



The Wheatsville Personnel Policies Manual

November 2009

This manual has been adopted, pursuant to Board of Directors Policies D.1.1, by our General Manager, Dan Gillotte, with the help and advice of the Wheatsville Personnel Policy Committee. It is subject to revision at any time by the General Manager.

Revised November 2009

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Wheatsville Co-op, the only consumer food co-op in Texas. This is your Personnel Policies Manual. In it you will find the written policies and procedures describing what Wheatsville expects of you and what you can expect from Wheatsville.

Wheatsville Co-op is a consumer food co-op. All Wheatsville employees are hired to serve our members and other shoppers. We are a results-oriented business where we measure success by the happiness of our members, our contribution to the community and the profitability of the business.

Although it is intended that this will be a rather comprehensive description of our expectations, it is not an employment agreement and is not meant to create any specific contractual rights or obligations either express or implied. Your employment at Wheatsville is “at-will,” and, pursuant to policy of the Board of Directors, you are hereby advised that your job is neither permanent nor guaranteed and may be terminated by you or by Wheatsville with or without cause, and with or without notice. We hope that you will find your experience here meaningful and rewarding and that you will enjoy being part of our cooperative enterprise. If you have any questions about these policies or suggestions for revisions of them, please speak to the general manager, your team manager, or any member of the Personnel Policies Committee (see page 38). Your ideas are always welcome.

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AN OVERVIEW OF WHEATSVILLE

Mission / Purpose / Methods Statement

As provided in the Wheatsville Bylaws

The purpose of Wheatsville Co-op is to create a self-reliant, self-empowering community of people that will grow and promote a transformation of society toward cooperation, justice and non-exploitation.

The mission of Wheatsville Co-op is to serve a broad range of people by providing them goods and services, using efficient methods that avoid manipulation of the consumers and minimize exploitation of the producers or damage to the environment. The primary focus for this mission is supplying high-quality food and non-doctrinaire information about food to people in Austin, Texas.

Cooperative Principles

Wheatsville is a consumer cooperative, owned by our members. Local control and local ownership make consumer cooperatives a special kind of business. Wheatsville is in business to benefit our community as well as our member-owners and we follow and support the internationally accepted Principles of Cooperation, which are:

1. Voluntary and Open membership: Co-ops are voluntary organizations open to all persons able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibility of membership, without gender, social, racial, political, or religious discrimination.

2. Democratic Member Control: Co-op members have equal voting rights. One member = one vote.

3. Member Economic Participation: Members contribute equity to and democratically control the capital of the co-op.

4. Autonomy and Independence: Co-ops are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members.

5. Education, Training, and Information: Co-ops provide education and training to their members, elected representatives, managers, and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives. They inform the general public about the nature and benefits of cooperation.

6. Cooperation among Cooperatives: Co-ops serve their members most effectively and strengthen the co-op movement by working together through local, national, regional, and international structures.

7. Concern for Community: While focusing on member needs, co-ops work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies accepted by members.

Product Policy

Wheatsville's Mission Statement defines our product policy. The focus of the mission is supplying high quality food and non-doctrinaire information about food to people in Austin, Texas. Hence, while Wheatsville sells mostly natural and organically grown foods, we also sell meat, sugar, coffee, alcohol and conventional grocery items. Our goal is to serve the membership by providing them with food and related items that they want. Wheatsville's product policy is distinctly non-dogmatic. The membership does have the authority to vote to boycott products, however.

Customer Service

At Wheatsville, the customer comes first. Because we are a consumer-owned co-op, our primary focus is the customer. One of our goals, in fact, is to be the *friendliest* business in Austin. Therefore, the first priority of everyone working at Wheatsville is excellent customer service. Our customers are the reason we are here working and why the cooperative exists in the first place. We want Wheatsville to be a pleasant place to work, and it is vital that we make it a comfortable place to shop as well. We expect our staff to have a good time doing their work, ensuring that our customers will have such a good experience they become repeat shoppers and also refer us to their friends. Present yourself to our customers as friendly, helpful, and polite, always maintaining an attitude of goodwill toward yourself and others. Make each and every customer feel welcome. Be a good listener, and offer your personal assistance whenever possible – for example, take the customer to a product instead of pointing. We want to “bend over backward” to help our customers and treat every customer the way they want to be treated. Please refer to your training manual for detailed information on our customer service philosophy and practices.

