative position to influence employees, participants, and others.
- Conflict of interest – A situation in which an individual or any of their family has an existing or potential financial and/or other material interest that impairs or might appear to impair the individual's independence and objectivity of judgment in the execution of responsibilities to Best Buddies.
- Financial irregularity – An intentional misstatement, omission, or failure to disclose information related to financial transactions that is detrimental to the interests of Best Buddies, including but not limited to embezzlement, fraud, or falsification of records to misappropriate assets.
- Fraud – Intentional acts of misrepresentation, dishonesty, trickery, or deceit (including but not limited to the concealment or suppression of truth), designed to obtain information or assets without approval.
- Kickback – Accepting a payment to improperly obtain or reward with favorable treatment in connection with either a contract or subcontract.
- Misconduct – Includes, but is not limited to, theft, fraud, embezzlement, cheating, falsification, plagiarism, fabrication, misappropriation, and wrongful conversion of property belonging to Best Buddies or any other person whether such acts result in a criminal proceeding.

Nepotism

Best Buddies permits the employment of qualified relatives of employees if such employment does not, in the opinion of Best Buddies, create actual conflicts of interest. For purposes of this policy, "immediate family" is defined as a spouse, child, parent, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, first cousin, corresponding in-law, "step" relation or any member of the employee's household. Best Buddies will use sound judgment in the placement of related employees in accordance with the following guidelines:

- Individuals who are related by blood, marriage, or reside in the same household are permitted to work at Best Buddies, provided no direct reporting or supervisor to subordinate relationships exists. That is, no employee is permitted to work within "chain of command" when one relative's work responsibilities, salary, hours, career progress, benefits or other terms and conditions of employment could be influenced by the other relative.
- Related employees may have no influence over the wages, hours, benefits, career progress and other terms and conditions of the other related staff members.

Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the founder and chairman.

Personal use of Best Buddies' resources

Best Buddies strictly prohibits the use of its resources for solicitation or other personal uses. Employees should not bring in items to sell to co-workers (raffle tickets, shop at home products) unless authorized by the

founder and chairman. If an employee needs to make a personal long distance phone call or send an emergency package overnight, he/she must use personal resources for those purposes. Personal phone calls are not to be made at Best Buddies time, especially calls of a social nature. Computer software may not be copied for personal use. Employees are prohibited from calling directory assistance. All Best Buddies' equipment and supplies are for the purpose of carrying Best Buddies business only.

The following items are property of Best Buddies and are to be used for business purposes only: computers, digital cameras, computer files, laptops, e-mail, fax machines, telephone voice mail, individual desks, office areas, and storage areas. As company property, appropriate Best Buddies staff members may access these items and areas when necessary.

The prohibition on using Best Buddies' resources for personal use applies to all resources, human as well as material. If an administrative assistant is assigned to an employee, that person is not to be asked to do personal errands.

Drug-free workplace

It is the policy of Best Buddies to maintain an alcohol, drug, and tobacco- workplace to promote the health and safety of our employees, our volunteers, our participants, and the public. Any instance of substance abuse is grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including probation or termination.

The unlawful manufacture, possession, use, transfer, purchase, or sale of legal or illegal substances that may impair the employee's thinking, reactions, or movement, on or off company time, on or off company premises, will not be tolerated and may be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination, whether the drugs are illegal drugs, prescription drugs, or over-the-counter drugs.

Alcohol

The possession or use of alcohol on company premises is expressly prohibited. Violation will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination. The company may make exceptions for company-sponsored parties, such as an annual holiday party. When such exceptions exist, all employees are expected to drink responsibly, adhering to all legal regulations. In addition, while participating in a company-sponsored event or function, all employees are expected to always maintain professionalism. Extreme intoxication will not be tolerated and failure to abide will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.

All employees are expressly prohibited from drinking alcohol in the presence of middle school, high school, or college volunteers. *All employees are expressly prohibited from drinking alcoholic beverages during the leadership conference.* Employees attending Best Buddies events are required to drink responsibly and demonstrate good judgement.

An employee who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs when reporting for duty or at any time while on duty is subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination, whether the consumption took place on Best Buddies' premises.

Any employee reporting for work visibly impaired and unable to perform required duties properly will not be allowed to work. Best Buddies is not required to establish actual employee impairment by drugs and/or alcohol to discipline an employee for violation of this policy. The supervisor should consult privately with the employee to rule out any problems that may have been caused by prescription drugs. If, in the opinion of the supervisor, the employee is impaired, the supervisor should decide whether to send the employee home or to a medical facility by taxi or another safe alternative. No impaired employee should be allowed to drive. If an employee has been sent home under these conditions, the supervisor must contact human resources

Drug Testing

Best Buddies will require drug and alcohol testing of employees under the following circumstances: “reasonable suspicion,” “incident based,” “contractual requirement” and “random” drug and/or alcohol tests. The founder and chairman must approve all types of testing.

- Random testing – Employees are subject to random testing for drugs and alcohol at different Best Buddies’ locations, on dates, and at times selected as needed.
- Incident-based testing – Any employee involved in an accident resulting in injury or property damage, or any employee involved in an automobile accident while on Best Buddies business, may be required to submit to a drug and alcohol test.
- Reasonable Suspicion testing – An employee who exhibits behavior that may be attributable to drug or alcohol use may be required to immediately submit to a drug and alcohol test. Best Buddies need not establish that the employee is impaired to require such a test; Best Buddies may require a drug and alcohol test whenever there is a reasonable suspicion that the employee may have used drugs or alcohol.
- Contractual requirements – Employees may be required to participate in drug testing as may be required by contract to ensure contractual compliance, as permitted by local, state, and federal law.

Consequences for Alcohol/Drug Violations

Best Buddies recognizes and complies with all applicable federal, state, or local laws. Any employee who has a positive, confirmed drug and/or alcohol test result may be terminated immediately. Employees who refuse to take any drug and/or alcohol test required by Best Buddies forfeit eligibility for worker’s compensation, medical and indemnity benefits, and may be terminated. Please notify your supervisor if you are using prescription drugs that will affect your performance. Abuse of prescription drugs will not be tolerated. Employees convicted of a criminal drug violation are required to report it to their supervisor and human resources within two business days of conviction. Incidents will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Conduct with volunteers

As representatives of Best Buddies, all staff members must be sensitive to the participants of the program - students, citizens, and people with intellectual disabilities. Considering Best Buddies employees’ unique responsibilities and obligations, employees should be cautious in personal contact with peer buddies, college buddies, and buddies outside of the program. There is to be no alcohol consumption by staff in the presence of volunteers (middle school students, high school students, college students and buddies).

Dating

Any intimate romantic relationship with a peer buddy, college buddy, citizen buddy or any other buddy is considered a breach of trust, and grounds for immediate termination.

Dating among staff members is highly discouraged. Unprofessional behavior displayed by employees who become involved in a romantic relationship will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Any type of romantic relationship between a supervisor and an employee is prohibited.

Social media policy

At Best Buddies International (BBI), we know that online social platforms, including blogs, wikis, message boards, video and photo-sharing websites, and social networking services, are constantly transforming the way we interact. We also recognize the importance of the Internet in shaping the public view of our company. Best Buddies International is committed to supporting your right to interact responsibly and knowledgeably on the Internet through blogging and interaction in social media. We want our members to share and learn from others to build a valuable online community.

The purpose of these guidelines is two-fold: First, Best Buddies International has an aim to protect our interests, including, but not limited to, the privacy of our employees and confidentiality regarding our business purpose, plans, partners, users, and competitors. Second, these guidelines will help you make respectful and appropriate decisions about your work-related interactions with people on the Internet.

Your personal online activity is your business. However, any activity in or outside of work that affects your performance, the performance of others at BBI, or BBI's business interests are a proper focus for this social media Policy. You must always assume that your work-related social media activity is visible to BBI as well as current and potential employees, program participants, partners, prospects, and competitors. BBI reserves the right to direct its employees to avoid certain subjects and remove inappropriate comments and posts. Our internal policies remain in effect in our workplace.

Guidelines for Discussing Best Buddies International on the Internet

- You are not authorized to speak on behalf of the company without express permission from your supervisor.
- If you have permission to discuss BBI and / or our current and potential business activities, employees, partners, participants, or competitors, please follow these guidelines:
 1. **Identification:** Identify yourself. Include your name, and when appropriate, state your role or title within BBI.
 2. **Disclaimer:** Use a disclaimer that "the views you express on the particular website are yours alone and do not represent the views of the Company."
 3. **Proof:** Support any statements made online with factual evidence. Also, let your supervisor know about the content you plan to publish. Your supervisor may want to visit the website to understand your point of view.

Guidelines for Confidential and Proprietary Information

- You may not share information that is confidential and proprietary about BBI. This includes, but is not limited to, company strategy, information about trademarks, upcoming program or product releases, finances, number of products sold, number of employees, and any other information that has not been publicly released by BBI.
- The list above is given as an example only and does not cover the range of what BBI considers confidential and proprietary. If you have any questions about whether information has been released publicly or any other concerns, please speak with your supervisor before releasing information that could potentially harm BBI, or our current and potential business interests, employees, partners, and participants.
- For additional information on proprietary information, please review the Staff Handbook of Policies and Procedures.
- The Company's logo and trademarks may not be used without following BBI's Design Guidelines. This is to prevent the appearance that you speak for or officially represent BBI.
- It is fine to quote or retweet others, but you should not attempt to pass off someone else's words, photography, or other information as your own. All copyright, privacy, and other laws that apply offline apply online as well. Always give proper credit to credit your sources when posting a link or information gathered from another source.

Ownership of Social Media Contacts

Any social media contacts, including "followers" or "friends," that are acquired through accounts (including, but not limited to email addresses, blogs, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, or other social media networks) created on behalf of BBI are the property BBI.

Transparency and Disclosures

- If you have permission to publicly share what a participant, partner, or other organization is doing, such as launching a new website or coming out with a new product or service, you must disclose your relationship to the other party.