Store Hours

Wheatsville is open daily from 7:30 am – 11:00 pm. The deli is open daily from 9 am – 9 pm.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Membership

Because Wheatsville is organized as a consumer cooperative, the members of the organization are the owners of the business. To serve these member/owner/consumers is the very purpose of Wheatsville Co-op.

Board of Directors

Wheatsville's Board of Directors is elected by the membership to govern the organization and assumes the trusteeship and legal responsibility for the cooperative. Responsibilities of the

Board include governing on behalf of the owners; acting as guardian of the cooperative's values; defining the reasons for the co-op's existence; and ensuring that the business identifies its place in the market, provides goods and services at good value, is adequately capitalized, and is well-managed. The Board also bears ultimate responsibility for the health of the business, safeguarding the assets and perpetuation of the cooperative.

Each year there are at least three positions on the Board open for election. Staff who are also members may run for the Board of Directors, but no more than two positions can be occupied by staff members.

Management

The general manager is hired by the Board of Directors and is accountable to the Board for overall management of store operations and implementation of Board policies. As the chief operating officer of Wheatsville, the general manager has final decision-making responsibility for the business. In addition to all other operational issues, the general manager is responsible for all personnel matters at the co-op.

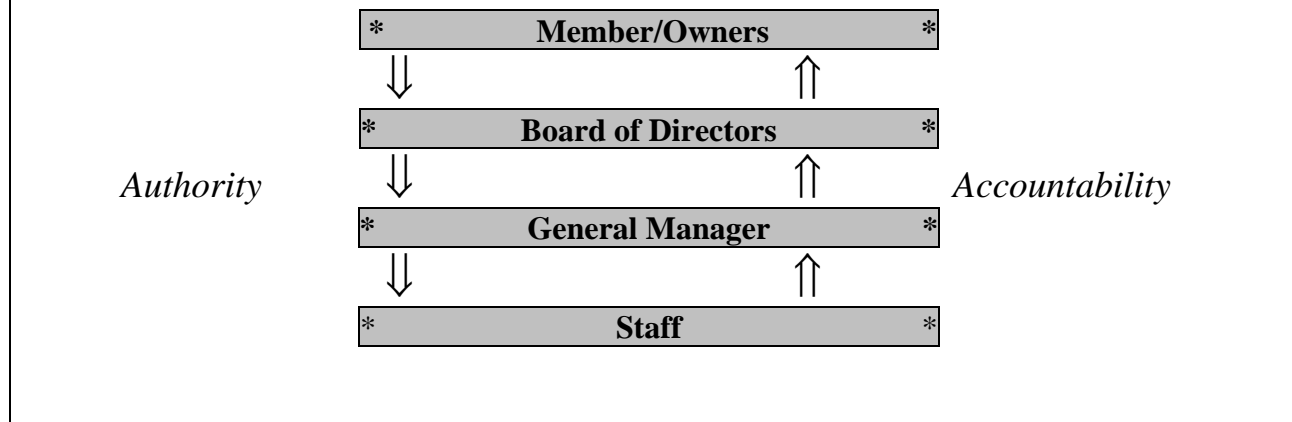
Leadership at Wheatsville is provided by a management team of Team Heads and mid-level managers (Team Heads are Art Manager, Deli Manager, Finance Manager, Merchandising Manager, Operations Manager, and Produce Manager; Mid-level Managers are Deli Counter Manager, Front End Manager, Health Team Coordinator, Kitchen Manager, and Stocking Supervisor). As a group, this management team meets to plan and coordinate operations within the store, to discuss ways to improve operations, and to facilitate communication channels among all staff members. Team managers are accountable to the general manager for the daily operations of their respective departments.

Team managers are expected to work closely with all of their staff members to establish objectives and see that these objectives are achieved. Team managers have primary responsibility for hiring, firing, evaluating, training, and supervising their staff members, subject to oversight by the general manager. Responsibility and authority within specific areas of operation may be delegated to department and/or assistant managers. The team managers, with the general manager, set standards of excellence, provide regular feedback on performance, and determine compensation levels for members of their teams.

In addition to any supervisory structure which may be established within the framework of each team, all staff members should respect the responsibility that managers of other teams and floor managers have for the efficient and proper operation of the business as a whole. This means staff members should be responsive to the advice, constructive criticism, and requests of all managers and floor managers as well as their direct supervisors. When a departmental supervisor is not present in the store, the floor manager on duty is authorized to provide supervision for workers in that department.



FLOW OF AUTHORITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE CO-OP



HIRING, ORIENTATION, & EVALUATIONS

Hiring Procedures

Wheatsville seeks to hire the best person available for all positions at the co-op and is always looking to find excellent candidates for each job. When a position becomes available at Wheatsville, it is posted immediately on the HR bulletin board. Priority consideration is given to interested and qualified staff members, but staff applying for positions may not necessarily be interviewed.

In order to insure that the co-op gets a good return on its investment made in training a person for a particular department, current employees are generally not permitted to transfer to a different department until they have completed at least six months at their current job. Because we want staff to have enough hours at Wheatsville to make a good living, however, team members may train in other departments and add regular hours from other departments in their first six months with approval from the team head of their primary department and the general manager.

(The Board of Directors hires the general manager, and the process for selecting any staff positions on search, interview, or hiring committees for general manager is determined by the Board.)

Equal Opportunity

Wheatsville is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We welcome applications and carefully consider each applicant's job qualifications. We do not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, religious affiliation or creed, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, or any other protected status under federal or state law.

Hiring Relatives

Wheatsville is reluctant to hire close relatives to work in the same department. Close relatives are defined as anyone in the immediate family: spouse, lover, parent, child, sibling. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Staff Ownership of the Co-op

We encourage all Wheatsville staff to become owners of the co-op. We offer annual memberships for a fee of \$15 which expire one year from the issue date. Alternatively, you can avoid paying multiple annual fees by becoming an Invested Owner. This requires a non-refundable joining fee of \$15 plus \$55 invested capital. Your paid-in capital is fully refundable if and when you resign your ownership in the co-op. If you choose to invest your capital in monthly payments, you will retain an Investing Owner status until it is paid in full.

If you wish, your ownership can be paid through payroll deductions of \$5 every pay period. To begin payroll deductions, you will need to pay a \$15 joining fee at the cash register and complete a membership application.

Orientation

Each new staff person will be scheduled for an orientation session within the first 2 weeks of employment. The orientation focuses on the history of Wheatsville, how it and co-ops in general work, and the expectations of working at Wheatsville. Orientation attendance is required and paid like a scheduled shift.

Trial Period

The first three months at Wheatsville are considered a trial period for all new employees and rehires. During this period, Full-Time and Intermediate-Time employees accrue sick and vacation pay, but cannot draw this money until the trial period has been successfully completed, as determined in a formal employee evaluation. If employment is terminated before passing the trial period, all accrued sick and vacation benefits are forfeited. If you change jobs and/or departments within Wheatsville, your first three months at the new job will be considered a trial period except that sick and vacation pay accumulations may be drawn once the initial trial period is passed.

Wheatsville, as a cooperative, depends on the willingness of the employees and members to work towards the good of the entire co-op, and to take responsibility for their input into the co-op. To this end, we ask that during their trial period and training sessions employees take responsibility for ensuring that they receive the best training that they can. Asking questions and looking for clarification is highly encouraged. We want you to succeed at the co-op and will do everything possible to help you do your best in your new job. If, however, we find during your trial period that you will not be able to adequately do the job for which you were hired, we

reserve the right to terminate your employment either before or after your trial period, in accordance with Texas employment law.

Evaluations

At the end of the three-month trial period, each new employee will receive a written evaluation from his or her supervisor. If the employee successfully passes their trial period, they will receive an evaluation and their one and only automatic raise, as outlined under Pay Rates, page 16. Subsequent raises must be earned through improved performance or increased responsibility and are not guaranteed.