- Do not discuss an organization or product in social media in exchange for money. If you receive a product or service to review for free, you must disclose it in your post or review.

Respect and Privacy Rights

- Use common sense.
- Follow the rules of the social media sites you use.
- Speak respectfully about BBI and our current and potential employees, participants, partners, and competitors.
- Write knowledgeably, accurately, and with appropriate professionalism. Despite disclaimers, your web interaction can result in members of the public forming opinions about BBI and its employees, participants, partners and business interests.
- Refrain from publishing anything that could reflect negatively on BBI's reputation or otherwise embarrass the organization, including posts about drug or alcohol abuse, profanity, off-color or sexual humor, and other inappropriate conduct. Do not use ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in any conduct that would not otherwise be acceptable in BBI's workplace. Please also show respect for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.
- Honor the privacy rights of our current staff, participants, and partners by seeking their permission before writing about or displaying internal company information that could be considered a breach of their privacy and confidentiality.
- Obtain a signed release of information from our participants prior to posting photos or personal information about the individual.
- Ensure that your social networking conduct is consistent with all policies contained in the BBI Staff Handbook.
- Respect the law, including those laws governing defamation, discrimination, harassment, and copyright and fair use.

Non-Competition

You may not sell any product or service that would compete with any of BBI's products or services without permission in writing from your supervisor. This includes, but is not limited to training, books, products, and freelance writing. If in doubt, discuss this matter with your supervisor.

Your Legal Liability

- The Company complies with all federal and state laws that apply to our operations and activities.
- Since you are involved in BBI's operations and activities, you are responsible for understanding and observing these policies.
- Note that breach of privacy and confidentiality, use of copyrighted materials, unfounded or derogatory statements, or misrepresentation may be considered illegal and is not accepted by BBI.
- Each person at BBI is personally responsible, and may be legally liable, for the content they publish online. You can be sued for not disclosing your relationship to BBI, or for purposely spreading false information. You can also be sued by BBI employees, competitors, and any individual or company that views your commentary, content, or images as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous or creating a hostile work environment. In addition to any legal action, your activity can result in disciplinary action up to and including employment termination

Grievances

Best Buddies recognizes that employees may have questions or issues concerning policies and procedures and at times may require assistance in resolving different issues that may arise. To encourage employees to voice their concerns and try to resolve the issues, Best Buddies has a formal grievance process and an open-door

staff relations system

Employee grievance procedure

An employee with a grievance must first seek resolution from their supervisor. The following steps should be taken:

1. Employee will notify supervisor in writing within 10 business days of the occurrence of the action being grieved and propose a solution. If the supervisor is the subject of the complaint, the employee may address the complaint to the vice president of his or her department. **If you feel the problem is with your immediate supervisor, or it is not possible or practical to discuss the matter with that person, you may skip step 1 and start the procedure with step 2.**
2. If you are not satisfied after the meeting with your supervisor, you may ask to meet with the vice president of your department. They will review the relevant facts, including any action taken by your immediate supervisor, and suggest a solution. **If you feel it is not possible or practical to discuss the matter with the vice president, you may skip step 2 and start the procedure with step 3.**
3. If you are not satisfied with your department vice president's handling of the problem you may request a meeting with the vice president, human resources, and operations. The vice president, human resources and operations will thoroughly investigate the problem and decide based on Best Buddies policies and procedures.

In the event the nature of the incident is considered a gross violation of Best Buddies policy, such as discrimination, harassment, theft, possession of weapons, fraud, etc. immediate contact should be made with vice president, human resources, or the senior vice president, finance and operations.

An employee will not be penalized, disciplined, or prejudiced for pursuing a grievance or for aiding another employee in the presentation of a grievance, provided such action is taken in good faith. In addition, it is against company policy to retaliate against an employee who reports any issues of non-compliance to human resources.

Whistleblower

Best Buddies International requires directors, officers, and employees to observe high standards of business and personal ethics in the conduct of their duties and responsibilities. As employees and representatives of Best Buddies International, we must practice honesty and integrity in fulfilling our responsibilities and comply with all applicable laws and regulations.

Reporting Responsibility

It is the responsibility of all directors, officers, and employees to report ethics violations or suspected violations in accordance with this Whistleblower Policy.

No Retaliation

No director, officer or employee who in good faith reports an ethics violation shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment consequence. An employee who retaliates against someone who has reported a violation in good faith is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment. This Whistleblower Policy is intended to encourage and enable employees and others to raise serious concerns within Best Buddies International prior to seeking resolution outside the organization.

Reporting Violations

Best Buddies International has an open-door policy and suggests that employees share their questions, concerns, suggestions, or complaints with someone who can address them properly. In most cases, an employee's supervisor is in the best position to address an area of concern. However, if you are not comfortable speaking with your supervisor or you are not satisfied with your supervisor's response, you are encouraged to speak with someone in the human resources department or anyone in management whom you are comfortable in approaching. Supervisors and managers are required to report suspected ethics violations to the Vice president, human resources, and operations (a compliance officer), who has specific and exclusive responsibility to investigate all reported violations. For suspected fraud, or when you are not satisfied or uncomfortable with following Best Buddies International's open-door policy, individuals should

contact the senior vice president, finance, and operations (a compliance officer) directly.

Compliance officer

The senior vice president, finance and operations is responsible for investigating and resolving all reported complaints and allegations concerning fraud and, at their discretion, shall advise the founder and chairman and/or the audit committee. The senior vice president, finance and operations has direct access to the audit committee of the board of directors and is required to report to the audit committee at least annually on compliance activity.

Accounting and auditing matters

The audit committee of the board of directors shall address all reported concerns or complaints regarding corporate accounting practices, internal controls or auditing. The senior vice president, finance and operations shall immediately notify the audit committee of any such complaint and work with the committee until the matter is resolved.

Acting in good faith

Anyone filing a complaint concerning a violation or suspected violation must be acting in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the information disclosed indicates a violation. Any allegations that prove not to be substantiated and which prove to have been made maliciously or knowingly to be false will be viewed as a serious disciplinary offense.

Confidentiality

Violations or suspected violations may be submitted on a confidential basis by the complainant or may be submitted anonymously. Reports of violations or suspected violations will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with the need to conduct an adequate investigation

Handling of reported violations

The compliance officer will notify the sender and acknowledge receipt of the reported violation or suspected violation within five business days. All reports will be promptly investigated, and appropriate corrective action will be taken if warranted by the investigation.

Audit committee compliance officer

James Lintott
Freedom Management Group LLC
11921 Freedom Dr., Suite 730
Reston, VA 20190

Best Buddies International compliance officers

Julie Torres- Vice President, Human Resources and Operations
Lori Penaloza- Senior Vice President, Finance and Operations

Section 5: General Policies and Guidelines

Marketing and partnerships

We encourage our volunteers and employees to seek opportunities to promote the Best Buddies brand. When you encounter a national marketing partnership opportunity with an outside organization, called a “third party,” the following policy and procedures apply.

Consider the benefits both to Best Buddies and the third party, and the value of our brand, when contemplating partnerships. This is meant to ensure we do not transfer the value of our brand to a third party without adequate compensation.

Any use of our intellectual property by a third-party receiving benefit from contractual or implied endorsements requires approval by the Best Buddies International Marketing team, in addition to any applicable review done by legal.

This includes verbal and written marketing involving any use of our brand, Keith Haring or Best Buddies typeset logo, likeness, marketing capital, photos and videos of our participants, employees, board members, constituents, celebrities, as well as marketing and advertising stories and/or any other information proprietary to Best Buddies on the state or national level.

For State marketing initiatives that are within one state only, our Director, State Marketing, will facilitate the approval by our VP, Marketing and Strategic Development within three business days.

For National marketing initiatives, or those within more than one state, our Senior Director, Marketing, will facilitate the approval or an appropriate response of our VP, Marketing and Strategic Development, within five business days.

Note, the minimum financial commitment required for National partnerships to be considered is \$25,000. Access to the channels Best Buddies has built to communicate with our loyal constituents, such as our National social media accounts, email database, website, etc., require a more substantial financial commitment and have real value.

Legal review, if applicable, can take up to three weeks for review and approval depending on write up and acceptance.

States should engage their assigned senior director as well as our marketing team as soon as possible upon receiving notice of an opportunity to partner with a third party, in order to better manage the timeframe of the review process. For any partnership opportunities that arise, the Best Buddies staff person leading the communication must follow Best Buddies sponsor management protocol and check Raiser’s Edge (RE) for historical context. If an existing relationship with the brand/potential sponsor has been documented, the Relationship Manager/Primary Solicitor noted in RE MUST be notified before any additional steps are taken in pursuit of a collaboration – regardless of the size of the ask.

In turn, any executed local or national partnership must be documented in Raiser’s Edge to ensure internal alignment.

In the case where a national partnership is large enough in scale to warrant product exclusivity, Best Buddies’ Marketing Team will send out a staff wide notification alerting the organization to the nature of the relationship. Any regional office seeking benefits from a local relationship that is an extension of the national deal MUST contact the Relationship Manager/Primary Solicitor before moving forward.

Examples

- Workplace giving programs that require our logo as part of the application/partnership agreements:

approval is not required by marketing team.

- National partnership with regional or national business: approval is required.
- Sites that create organization-specific links for people to shop through and a portion of the sale with the online retailer goes back to the non-profit, like Shop for Good, Cause Network: approval is required.
- Third party fundraising events (a company does a golf tournament and gives the funds to a non-profit or a restaurant hosts a charity night where a portion of the proceeds goes to Best Buddies), and so want to use the logo in their golf tournament marketing, but they are not making money on the tournament: approval not required by marketing team.
- A local fast-food restaurant wants to have a Best Buddies Burrito sold during Best Buddies month, and they give us a portion of proceeds for every Burrito sold: approval not required by marketing team.
- A regional or national fast-food chain wants to do a Best Buddies Burrito sold during Best Buddies month, and they give us a portion of proceeds for every Burrito sold across the country: approval required by the marketing team.
- A fast-food restaurant wants to do host a Spirit Night to raise money for Best Buddies: approval not required by the marketing team.
- A jewelry company wants to sell a piece of jewelry with the Best Buddies logo nationwide or within a multistate region: approval required.
- A jewelry company wants to sell a piece of jewelry in one state benefiting that state: approval not required.

Merchandise policy

Order Processing

ALL merchandise needs and orders from state offices MUST be directed through the merchandise team (via the support desk), no exceptions. This includes Fixed, Fixed-Custom, and Custom Orders. If a state office sponsor wants to donate merchandise, the state office must obtain written approval from the merchandise team to source the item directly from that sponsor. The design of the item will STILL have to be approved, in writing, by the merchandise team. There will be no exceptions to this policy and the accounting team will not pay or authorize payment for any merchandise without signoff by the merchandise team.

Forms of Payment

The Merchandise Department only accepts payments made with a credit/debit card, or with a PI Form. Schools and chapters can only pay with using a credit or debit card. Checks and Cash are not accepted.

All PIs must have prior authorization in accordance with the Approval Limit set forth in the finance section. Each position may approve up to a dollar limit; items over the dollar limit will need approval from the next supervisory level.

All approved PIs must be submitted to the Manager, Art and Merchandise Operations (merchandise@bestbuddies.org) for processing. Do not send any payments for merchandise to the accounting team since they will not process any merchandise related PIs if not received directly from the merchandise team.

Fulfilment Timeline

To make sure your orders are delivered on time, please plan accordingly as processing and delivery can take anywhere from a day to more than a month depending on the type of order, design, quality, and quantity, and another 1 – 10 days to ship depending on the method of delivery. Below is just an estimate based on historic data:

Type of Order	Processing Time	Shipping Time
Fixed Orders	1-3 Days	3-10 Days
Fixed Custom Orders	1-3 Weeks	3-10 Days
Custom Orders	2-5 Weeks	3-10 Days

Refund Policy

There are no refunds available once an order has been placed, except when there is an error on our end. The merchandise team is not responsible for left over merchandise after an event. Please plan accordingly so such situations are avoided.

Design and Branding

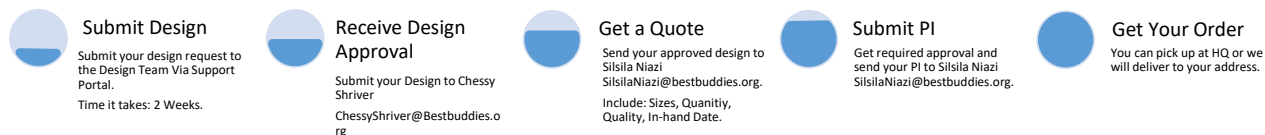
We encourage creativity and are open to new design ideas, but we are all charged with the responsibility of maintaining the integrity of the Best Buddies brand, name, and logo. Regardless of whether an item is intended for gift or sale, we will only produce merchandise that meets the Best Buddies' Branding Guidelines.

All Fixed-Custom and Custom merchandise MUST include BB logo or BB Typeset on at least ONE of the imprints.

Custom Orders by Schools and Chapters

State office leads are encouraged to perform an initial review of the design requested by the School or Chapter to make sure they meet Best Buddies Branding Guidelines. Merchandise team will perform a final review and approval of the design before it is sent for production.

Requesting Custom Designs



Guidelines and Documentations

For information and how-to videos, please login to shop.bestbuddies.org, and log in using your Best Buddies email. You can find this document as well as detailed Guidelines on your Dashboard after you log in.

If you have additional questions, please send an email to merchandise@bestbuddies.org

Graphic, web and merchandise project requests

The creative team accepts all graphic, web and merchandise project requests via the support desk. This system allows the creative team to schedule and track all project requests and provide staff with notifications and status updates. Due to the high volume of requests, the creative team will not accept incomplete requests, and will only accept requests submitted via the support desk.

As project completion times vary, users should submit requests that include the approved, final content for the project at least one week in advance. If the requested delivery date cannot be met, the designers will advise the user of the earliest date it can be completed. Production will begin on the date the designers receive all final content (i.e., images, photos, photo captions, proof text, etc.). Each time new content is received after a ticket has already been submitted, the delivery date will be pushed back by one week.

Best Buddies databases

Best Buddies utilizes several databases to manage information within the organization. All donor information and cultivation are managed in Raiser's Edge, the organization's database of record. A detailed list of databases and information flow is available on the staff portal (database flow chart). Every staff

member is required to utilize databases to collect and maintain information about our donors, participants and/or any contributor to our organization. Best Buddies provides basic training and full support to our database users. See the database flow chart for information basic reference and for directing database questions.

Best Buddies logo

The Best Buddies logo incorporates a colorful Keith Haring creation that represents one-to-one affection and acceptance. The image is a work of art; therefore it is important to preserve its integrity as such.

The logo artwork is copyrighted and licensed to Best Buddies. The license agreement entitles Best Buddies to use the artwork within the confines of the terms outlined in the original agreement. The copyrighted artwork cannot be altered or used beyond the guidelines outlined in the Best Buddies logo document managed by the marketing team and available on SharePoint. Anyone utilizing the Best Buddies logo must follow the branding guidelines established on the logo document. Any questions regarding the Best Buddies logo should be directed to the graphic designer.

Building access

Various Best Buddies offices are in buildings that require a building access card and office key to gain building access. If an employee issued a building access card and office key loses either or both items, the employee will incur the necessary fees to obtain a new key or building access card. Upon the employee's last day, the employee will return both the access card and the key, or the appropriate fees will be withheld from their final paycheck to replace the items.

Conference calls

All staff have access to Microsoft Teams for video and phone conference calls. Microsoft Teams is the most common conference line utilized for internal meetings, training, calls with vendors and participants etc.

For traditional landline calls, we recommend FreeConference.com. Calls may be scheduled as needed by logging on to: www.freeconference.com. These calls are free (outside of normal phone use charges) when scheduled through the "Web Scheduled Standard" option. Please note conference fees are charged if "Web Scheduled Premium 800" is selected or if optional services are requested (recording, SMS alerts etc.); **please do not use these options**. It is recommended that each office or department assign one person in charge of creating and managing a free conference account. State offices should check with their senior directors to inquire if a conference line has been set up for the state office or team. Once a call is scheduled, emails can be sent directly from the website to each participant. This service offers a six-hour call maximum and 96 people maximum. Please contact accounts payable for more information; useful links are provided below:

<http://www.freeconference.com/QuickStart.aspx>

http://www.freeconference.com/DemoFull.aspx?Movie=resless_tutorial.swf

Contracts

Employees shall not take it upon themselves to sign any contracts or other legal documents. All government contracts must be signed by the founder and chairman. All legal documents, such as lease agreements for office space and equipment, are to be forwarded to the headquarters office, attention contracts & grants administrator, for review by legal counsel and final approval. Lease agreements, equipment leases and venues for special events, can be signed by the vice president, human resources, and operations, senior vice president, global mission, senior vice president, finance and operations or the founder and chairman (depending on the amount of the contract or lease agreement). State directors may also sign agreements if they are within their approval limits and with approval from the senior director and vice president, state operations & mission advancement.

General liability insurance

Best Buddies International carries liability insurance protecting the corporation, staff and volunteers while conducting Best Buddies business or activities. Best Buddies' certificate of insurance with coverage limits and policy number is available on the staff portal each year in July.

Liability insurance covers the corporation, employees, and volunteers during official Best Buddies business or activities from claims of bodily injury, property damage, personal injury (includes sexual abuse, sexual molestation, sexual exploitation, or sexual injury), and advertising injury due to their alleged negligence during a Best Buddies outing. The liability insurance does not cover various high-risk events such as white-water rafting and skydiving.

Best Buddies general liability insurance is considered a "last resort" insurance. Everyone involved with Best Buddies (employees, volunteers, participants, etc.) is expected to be reasonably responsible for their participation, their actions, and any incidents that may occur in association with individual participation and actions.

Often principals or school officials inquire about Best Buddies general liability insurance coverage. Chapters are covered by liability insurance if they have submitted their chapter dues for the upcoming program year (applicable to high school and college chapters only) and the chapter has been approved in the Best Buddies Online platform. Generally, the standard certificate of insurance will suffice, however, chapters or volunteers may need to be listed as "Additionally Insured." Employees may obtain an "additionally insured" certificate from the contracts manager; please e-mail all requests and provide the name and mailing address of the person/organization who needs to be named on the certificate. Allow at least two weeks for the request to be processed.

. Best Buddies can provide evidence of insurance for the following:

- Evidence of general liability insurance: A certificate of coverage is posted on the staff portal each year in July. This certificate states the coverage limits, insurance company and policy number.
- Chapter/school listed as "additionally insured": To request a copy of our General Liability Insurance for a school, listing the school as "Additionally Insured," contact the contracts manager with the name and address of the school and indicate that they are to be listed as "Additionally insured." Please note, there is a fee associated with this service; therefore, ensure that a copy is mandatory before requesting.
- Special events, contracts, or leases: The organization has special coverage for large events, under the general liability policy. Contact the vice president, human resources to questions regarding a large event (over 1000 participants). The general certificate usually suffices for special events. If you need a custom certificate, contact the contracts manager with the name of the event, location of the event, time of the event, date of the event, and number of participants.

Government

Federal, State, and local government funding is a key component of the Best Buddies budget. Relationships with government officials are the responsibility of the government relations department. All contact with government officials for information about Best Buddies should be forwarded to the vice president, government relations. Contact includes but is not limited to phone calls, e-mails, conversations, faxes, invitations, letters, newsletters, and meetings. If you would like to request that a government official be involved in Best Buddies, the first step is to submit a ticket request through the support desk.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) grants tax-exempt status to 501(c)(3) organizations. There are many rules and regulations that such groups must follow, and violations of such rules can cause Best Buddies to lose its tax-exempt status. One rule is that 501(c)(3) organizations cannot endorse or campaign for a political candidate. This means that employees of Best Buddies cannot use Best Buddies resources to endorse, fundraise, or otherwise campaign for a candidate. Questions regarding permissible activities are to be directed to the government relations department.