Six months after the trial period evaluation, all Regular employees will receive a second evaluation. This is a raise-eligible written evaluation outlining specific goals for the employee's development in the next six months. At month 15, the employee will receive their last 6-month, raise-eligible evaluation. If the employee has brought improvement to their position or added new responsibility to their job, they may receive a raise. After another six months, the employee and supervisor will meet to discuss a brief written progress report reviewing the employee's progress toward the employee's specified goals. This progress report shall be placed in the employee's personnel file. One year after the third evaluation, the employee will receive another raise-eligible written evaluation with compensation based on progress, or lack thereof, toward the goals that were presented to the employee one year prior. This evaluation will also establish new goals for the next yearlong evaluation cycle.

Month: 3	9	15	21	27	33
Trial Period Eval	6-Month Eval	6-Month Eval	6-Month Progress Report	Annual Eval	6-Month Progress Report
Automatic Pay Raise	Raise Eligible	Raise Eligible		Raise Eligible	
	Goal Setting	Goal Setting	Goals Review	Goal Setting	Goals Review

Your supervisor will discuss your evaluation with you and provide a copy for your records. The supervisor must then present the evaluation to the general manager for approval. After being signed by the employee, the team manager, and the general manager, the written evaluation becomes a part of the employee's permanent personnel file. Keep in mind that evaluations and pay rates are confidential, so please do not leave a copy of your evaluation where others may see it.

An employee being promoted or changing positions at the co-op will begin a new 3-month trial period. At the end of this trial period, they will be eligible for a raise. If the employee has been employed at Wheatsville for less than 15 months, they will go on a 6-month evaluation schedule for the next period, switching to an annual raise eligible evaluation schedule after that. If an employee has been here for more than 15 months, they will go on an annual raise-eligible evaluation cycle after their trial period.

In cases of rare and exceptional employee performance, the team manager may recommend an accelerated evaluation to reward the employee earlier for their work and to encourage retention of such employees. However, all such accelerated evaluations must be approved by the general manager.

Staff Input for Manager Evaluations

At least once annually all employees will be given an opportunity to provide written feedback about their direct supervisor's performance. All information gathered through this process will be confidential and will be considered during the supervisor's evaluation.

COMPENSATION

Staff Definitions

Staff members are classified according to their work schedules, as follows:

- **Regular, Full-Time Staff:** Any person regularly scheduled for 30 or more hours per week. If a staff member works in more than one department, all regularly scheduled hours in all departments are included. Occasional, temporary changes in schedule do not affect one's status, but any change anticipated to continue more than six weeks is considered to be a change in the regular schedule. The number of hours an employee is deemed to be "regularly scheduled" in any department is determined by the team manager. It is not necessary that the employee have a fixed schedule, but the "regularly scheduled hours" should fairly represent the minimum number of hours being worked and expected to be worked on a consistent basis.
- **Regular, Intermediate-Time Staff:** Any person regularly scheduled for 20 or more, but less than 30, hours per week.
- **Regular, Part-Time Staff:** Any person regularly scheduled for less than 20 hours per week.
- **Substitute Staff:** Any person hired to meet the needs of a department, with no regularly scheduled hours.

Team managers are responsible for reporting to the HR Coordinator any change in schedule which may affect the status of staff in their departments, and any change in status must receive the approval of the general manager. Employees working in more than one department must keep their team managers advised of their scheduled hours in other departments, especially if additional hours might affect employment classification.

In addition to Regular and Substitute status, employees are classified as salaried/exempt or hourly/non-exempt, as follows:

- **Salaried/Exempt Employees:** Some positions are compensated on a salary basis and are exempt from overtime pay under federal and state law . These positions may be reclassified at the general manager’s discretion at any time.
- **Hourly/Non-Exempt Employees:** All non-salaried positions are compensated on an hourly basis and are subject to overtime pay requirements under federal and state law.

Wheatsville Pay Policy

Pay Rates

Compensation for the general manager is determined by the Board of Directors, and the general manager is responsible for establishing pay rates for other staff members. This policy sets general guidelines for staff compensation.

All hourly/non-exempt jobs at Wheatsville fall into one of five levels determined by the responsibility and complexity of the position as detailed in written job descriptions (see Wage Scale provided in your New Hire Packet and posted on the HR Board). A basic entry range and a ceiling wage are assigned to each of these levels. Within each level, individual pay rates are determined primarily on the basis of individual merit, taking into consideration the profitability of the business and of the department as well as budgetary constraints imposed by the Board of Directors.