Inclement weather

Best Buddies understands that adverse weather conditions can result in dangerous driving conditions. Employees should follow the guidelines below during bad weather.

- Best Buddies offices will be closed only when government offices or school districts in each respective city are also closed or when the office building that houses the Best Buddies office location is closed.
- When government offices or buildings are not closed, the office should not be closed.
- Employees should make every effort, while maintaining safety, to arrive to the office on time.
- In the event of early morning severe inclement weather conditions, the state director can decide to open the office late.
- In the event of severe inclement weather during office hours, the state director will have the discretion to allow employees to leave work early for safety reasons. Decisions to allow employees to leave work early should take into consideration the workload and any appointments scheduled. If possible and necessary, employees should take work home.

Whenever the office is closed due to severe inclement weather, the state director should notify their senior director and human resources who will notify the rest of the Best Buddies staff. If possible, e-mail notifications and voice mail should be changed to indicate that the office is closed and when it will re-open. Any appointments scheduled for that day should be rescheduled.

Best Buddies understands that there are incidents when the weather is very severe and government offices may not close. In a case where severe inclement weather is causing safety to be jeopardized, the government offices remain open; the state director should contact their senior director for approval to close the office.

Natural disasters / emergency evacuation

Every state director is responsible for working with their landlord to learn emergency evacuation procedures for their building. This includes, but is not limited to, knowing the location of fire exits and where the fire extinguishers are housed. If an office has employees with handicaps, the evacuation plan must account for their needs.

In the event of an emergency evacuation of a state office, the head of that office must call headquarters and inform the vice president, human resources, and operations of the situation. If possible, the state staff should plan to work out of some alternate location, perhaps their home, until the crisis has passed. If the headquarters office is affected by an emergency evacuation or natural disaster, the vice president, human resources, and operations will contact the founder and chairman and will relay instructions to the other staff members. If the vice president, human resources, and operations cannot be contacted, the founder and chairman is to be contacted. If the founder and chairman cannot be reached, the vice president, government relations in the Washington, D.C. office should be contacted. The vice president, human resources and operations will notify all staff of the situation and may appoint one state director or a remote staff member to assist with logistics, if necessary.

After the emergency is over, employees will report back to the office as soon as the building reopens. At that time, employees may advise supervisors of their personal situations, and Best Buddies management will attempt to help in any practical way possible.

Hurricane preparedness

While hurricane information primarily affects offices along the eastern coast of the United States and the Gulf of Mexico, it also applies to all coastal areas and will take on increasing importance as we add new offices in such locations.

The National Hurricane Center issues two types of reports in reference to hurricanes, the "hurricane watch" and the "hurricane warning." The hurricane watch is only precautionary. During a hurricane watch, employees will report to work as usual, making certain to monitor updates on the hurricane's course.

When necessary, employees may request approval from human resources to leave work during a hurricane

watch.

Employees should not report to work during a hurricane warning. If a hurricane warning is issued during business hours, employees should follow the safety measures determined by the building management of each office location.

In the event a hurricane devastates a state office, the head of that office must call headquarters and inform the vice president, human resources, and operations of the situation. If possible, the state staff should plan to work out of some alternate location, perhaps their home, until the crisis has passed.

If the headquarters office is devastated by hurricane, the vice president, human resources, and operations will contact the founder and chairman and will relay instructions to the other staff members. If the vice president, human resources, and operations cannot be contacted, contact the founder and chairman. If the founder and chairman cannot be reached, contact the vice president, government relations in Washington, D.C. The vice president, human resources and operations will notify all state offices of the situation and may appoint one state director or remote staff member to assist with logistics, if necessary.

After the situation is resolved, employees will report back to the office as soon as the building reopens. At that time, employees may advise supervisors of their personal situations, and Best Buddies management will attempt to help in any practical way possible.

For the most updated information regarding natural disasters please refer the Best Buddies health and safety handbook available on the staff

Information technology

Best Buddies provides hardware, software, and electronic resources to staff members at the time of hire. Equipment assigned to staff is the property of the organization and to be used solely for Best Buddies business purposes. Staff members are expected to utilize Best Buddies equipment responsibly and in accordance to information technology policies and best practices.

Best Buddies has a technology plan designed to address ongoing and/or new technology challenges faced by the organization. Each year we have a set of goals established based on need and budget constraints. For questions regarding the Best Buddies technology plan and/or to provide feedback or share concerns and for information on strategic efforts, contact the vice president, human resources and operations.

Information technology policies and best practices are administered by the I.T. manager at the headquarters office. State office locations receive assistance from the headquarters I.T. manager with purchases, software and e-mail accounts; The I.T. manager is not able to assist state office users with hardware or internet issues. Each state office is responsible for having a local I.T. resource.

All information technology requests must be submitted via the **support desk**. The I.T. manager is not able to attend to e-mail requests. The link to the support desk is available on the staff portal and you can e-mail helpdesk@bestbuddies.org

Hardware

Hardware refers to computers, printers, faxes, scanners, external drives, projectors, cameras, etc. When a staff member is assigned equipment necessary to complete their job duties, they will be required to sign the Information Technology User form. The agreement applies to any hardware assigned to and/or utilized by the staff member (i.e., computer or office projector). Note that users must report damaged, lost or stolen hardware to their supervisor and the headquarters office manager immediately.

Should hardware be damaged, lost or stolen due to failure to follow best practices or due to negligence, the staff member will be responsible for replacing the item based on the item's replacement value. If the hardware is older than three years, the staff member will not be responsible for the cost of replacing the item.

Upon hire employees may choose to use Best Buddies hardware or their own device. Best Buddies created a “bring your own device” or BYOD policy as result of employee requests to utilize their own computer. This policy exists to accommodate a growing demand from staff who prefer to utilize their own equipment. The BYOD policy stated below addresses eligibility, allowed devices, service, support and maintenance to ensure proper user administration, data security and overall compliance.

I. **Eligibility**

All Best Buddies employees and interns are eligible to participate in the BYOD program. Under this policy, people and departments gain the freedom to choose their preferred devices. The decision to use a personal device over company issued equipment is optional for the staff and subject to managerial discretion.

II. **Allowed devices**

Best Buddies hardware

- Dell Latitude E6430
- Apple MacBook – these are only provided for specific positions which require heavy graphic design work.

Approved employee-owned devices w/ full office functionality

- Laptops, Tablets, and Computers running Windows 7 or Higher with at least 4GB of RAM.
- Laptops, Tablets, and Computers running MAC OS X/IOS7 or Higher

Approved employee-owned devices w/ web office apps

- Laptops, Tablets, and Computers with an internet browser and internet connection. These devices do not have local office 2013 but they can still Create and modify documents in their native “office like” applications. (Chromebooks, Android phones, and Tablets)
- Mobile smart phones running iOS5 or higher & Android 3 or higher operating systems.

III. **Service availability**

Best Buddies will provide every employee with standard Microsoft Office Suite, including SharePoint and OneDrive. Additional software may be available and should be requested via the support desk. Users are not allowed to install any software on BB hardware, unless approved by the I.T. manager. Best Buddies does not manage software on employee-owned devices.

IV. **Support and maintenance**

Best Buddies will provide support to BB owned hardware at the HQ office. The I.T. manager will support remote users with purchases and software (including e-mail accounts), however, remote users are responsible for having local I.T. support in case of hardware failure. Best Buddies is only responsible for company owned equipment.

Should BB owned hardware be damaged, lost or stolen due to failure to follow best practices or due to negligence, the staff member will be responsible for replacing the item based on the item’s replacement value. If the hardware is older than three years, the staff member will not be responsible for the cost of replacing the item.

The following procedures should be followed by any Best Buddies employee and/or intern that has a device connected to the Best Buddies system when a device is lost or stolen (this applies to BBI and employee-owned devices).

1. The loss or theft of any device must be reported as soon as possible but within 24 hours

- to the support desk or via e-mail to the I.T. manager.
2. In the case of theft, contact the local police department to file a police report.
 3. Complete and submit an incident report form to HR, in case of theft please include the police report.

While Best Buddies will not service employee-owned devices, the organization does have a pool of devices for loaning to staff members who are in the process of getting their device serviced or replaced, in an effort to avoid workflow interruption.

V. **Security**

Security is the biggest challenge an organization will have when offering a BYOD program. To ensure the confidentiality of our data, Best Buddies will use a remote wipe solution that allows the organization to delete information in case of loss or theft. This data wiping feature applies to BBI and employee-owned devices. While data will be wiped on the device, all company information will still exist on a cloud. We encourage employees to back up their devices to avoid complete data loss.

- Best Buddies will wipe all BB related information (i.e. e-mails, office and documents) upon receiving notification or loss of theft. This is to ensure the privacy of Best Buddies information. Employees who wish to have all device data deleted must request it in writing when reporting the incident.

Software

Software refers to programs installed on a computer such as antivirus protection, Microsoft office suite, Adobe, Photoshop etc. Best Buddies provides all staff members with a standard office suite. Additional software may be available by request via the support desk. A full description of Best Buddies standard software and how to purchase non-standard software is available on the best practices guide.

All software provided to staff members is the property of Best Buddies and must be used in compliance with applicable licenses and agreements. Furthermore, staff members are not permitted to copy the Best Buddies software.

Data security and confidentiality

Best Buddies is committed to ensuring data security, privacy and confidentiality. For more detailed information regarding participant data, see section 7 – Program Policies. Cybersecurity training is available and mandatory for all staff.

Best Buddies software includes multiple layers of Microsoft encryption should staff be sharing any private or personal data of staff, participants donors, or BBI contracts or operations. Staff may encrypt at the document or email level, or both, depending on the data. Staff may access guidance on Microsoft encryption in the portal, SharePoint, or the IT training call.

E-mail and Internet use

Best Buddies provides an e-mail account and internet access to every staff member. E-mail accounts and internet access are to be used solely for Best Buddies business purposes. Electronic resources should be used responsibly and according to information technology policies and best practices.

All electronic communications and stored information transmitted, received, or archived in the company's information system are the property of Best Buddies. Best Buddies reserves the right to monitor and review all information created and/or communicated by its staff members via electronic media; copy and/or disclose any information in our system to law enforcement officials or other third parties.

Electronic media may not be used for discriminatory, harassing, or obscene communications, personal gain, advancement of individual opinions, or for any other purpose which is illegal or against policy or Best Buddies' interest.

Staff members are required to:

- Check e-mail at least twice each workday, including during staff appreciation days.
- Respond to every e-mail within one business day.
- Utilize professional signatures and add the taglines provided by the senior director, communications. Taglines are updated regularly and e-mailed to all staff. Staff members are asked to utilize business fonts and not add background or personal quotes to their e-mail signature.
- Properly log off from your computer each time you finish your shift.
- Use their Best Buddies e-mail address when conducting Best Buddies business.
- Request approval from the vice president, human resources and operations prior to sending any e-mails intended for all staff members.

Staff members may not:

- Utilize Best Buddies Internet to access personal social media websites or stream video, music, etc.
- Send e-mails containing solicitation or personal announcements.
- Transmit, retrieve, download, or store any images or messages that may be derogatory, offensive, defamatory, discriminatory etc. to someone.
- Send e-mails regarding politics, religion, or anything of a sexual nature.
- Send or receive copyrighted or confidential materials without authorization.
- Solicit personal business opportunities or personal advertising.
- Gamble, monitor sports scores or play electronic games.

Digital business cards

Best Buddies requires all employees to only use digital, not paper, business cards. The stewardship protocol requires employees to collect new contact information (participants, donors, volunteers etc.) and within 24 hours, reach out to the new contact via e-mail and include a branded V-card. It is the organization's belief that by reaching out to a new contact via e-mail (and within 24 hours of meeting them) you will create a lasting impact and ensure that your new contact has quick access to your information.

Find a general v-card template on SharePoint, under the marketing folder.

Media

Best Buddies International has established the following media relations policy and procedures in an effort to ensure clear, factual communications with the public and to protect the interest of our organization.

The Communications department at Best Buddies International is prepared to empower and collaborate with local offices to garner press coverage. That said, it is important to present Best Buddies in a manner that is both accurate and consistent with the organization's mission.

Responses to Inquiries from the Media:

In the event that Best Buddies is involved in a national news story, crisis management, emergencies, etc., Best Buddies staff, volunteers, and board members, will **not directly** respond to any inquiries from the media concerning matters related to the organization. Please route all media inquiries directly to head of Communications.

Senior level leadership and state directors may respond directly to local media inquiries on ordinary, day-to-day matters such as mission-based initiatives and special events. However, all inquiries should be reported immediately via email to the Director of Communications, Nicole Maddox.

Press Opportunities for Best Buddies International:

Any opportunity involving national media coverage must be properly vetted and approved by the Communications department at Best Buddies International headquarters. All details must be directly routed to Nicole Maddox, Director of Communications, with at least five (5) business days' notice. In no instance shall a

Best Buddies staff member commit to any Best Buddies' participation/mentions on any national media outlets without express written approval from the organization's Director of Communications. This includes opportunities that were generated by board members, event chairs, volunteers, or any other third-party partners.

Nonpartisan organization statement

Best Buddies International was founded on the premise of inclusion for all. We are a nonpartisan organization and grateful to all who are committed to improving the lives of individuals with and without intellectual and developmental disabilities.

As a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, Best Buddies is closely held to IRS guidelines prohibiting organizations from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaigning on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for elective public office at the federal, state, or local level. This is a strict prohibition, and any perceived violation could result in denial or revocation of tax-exempt status and the imposition of certain excise taxes. Therefore, to maintain our 501(c)(3) nonprofit status with the IRS, it is critical that staff, volunteers, program participants, and those promoting our cause take these guidelines into careful consideration while serving as a representative for the organization.

We ask that all Best Buddies employees, volunteers, program participants, board members, event chairs, and any other third-party partners refrain from any public political discourse in the name of Best Buddies, using the assets of Best Buddies, or that is in any way associated with Best Buddies or their role within Best Buddies. Public political discourse includes, but is not limited to, broadcast (television and radio), print, and digital mediums.

No smoking

Best Buddies strives to provide a healthful, safe, and comfortable working environment for all employees and visitors. Smoking by employees and visitors is therefore prohibited within and throughout all buildings.

Employees and visitors who wish to smoke must leave the building and use only designated areas outside which have appropriate smoking waste disposal receptacles. Employees who fail to comply with this policy will be subject to disciplinary action and any applicable punishment by state and federal law.

Print orders

Stationary

All printing and stationary orders are processed via www.gotoprintonline.com. State offices are responsible for logging on to the website and placing their own orders. Once orders are placed, they are automatically forwarded to the headquarters office manager for final approval. The order will be approved upon receipt of a signed proposed in-office expense form. Note that the minimum stationary order should be placed in quantities of 500 at a time, if ordering a higher quantity make sure to add a supporting statement to explain on the proposed in office expense form.

Orders received after 6 p.m. EST on Thursday will be processed the following week. All prices are listed on www.gotoprintonline.com.

Marketing materials

Requests for marketing materials both from headquarters and state offices are to be sent to the graphic design team via the I.T. support desk. Marketing materials for all state offices are available on the marketing folder off the SharePoint homepage.

Relocation

From time to time, Best Buddies may request an employee or prospective employee to relocate. It is Best Buddies' policy to pay a mutually agreed upon amount associated with any relocation requested by the organization. Any employee who relocates will be required to agree, in writing, to reimburse Best Buddies in full

for all relocation costs if the employee leaves the organization before completion of one year of service.

Requests for Best Buddies documents and information

The Headquarters office coordinates all official communication regarding Best Buddies. Requests by the press for interviews or quotes should be directed to the senior manager, communications (refer to the media policy). The exception is requests for chapter information such as Chapter Charter Applications. The Field offices may handle these requests.

Safety

Employee safety is the constant concern of Best Buddies. Every precaution has been taken to provide a safe workplace for all staff members. Common sense and personal interest in safety are still the greatest guarantees of safety at work, on the road, and at home. We take safety seriously and any willful or habitual violation of safety rules will be considered cause for dismissal.

The cooperation of every employee is necessary to make Best Buddies a safe place to work. Employees are to report unsafe or hazardous conditions immediately to their manager and to human resources. Best Buddies is sincerely concerned for the health and wellbeing of each member of the team. Employees are expected to give earnest consideration to the rules of safety presented by poster signs, discussions with supervisors, posted department rules. Employees must consider safety whenever performing their job or starting a new one.

Special events

Headquarters staff members, as well as state field staff, may be requested to attend national or local special events in their area. The founder and chairman will attend special events as the nature of the event dictates and as his schedule permits. Some staff members will be required to attend, and in that instance, the Best Buddies travel policy will apply. All events require full payment from any non-essential staff member who wishes to attend.

Best Buddies Staff Leadership Conference and Leadership Conference

The Staff Leadership Conference (SLC) occurs annually in January and brings staff from all departments and state offices together to learn, to connect as peers and friends, and to prepare for an impactful year ahead.

SLC is held as an in-person training event each January. Sessions bring in outside speakers as well as peer-led discussions. Staff awards are announced each year at SLC.

The Best Buddies Leadership Conference (BBLC) occurs annually in July and will be hosted at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana. All staff who work to support programs (including, but not limited to, state directors, area directors, directors, friendship program staff, jobs program staff, and headquarters program staff) are required to attend BBLC in its entirety. No exceptions will be made to this policy. Employees should not plan any vacations, or major events that would require being out of the office, around the weeks that SLC and BBLC are scheduled. All staff members, regardless of role and department, are required to attend BBLC following their hire and every two years thereafter.

Any employees resigning from Best Buddies prior to the start of SLC or BBLC, but AFTER their flight has been ticketed and paid for, will be responsible for reimbursing Best Buddies for the cost of the airline ticket and any applicable taxes. If the separation is initiated by Best Buddies, the employee will not be responsible for the cost of the airline ticket.

Note that employees may attend other types of conferences and/or training throughout the year (voluntary or mandatory), the same rule applies to airline tickets when it comes to other conferences as well. If an employee resigns from Best Buddies prior to such conference and/or training, but AFTER their flight has been ticketed and paid for, they will be responsible for reimbursing Best Buddies for the cost of the airline ticket and any applicable taxes. If the separation is initiated by Best Buddies, the employee will not be responsible for the cost of the airline ticket and any applicable taxes.

Additional conferences including Leadership Summit or position-specific training out-of-state may be required. The same rule applies to airline tickets when it comes to other conferences as well. If an employee resigns from Best Buddies prior to such conference and/or training but AFTER their flight has been ticketed and paid for, will be responsible for reimbursing Best Buddies for the cost of the airline ticket and any applicable taxes. If the separation is initiated by Best Buddies, the employee will not be responsible for the cost of the airline ticket.

Section 6: Finance Policies and Guidelines

Cellphones

Best Buddies reimburses employees for business use of their cellphones up to \$65 per month. Note that while Best Buddies does reimburse for usage, the organization does not provide reimbursement for equipment installment plans or purchases.

For state offices, the monthly reimbursement will be granted upon the state director's approval. State directors are responsible for an annual review of employee-business-related cell- phone use to determine if the existing reimbursement, when evaluated within budgetary constraints, should be continued, changed, or discontinued.

For all other positions, it will fall to the discretion of the supervisor and their respective departmental budgets.