Compensation for salaried/exempt positions is set by the general manager on the basis of the responsibility and complexity of the position, individual merit, productivity, and contribution to the profitability of the business, within the context of budgetary constraints.

The following guidelines will be observed in determining individual pay rates for hourly/non-exempt positions:

1. New hires are paid within the entry wage range, based on experience. (If very little additional training will be required, transfers from other departments or positions at Wheatsville may start at a rate up to that received in their other position. For promotions with added responsibility where the starting wage range is less than the staff person is presently earning, current staff may start at a wage up to 50¢ above their current wage.)
2. After the initial 3 month trial period, or after completing the trial period in a new job or department, an employee will receive a wage increase no less than 25¢ and no more than \$1.00.
3. Subsequent raises will be considered at each raise-eligible evaluation, the first such evaluation occurring six months after the trial period evaluation and each year thereafter. However, an evaluation does not necessarily guarantee a raise. Any wage increase given after the trial period evaluation will be no more than \$1.50. This maximum raise is reserved for exceptionally high-performing employees; a typical raise may be considerably lower.

4. Specific raise amounts are recommended by the team manager, but must be approved by the general manager before being presented to the employee.
5. When deemed appropriate, a raise may be deferred for a specified period of time or until the employee meets specified conditions as agreed upon in the written evaluation. When this action is taken, the employee is considered to be on probation.

This pay policy will be reviewed annually in connection with preparation of the operating budget for the fiscal year, commencing June 1. Wage scale adjustments may be made at that time. It is the policy of the Board of Directors that our employees should receive “competitive compensation” and that Wheatsville should “provide a wage and benefit package within the budget priorities and in accord with cooperatives of comparable size and type.” Better salaries and wages are a high priority, and your best efforts to make the business consistently profitable will help us to achieve this goal. In profitable years, Wheatsville board and management may offer a bonus to share profits with staff.

Overtime Pay

Hourly/non-exempt employees will not be scheduled for more than 40 hours per week unless specifically approved by the team head. It is the employee’s responsibility to notify the supervisor or team manager *in advance* if working a shift will result in more than 40 hours for the week. This is particularly important for those staff members working in more than one department. Failure to seek permission prior to going into overtime may result in a written warning. If you have overtime hours in only one week, you must be sure your supervisor is aware so the proper pay can be calculated. Unless indicated by the team head, overtime for employees who sub in multiple departments will be charged to the subbing department. Wheatsville complies with the Fair Labor Standards Act and pays 1.5 times the regular rate for any hours over 40 worked by hourly/non-exempt employees in a week.

Paychecks

You will be paid every other Friday for the two-week pay period ending the preceding Sunday. Checks are distributed in the Accounting Office from 12-5PM on payday. If payday falls on a holiday when the store will be closed, checks will be distributed on the day before the holiday at noon. Specific dates of payday are posted on the bulletin board in the back of the store and in the office, among other places. If you are not present for the actual distribution of paychecks, your check can be obtained from a floor manager at any time during business hours after 5PM on payday. To partially offset the fee charged by our bank and administrative expenses, if you lose your paycheck, Wheatsville may charge you a fee to stop payment and replace the check. Unless you have given the general manager prior written notice to the contrary, you agree that the following deductions may be subtracted from your paycheck: staff charges, personal long-distance phone calls, medical and dental insurance payments, membership capital and fees, voluntary dues, advances, unpaid merchandise purchases, returned checks, check replacement fees, name tag replacements, and any other expense incurred by

Wheatsville for the employee. Distribution of your payroll check to a friend or relative must be designated by you in writing.

Benefits

Besides getting to work with great folks for a good cause, Wheatsville offers employees many benefits which vary depending on your status as a Regular Full-Time, Regular Intermediate-Time, Regular Part-Time, or Substitute employee (see **Compensation** for these definitions).

Staff Discount

All regularly scheduled employees are eligible to receive a 15% discount on their purchases at the cash register, and they are also exempt from non-member surcharges on their purchases. Subs will receive the discount only on days that they work. The staff discount does not apply to stamps, memberships, or gift certificates.