Cellphone reimbursements are to be submitted via the online reimbursement site. They are to be submitted within the 30-day period from the last date of your billing cycle shown on your bill. Staff members are required to submit as backup the bill page(s) that show the billing cycle and the amount of current charges. If an employee is on a family plan, they must highlight their portion of the bill. Best Buddies will not reimburse family members' plans. **If an expense report is submitted more than 30 calendar days after the billing close date, the reimbursement will be rejected.**

Contracts

Employees shall not take it upon themselves to sign any contracts or other legal documents. All government contracts must be signed by the founder and chairman. All legal documents, such as lease agreements for office space and equipment, are to be forwarded to the headquarters office, attention director contracts & grants, for review by legal counsel and final approval. Contracts for special event venue can be signed by the senior vice president, global mission, state development & operations; vice president, human resources and operations; senior vice president, finance and operations; or the founder and chairman (depending on the amount of the contract). State directors may also sign agreements, excluding those referenced above if they are within their approval limits and with approval from the senior director, state operations or development or vice president, state operations and mission advancement.

Contributions and payments

State offices should make deposits on a weekly basis using either the Wells Fargo mobile app or the nearest Wells Fargo ATM. Donation Transmittal Forms (DTFs), check scans, and deposit receipts must be sent to mobiledeposits@bestbuddies.org before end of day on the day of the deposit.

Online expense reimbursements

All expense reports must observe approval limits and are due to headquarters no later than 30 calendar days from the date on each receipt.

For detailed information on how to utilize the online reimbursement system, including submission deadlines, please refer to the finance reference document available in the Finance Resource Center portal on SharePoint.

Please note: the senior vice president, finance and operations has the authority to disallow expenses deemed excessive or inappropriate.

Approval limits

Each position may approve up to a dollar limit; items over the dollar limit will need approval from the next supervisory level. Here are the approval limits:

- Program Supervisor, Senior Program Manager & Senior Employment Consultant \$300
- Deputy Directors & Managers \$600
- Regional Directors, Area Directors and Directors \$1,000
- State Directors \$1,500
- Senior Directors & Vice Presidents \$2,000
- Senior Vice President, Operations & Programs \$5,000

Invoices

Invoices received from vendors can be submitted to headquarters for payment through Blackbaud Financial Edge NXT (FE). New vendors will be required to submit a W-9 (W-8 BEN/Ben-E for international vendors), and payment form (ACH/CK) along with their invoice. Quotes and estimates should not be submitted for payment. State directors and department heads should contact the finance department when new users in Blackbaud FE NXT need to be set up via our ticketing system. For detailed information on how to submit an invoice for payment in Blackbaud FE please refer to the finance reference document available on the staff portal.

Each supervisor must observe their approval limit.

Shipping

Shipments costs represent a significant portion of operational costs for many offices, so keeping those costs low can make a big difference to your overall budget. For this reason, we negotiate contracted rates with the following shipping vendors:

UPS via Worldwide Express (preferred)
FEDEX

Every office and employee within Best Buddies may access our shipping accounts for handling Best Buddies shipments and are required to utilize one of the above vendors for all their shipping needs. It is Best Buddies national policy to ship via 3 days, aka express saver. Overnight or "second day" shipments will require the chairman's approval prior to shipment. Every shipment **MUST** be coded accordingly, coding can be obtained with your supervisor. Coding must be clear and accurate.

Failure to submit proper coding or PI makes it difficult for accounting to properly pay and charge the invoices, please be mindful to provide accounting with all the information needed to pay the invoices.

Purchases and equipment contracts

Best Buddies requires competitive bids for large purchases or equipment contracts. Any purchase of office equipment or contract printing, services or any other large expenditure exceeding \$2,500.00 requires a minimum of 3 price quotes. Quotes should be obtained on items that have equal or similar features. These quotes must be submitted to the employee's respective senior director or vice president (as applicable) for review who will obtain final approval from the founder and chairman prior to the purchase. Large purchases without final approval are not authorized.

Stipends

Three types of stipends are available to assist with routine office expenses, extended travel and events. Submitted receipt dates *cannot be prior to the check issue date*. These receipts should be submitted as an employee reimbursement and within the 30-day deadline.

Travel and office stipends

These are issued for routine office expenses, such as supplies, copies, postage and extended travel expenses; they are considered petty cash to reduce out of pocket expenditures by the employee. These are due back to accounts payable within 60 days of stipend check date with all receipts. Stipend reports and copies of receipts can be e-mailed to accounts payable for processing. Remaining balances will be deducted through payroll.

Event stipends

These are due back to accounts payable within 30 days of stipend check date. Stipend reports and copies of receipts can be emailed to accounts payable for processing.

An approved check request is needed for one of these stipends to be issued. The stipend is considered as owed to Best Buddies until stipend reports, containing detailed receipts, are received and processed through accounts payable. Note that if the complete report is not submitted to the finance department within the deadline above, the stipend amount will be payroll deducted. It is the responsibility of each employee to report back on outstanding stipends and/or return any unused balance. The finance department does not send reminders or any other communications regarding approaching deadlines.

Please note: the senior vice president, finance and operations has the authority to disallow expenses deemed excessive or inappropriate.

The completed stipend reporting form is submitted to the supervisor for approval and forwarded to accounts payable. Please reference the forms for further details.

Air Travel

Best Buddies has a corporate account with Corporate Travel Consultants. Staff members utilizing Corporate Travel Consultants are responsible for contacting the travel agency for price quotes when preparing the proposed travel itinerary. Only economy travel is covered. Once the proposed travel itinerary is complete, including coding information, and approved by the supervisor, it must be e-mailed to accountspayable@bestbuddies.org for processing and final approval to book. Please refer to "Forms" for instructions on how to complete the proposed travel itinerary

Travel Agency: Corporate Travel Consultants II LLC

4141 N.E. 2nd Avenue, Suite 201
Miami, Florida 331375
305-576-3200 phone
(800) 842-8763 toll free
gussie.ragin@ctc2.com

All airlines have toll-free numbers; it is the employee's responsibility to contact the airline prior to their flight to see if any changes have been made. The travel agency does not notify employees of any changes.

All flights must be booked through the approved corporate travel agency to ensure canceled travel credits are returned to the company. Employees who book travel through alternative channels (including using a corporate card or seeking expense reimbursement) will be personally responsible for the entire cost of any cancellations, including the full ticket price and any associated cancellation fees.

Digital credit card platform and corporate credit card

Best Buddies has a contract with a digital credit card platform to provide its employees with access to a digital credit card. State directors and department heads should contact headquarters via the ticketing system when new users need to be set up. Each supervisor must observe their approval limit. Receipts must be uploaded within 5 days of card purchase. Receipts should include the date, vendor's name, purchaser's name, amount, item/service purchased, and payment information (i.e. payment method, date, etc.) For detailed information on how to use the platform please refer to the finance resource center. The link is available on the staff portal.

Please note: the senior vice president, finance and operations has the authority to close an account if users consistently fail to upload a valid receipt.

Corporate card

A corporate credit card is available for use and should be used for larger purchases that require a card on file. Examples include hotel reservations for large groups or venue reservations. The corporate card is not to be used in instances when a check is acceptable. Please plan accordingly to avoid last-minute emergency requests.

To request payment via company card:

- An invoice or event contract with proper approvals and coding should be submitted to accounts payable.
- Accounts payable will process the payment activity, card information will not be distributed.

Ground travel

Personal vehicles are used for Best Buddies business, and each employee is required to submit proof of auto insurance at the time of hire, as per the **Driving for Best Buddies policy**. When personal vehicles are used for business purpose, Best Buddies will reimburse mileage as follows:

Mileage Reimbursement	\$0.55 per mile
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The mileage allowance covers both gas and wear and tear on the vehicle.

Rental car arrangements may be requested when:

1. Out-of-town travel is via air, and ground transportation is necessary in the destination city.
2. Travel will require the employee to drive more than 3 1/2 hours between any two points.

Car Rental **Reimbursement** allowance is up to \$65 daily, Best Buddies has car rental corporate accounts with different rental car companies. Updated corporate account information is available on the staff portal or with the headquarters office manager.

Rental car companies offer additional types of insurance at the time you pick up the rental car. Best Buddies will **NOT** reimburse the cost of any additional insurance you elect when renting a vehicle. Examples include but are not limited to: **Personal Accident insurance, Liability Insurance, Collision Damage Waiver** Note that some of our corporate rates include additional insurance at no extra cost and that Best Buddies carries auto insurance which provides coverage for rental vehicles. If additional insurance is elected, employees will be responsible for covering the expense.

Best Buddies will only reimburse car rental expenses for the day(s) spent traveling. Therefore, employees are to return rented vehicles to their respective rental car companies immediately after having reached the city limits in which they reside. Additional days that were not part of the employee's travel plans will not be reimbursed.

Meal per Diem

Non-overnight

- Staff members will be reimbursed up to \$65.00 per day to cover meals when traveling long distances (over 100 miles from BB office). Itemized meal receipts are required as well as proof of payment. If an itemized receipt is not provided, Best Buddies will accept a bank statement or a credit card receipt, however, the allowable reimbursement will default to \$10.00.
- Each staff must pay for his/her own meal and may not pick up the tab for another staff member. Meal receipts must be submitted individually to ensure per diems are tracked.

Overnight

- Staff members will be reimbursed \$65.00 per night for overnight travel and no receipts are required.
- On the return day, if you are back in your working city by 12pm, do not count this day in your overnight per diem; itemized receipts will need to be provided.
- When traveling overnight in groups as is the case with our conferences and retreats, group receipts/reimbursements are **not accepted** as the per diem rate of \$65.00 will be reimbursed.
 - Best Buddies does *not reimburse for alcohol consumed by staff* but does recognize situations such as board member dinners, donor stewardship meals, etc. In such cases, an itemized receipt is required for reimbursement with the purpose outlined such as [board member dinner].

Maximum reimbursements per meal will be:

Breakfast: \$15

Lunch: \$20

Dinner \$30

Please refer to the finance reference document when traveling for a staff retreat.

Lodging

- Hotel Reimbursement up to \$220 per night

If every effort made to secure hotel lodging within the guideline rates has failed, and lodging will be more than \$220, employees must note the circumstances on the proposed itinerary.

All hotel reservations must be booked through the approved corporate travel agency to ensure canceled travel credits are returned to the company. Employees who book travel through alternative channels (including using a corporate card or seeking expense reimbursement) will be personally responsible for the entire cost of any cancellations, including the room rate, and any associated cancellation fees.

Supplies

Headquarters office supplies are ordered semi-monthly. Headquarters staff members are responsible for requesting supplies by the 15th day and the last day of each month. If employees have special projects that require office supplies, they should list those needs on the requisition. The office manager is responsible for keeping a sufficient stock of the "basics," but if an employee has a project that is going to deplete the stock of an item, they must submit their order. Employees must forecast their needs, as supplies will only be ordered twice a month. If an employee needs supplies between orders, he/she will be responsible for submitting an approved proposed in-office expense form, purchasing the supplies, and submitting an in-office reimbursement form.

Amazon purchases **must** be made with the corporate account to avoid sales taxes.

Forms

Note: these forms are to be downloaded from SharePoint Home Site: Finance Resource. Finance forms as needed. They are not to be saved as they are updated with new accounts throughout the year. The four forms below have their own tab on the finance form file.

Mileage Form

Purpose: used to request reimbursement for miles, parking fees, and tolls.

- It is at the discretion of the employee to select to submit their mileage on this form and attach it as a receipt to their online reimbursement report or report directly into the online reimbursement system.
- Reimbursement of 100 miles or more on a single trip must include Google map directions supporting the miles reported from point A to B.
- Best Buddies reimburses miles when staff are driving their auto for work-related activities, such as a chapter visit or an event. Your commute to and from your work location is NOT a reimbursable expense. It is the employee's responsibility to incur the cost of getting to/from their office location.

Proposed Travel Itinerary form

Purpose: used to obtain approval for overnight travel when booking with the corporate travel agency. The proposed travel itinerary must be completed and submitted to the supervisor, if applicable, for approval at least one week in advance of the proposed departure date. Travel taken without approval will not be reimbursed, no exceptions. The form must include coding: account and grants. The form should include the total cost of the trip, even if some items are being paid for by headquarters (for example, airfare, lodging and car rental)

- Airfare: the total can be shown on day one; it is not necessary to split by day.
- Lodging: up to \$150 per night is for hotels, hostels, and dorms.
- Per Diem: staff members will be reimbursed \$60.00/night – receipts are not required.
- Car Rental: corporate travel consultants search best available rate
- Gas: this line items should only be used when you rent a car
- Mileage: is recorded as a dollar value (number of miles x \$0.50). Mileage covers gas and normal wear and tear on your vehicle, not on a car rental. Mileage incurred while driving a car rental will not be reimbursed.
- Other: any expenses entered here need to be explained within the column. Gratuity allowance: for tips other than means, the limit will be up to \$10 a day.
- Coding: required and must include account and grant allocations

Please refer to the finance reference document for travel returns and per diem applicability. When employees book travel on their own and request reimbursement through the online reimbursement platform, if prior approval was not requested the supervisor has the authority to deny reimbursement.

Stipend Report Form

Purpose: used to report on expenses associated to an event, office, or travel stipend

- Receipt: the receipt number on the form must match the number on the physical receipt. If the coding is the same for multiple receipts, you can use the same number
- If a receipt is not provided, please explain why, i.e.: overnight per diem
- Company, expense type and state office: these are required, please use drop down options
- Amount: enter the receipt or receipts amounts associated to that line item

Section 7: Program Policies

Legal Requirements

Best Buddies complies with all legal and regulatory requirements and engages in activities designed to promote awareness, understanding and satisfaction of its various obligations. This is necessary for the organization's success, sustained existence, and ability to positively affect the lives of the people served. The organization has systems in place for ongoing review and monitoring of legal and regulatory requirements to ensure compliance. Policies, procedures, and practices are revised to reflect changes in requirements.

Program Personnel Requirements

In addition to complying with the standard new hire requirements, select program employees will be subject to additional new hire and ongoing requirements. Some Best Buddies' programs receive federal and/or state funding through different agencies and therefore Best Buddies is required to comply with any additional compliance requirements stated in such agency contracts. New hire requirements include, but are not limited to:

- The organization ensures compliance with other legal authorities, as applicable, including the Federal Exclusions List. The Office of Inspector General has the authority to exclude individuals and entities from federally funded healthcare programs and maintains a current List of Excluded Individuals and Entities (LEIE).
- State and National background checks (7 years deep in current county of residence and checks for felony, including misdemeanor)
- State and National criminal history record check (includes the National Criminal Record File)
- CPR training
- Program training (i.e. supported employment specific).

A list of requirements will be provided to all new hires at the time of hire, however, at times requirements change or are updated. Best Buddies will communicate with each employee should such a situation arise. Any adverse background or criminal information will be handled according to Best Buddies policies and agency contract requirements applicable.

Best Buddies prohibits employing a person who has been convicted of any felony in any of our programs. Best Buddies prohibits against employing or contracting with a person who has been convicted of any of the following offenses:

- Sex crime
- Felony battery
- Exploitation of an endangered adult or of a child
- Failure to report battery, neglect, or exploitation of an endangered adult or of a child, or abuse or neglect of a child
- Theft (only if the conviction occurred less than 10 years before the person's employment application date)
- Murder
- Voluntary manslaughter
- Involuntary manslaughter
- Felony offense related to a controlled substance

Program Training Requirements

In addition to complying with the standard new hire training requirements, select program employees will be subject to additional new hire and ongoing training requirements. Some Best Buddies' programs receive federal and/or state funding through different agencies and therefore Best Buddies is required to comply with any additional compliance requirements stated in such agency contracts.

Training requirements will be provided to each employee at the time of hire and throughout their employment. Any questions regarding training requirements may be directed to the supervisor or human resources.

Human resources maintain a training file for each program employee. Every training must be documented and placed in the employees' training file. Employees must forward to human resources all certificates or other proof of training completion. Training documentation must demonstrate:

- Topic of training provided
- Date of training
- Duration of training
- Name and qualification of the trainer

Accessibility

Best Buddies is committed to diversity, inclusion and accessibility for persons with disabilities.

It is the policy of Best Buddies to provide an organizational climate that accommodates the needs of all persons served, personnel and related stakeholders. Central to this commitment is the identification and removal of all barriers that may impede full access to the organization.

The program's team will make an annual assessment of the existence of architectural, environmental, attitudinal, and financial, communication, transportation, and other barriers by surveying all participants. The results of the annual survey will be presented to the leadership team on an annual basis.

This policy describes how Best Buddies works with its employees as well as how it provides its programs and services in a manner that respects the dignity, independence, integration, and equal opportunity of persons with disabilities.

Assistive devices

Best Buddies permits persons with disabilities to use their personal assistive devices while on Best Buddies' premises.

Communication

Best Buddies is committed to communicating with persons with disabilities in ways that consider their disability.

Service animals and support persons

Best Buddies welcomes onto its premises service animals and support people upon whom persons with disabilities rely. Best Buddies will advise the parties as soon as possible about any costs they will incur associated with having the support animal or person.

To request accommodation or assistance for any program or service, contact Best Buddies by phone or email.

Feedback process

Best Buddies encourages feedback regarding how it provides programs, goods and services to persons with disabilities. This can be provided via the following methods:

E-mail: JulieTorres@bestbuddies.org
Mail: 100 SE 2nd Street, Suite 2200
Miami, FL 33131
Phone: (305) 374-2233 Ext. 331
Fax: (305) 372-5267

Rights of persons served

Best Buddies is committed to protecting and promoting the rights of all persons served. This commitment guides the delivery of services and supports ongoing interactions with program participants. Best Buddies employees are

expected to advocate for and ensure that participant rights are protected. Rights information is included in the participant handbook which is reviewed at the start of service delivery and annually thereafter.

- Persons served have the right to:
 - Confidentiality of information
 - Privacy
- Access to:
 - Information pertinent to the person served in sufficient time to facilitate his or her decision making
 - Their own records
- Informed consent or refusal or expression of choice regarding:
 - Service delivery
 - Release of information
 - Concurrent services
 - Composition of the service delivery team
- Access or referral to:
 - Legal entities for appropriate representation
 - Self-help support services
 - Advocacy support services
- Freedom from:
 - Abuse
 - Financial or other exploitation
 - Retaliation
 - Humiliation
 - Neglect

Confidentiality of Information

Best Buddies employees are required to comply with all laws pertaining to confidentiality. Confidentiality means limited access and that only those employees who have need-to-know information have access to participant records. This standard applies to information in all forms, including the use of electronic and computer records related to participants.

To guarantee conformity to all laws pertaining to the right to confidentiality and privacy, Best Buddies program employees receive training at the time of hire and annually thereafter.

Best Buddies employees understand and follow strict protocols regarding participant rights to confidentiality of information. To protect participant rights to confidentiality, the following procedures are observed by Best Buddies program employees:

- Best Buddies employees may collect a variety of identifiable data and protected health information. All participant data is kept in the participant's file and/or in a secure database
- Best Buddies employees have unique login and passwords to access secure databases
- All participant files are kept at a Best Buddies office and secured in locked cabinets with limited key access.
 - Participant records are always kept in the office
 - Case files remain in locked file cabinets unless currently being reviewed and/or updated

Privacy

Best Buddies employees are required to observe and ensure participants' privacy. Privacy refers to the freedom from intrusion into one's personal matters and personal information.

Best Buddies employees understand and follow strict protocols regarding participant rights to privacy. To protect participant rights to privacy, the following procedures are observed by Best Buddies employees:

- The identity of participants, nor information about them, is to be disclosed unless there is participant consent.
- Employees access the minimum amount of information necessary to provide services
- Best Buddies employees will never disclose participant information without consent. This includes personal health information, disability information, photographs etc.

Access to information and records

Best Buddies participants are provided with information pertaining to immediate, pending, and potential future service/support needs. Information is offered in a manner that is clear and understandable, with risks identified when applicable. Participant's rights to access information, including their own records, is stated on the participant handbook. Participants have the right to:

- Their own records
- All Information pertinent in sufficient time to facilitate his or her decision

Informed consent or refusal or expression of choice

Best Buddies employees ensure participants have the right to informed consent or refusal or expression of choice regarding services received, release of information, concurrent services, and composition of service delivery team. Participant's right to informed consent is stated in the participant's handbook and explained to each participant in a manner that is understandable to them. Participants have the right to:

- Informed consent or refusal to and expression of choice when:
 - Selecting a job
 - Sharing personal information
 - Selecting an employment consultant

Referrals

Best Buddies employees ensure participant's rights to access or referral to self-help, advocacy support services and/or legal entity for appropriate representation. This is triggered during the vocational assessment and referrals are made as needed. Participant's right to access or referral is stated on the participant's handbook and explained to each participant in a manner that is understandable to them.

Best Buddies employees deliver self-advocacy training to each participant and refer them to outside agencies or the Best Buddies Ambassadors program.

Reporting information security incidents

If there is a breach of confidential participant information, it is Best Buddies policy that employees immediately contact their supervisor and complete an *Incident Report* within 24 hours. A breach includes but is not limited to the following:

- Loss or theft of paper records containing personal information
- Mailing or faxing documents containing personal information to the wrong person
- Loss or theft of a computer (e.g., laptop, desktop, tablet), cell phone, or other electronic devices
- Loss or theft of a CD, DVD, disk, USB flash drive, or other storage media containing personal information

All employees, contractors, vendors, and service providers must report any suspected information security incident or data breach. Prompt detection and reporting of information security incidents helps contain and limit damage and may be necessary to comply with legal obligations. Any employee who suspects an information security incident has occurred must report it promptly to human resources.

Best Buddies operates internationally and in many legal jurisdictions. While the information security policies and procedures set forth provide a minimum requirement for control, there may be other regional requirements for information security. Employees, and all others working on behalf of Best Buddies, are required to follow all laws and regulations of the countries or regions in which they operate and/or funding agencies. Users may contact human resources to determine any specific information security requirements for their location.

Abuse and Neglect and Mandated Reporting

Best Buddies employees ensure participants have the right to be free from abuse, neglect, humiliation, exploitation, retaliation etc. It is the policy of Best Buddies that employees practice and advocate for the Human Rights of our participants with Intellectual or developmental disabilities. Employees are expected to treat participants with respect and dignity at all times.

According to the U.S. Attorney General's guide for mandated reporters, vulnerable members of our society who suffer from abuse are not always able to report the abuse inflicted on them. So, it is important for people who interact with children, individuals with disabilities and the elderly to know how, when and where to report incidents of abuse. Reporting abuse to the proper agency will not only help the person who has suffered the abuse in that particular situations but will also send out a broader message to everyone that mistreatment will not be tolerated or ignored.

Best Buddies employees are prohibited from abusing, neglecting, or violating the Human Rights of participants or any individual with intellectual or developmental disabilities. Furthermore, employees are required to report any all concerns of abuse, neglect and violations of human rights and individual rights internally and to outside agencies accordingly. State laws and/or funding agencies may have a unique reporting requirement, employees may reach out to the state director, Jobs teams or human resources for reporting information applicable to their location.

Purpose

This policy is formulated to protect our participants against any form of abuse, neglect, harassment, discrimination. It establishes that every Best Buddies employee is responsible for treating participants with the utmost dignity and respect. Furthermore, it establishes that *every Best Buddies employee is a mandated reporter*. This policy applies to every employee.

Definitions

"Abuse" is any act that constitutes the intentional and non-therapeutic infliction of pain or injury or any persistent course of conduct intended to produce mental or emotional distress. Mistreatment or illegal, dangerous, or inhumane conditions are considered abuse.

Mistreatment includes, but is not limited to:

- Physical abuse: physical force or violence that results on bodily injury or pain
- Sexual abuse or harassment: verbal or physical actions that reference sexual acts
- Psychological abuse: actions that result in emotional trauma and low self-esteem including yelling, name calling, threatening, and ignoring
- Financial abuse: taking advantage of a person for financial gain including misuse of a person's money
- Retaliation: to take retribution by returning some injury
- Humiliation: to cause a person a painful loss of pride or dignity

Dangerous conditions/incidents include, but are not limited to:

A condition/incident which poses or could have posed a danger to the health or safety of a participant regardless of whether injury has resulted, and which has not been adequately addressed through administrative action within a reasonable time.

- A gas leak in a residence is not corrected despite staff and administration's knowledge.
- A participant known to eat inedible substances is left alone in a room with an open household cleaner

container, which he attempts to ingest.

Illegal condition/incident include, but are not limited to:

A condition/incident in violation of regulation or law which posed a danger or harm to a participant, and which has not been adequately addressed through administrative action within a reasonable time.

- Unauthorized cashing of participant's checks
- Driving participants in an unregistered vehicle
- Stealing from a participant
- Using illegal substances

Inhumane conditions/incident include, but are not limited to:

A condition/incident inconsistent with the proper regard for human dignity or which is or was demeaning to a consumer.

- Swearing at or threatening a participant
- Incitement of consumers or others to mistreat a participant
- Any unreasonable use of force which is not necessary to protect a participant from harm
- Humiliation of a participant through words or actions

"Neglect" is failure of a caregiver to supply the participant with necessary food, clothing, shelter, health care or supervision; or the absence or likelihood of absence of necessary food, clothing, shelter, health care or supervision for a participant or failure to care for the participant's basic needs.

"Human Rights" of individuals with disabilities. Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities face discrimination and barriers that restrict them from participating in society on an equal basis with others every day. They are denied their rights to be included in the general school's system, to be employed, to live independently, in the community, to move freely, to vote, to participate in sports and cultural activities, to enjoy social protection, to access justice, to choose medical treatment and to enter freely into legal commitments such as buying and selling property. At Best Buddies, we promote, discuss and expect our employees to understand, advocate Human Rights of our participants and require employees to understand their reporting responsibility.

Reporting of Violation

Internal reporting requirement: Incidents must be documented in the Best Buddies participant incident (critical incident) form within four hours. The report should be sent to the supervisor, state director, senior director, Jobs or Programs and human resources.

Outside reporting requirement: Incidents/concerns must be reported to the appropriate state agency or protective state agency within four hours. Many state agencies have complex reporting requirements. A directory with state agencies and reporting requirements is available with the programs team.

Retaliation

Best Buddies strictly forbids retaliation against anyone who reports an incident in good faith.

Disciplinary Action

If the person suspected of abuse or neglect, or any other misconduct towards a participant is a Best Buddies employee, the organization will suspend the employee without pay until the investigation is concluded. Best Buddies employees are expected to advocate for all participants with IDD and misconduct towards participants will not be tolerated.

Failure by Best Buddies employees to file a complaint, assist an individual in filing a complaint, or assist in

forwarding complaints received from another staff person or individual constitutes grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Participant Grievance and Appeal Policy

Best Buddies complies with all applicable provisions of state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to non-discrimination, sexual harassment and equal employment opportunity. Any program participant who feels he/she has been discriminated against in any of those areas is entitled to seek redress by means of the established grievance and appeal policy.

Every effort is made to resolve issues as they arise. Best Buddies is committed to addressing grievances and resolving through communication and mutual compromise. If an agreement cannot be reached, participants have the right to appeal any decision made or file a formal grievance. A grievance is defined as a complaint, either written or oral, expressing dissatisfaction with the services provided or the quality of participant care. A grievance may include, but is not limited to:

- The quality of services a Best Buddies participant receives;
- Behavior of program staff;
- A violation of a participant's rights

Grievance and appeal protocols are stated in each program handbook. Grievance reports should be submitted to relevant, involved parties. Employees who receive a grievance report should notify the senior director and human resources within 24 hours of submission.

Participant Transition or Termination

The following behaviors would cause a participant to be terminated from a Best Buddies program:

- Not following the member code of conduct
- Illegal drug use at any time
- Alcohol use while on the job
- Sexual harassment
- Violent verbal or physical aggression with the Best Buddies employees, coworkers, and/or customers
- Not cooperating with the Best Buddies employees and/or employer
- Participant has lost the desire to work

If a Best Buddies participant is discharged from a program, a letter must be sent to the participant notifying them that they have been discharged. If the participant is transitioning to another agency, Best Buddies staff will work with the individual and their support team to ensure a smooth transition. All files will be made available to the new provider, no later than seven days after receipt of a signed release of information. The step-by-step separation protocol is stated in the programs handbook.

Health and Safety Requirements

Best Buddies makes every attempt to ensure the safety of employees, participants and volunteers. Employee incidents are managed by human resources. Participant or volunteer incidents should be reported to the senior director of each program who will review the incident with human resources.

All senior directors are responsible for reviewing all incidents annually and provide recommendations to the leadership team on how to mitigate identified risks. Step by step on how to manage participant or volunteer incidents within each program is outlined in the program's handbook.

Detailed information regarding health and safety policies and protocols is available in the health and safety handbook as well as on the Safety and Risk management section on the Mission Memo.

Transporting Participants

Best Buddies programs staff may at times provide transportation to participants or volunteers. Transportation for participants must be provided in a safe manner consistent with the regulations of local and federal authorities. Every program employee must be an acceptable driver under the driving for Best Buddies policy. In addition to complying with the driving policy, every program employee must observe local state and/or funding agency requirement and the following standards:

- Maintain a first aid and emergency supplies in vehicle in case of emergency (Best Buddies will provide kits at time of hire)
- Consent to DMV record check at time of hire and annually thereafter
- Report to human resources any traffic violations, driving restrictions or change in insurance immediately
- Always maintain an updated auto maintenance form in vehicle. Follow vehicle maintenance procedures and schedules comply with the manufacturer's recommendations
- Maintenance records to support regular preventive maintenance, regular inspection, and repairs

If an employee is unable or uncertain if he/she can provide safe transportation to the participant, the employee has the right to refuse transportation service. The employee will be required to work with the participant to secure proper transportation and will work with the supervisor on addressing any deficiencies.