Dependent children and one additional person *who shares food expenses* with an eligible staff member may be designated by that staff member to receive a staff discount. To receive the discount, the designated individuals must show the cashier a current Staff Designated Discount Card. These cards are issued by the Membership Coordinator. They are valid only as long as the staff member continues to be a regularly scheduled employee, and they must be renewed annually. Staff members are accountable for any abuse of the discount by those they designate.

Holiday Pay

Wheatsville staff are paid for three holidays: Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Years Day. Full-Time employees receive one day's pay (eight hours) for each holiday. Intermediate-Time employees receive 6 hours pay. Part-Time employees who work at least 10 hours per week receive four hours pay. Any employee who works an average of less than 10 hours per week will not receive holiday pay. Salaried employees receive holidays off with pay, but do not receive additional pay in excess of their regular salary. Employees must have passed their trial period by the date of the holiday to receive holiday pay.

Sick Pay

You are encouraged to stay home from work if you are contagious so that the rest of the staff are not exposed to your illness. If you work in food preparation, the Health Department urges that you stay home to avoid food contamination to our customers. Your supervisor or floor manager has the right to send you home if you come to work when you are sick. You are, however, responsible for your scheduled shifts, so you should make arrangements for your work to be covered when you are ill. (See additional comments under **Schedule & Absenteeism**)

Sick pay benefits are accumulated for all Regular Full-Time and Regular Intermediate-Time employees (those regularly scheduled at least 20 hours per week) using the following formula:

$$\text{Hours worked} \times \text{pay rate} \times .0279 = \text{sick pay in dollars.}$$

This benefit is calculated each pay period for eligible employees who actually work at least 40 hours during that pay period (20 hours per week). For example, if you work 80 hours at \$8.00/hr, you will accumulate \$17.86 for that period. See also *Provisos* under Vacation Pay.

Vacation Pay

Vacation time must be arranged in advance and approved by your team manager. Normally, at least two weeks' notice is required, and more notice may be needed if no one else is available to cover your duties. For extended time away from work, see provisions under **Leave**.

Vacation pay benefits are accumulated for Regular Full-Time and Regular Intermediate-Time employees (those regularly scheduled at least 20 hours per week) using the following formula, based on the number of years worked at Wheatsville:

First year:	Hours worked	x	pay rate	x	.01923	=	vacation pay
Years 2 - 5:	Hours worked	x	pay rate	x	.03846	=	vacation pay
Years 6 - 10:	Hours worked	x	pay rate	x	.05769	=	vacation pay
Over 10 years:	Hours worked	x	pay rate	x	.07692	=	vacation pay

This formula represents one week's pay the first year, two weeks' pay beginning the second year, three weeks' pay beginning the sixth year, and four weeks' pay beginning the eleventh year. This benefit is calculated each pay period for eligible employees who actually work at least 40 hours during that pay period (20 hours per week).

Years worked are measured from the date when an employee is first classified as Full-time or Intermediate-Time. If the employee drops to Part-Time or Sub status and subsequently resumes Full or Intermediate-Time status, then the starting date is adjusted to exclude any time when the employee was not regularly scheduled for at least 20 hours per week. Whether or not time previously worked will be counted for employees who are rehired at Wheatsville after terminating employment will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Provisos for Sick and Vacation Pay: Full and Intermediate-Time staff members begin to accumulate sick and vacation pay beginning from the pay period when they are first regularly scheduled for at least 20 hours per week (as determined by the Team Manager and approved by the General Manager), but no part of either benefit can be claimed until after successful completion of the initial three-month trial period. If you leave before that time, either voluntarily or involuntarily, you forfeit any accumulated monies. After passing the trial period, you may request all or any part of either benefit by filling out a request form and it will be paid to you on your next paycheck. (Remember that sick and vacation pay are subject to Social Security and income taxes just like your regular wages. If you request sick or vacation pay to replace wages when you are off work, your net check will normally be the same as if you had worked. If you

request sick or vacation pay *in addition to* your regular wages, then the percentage withheld for income tax on those benefits may be even greater than the tax on your regular wages, depending on your W-4 status and the gross amount subject to tax.) You can see the amount available in your sick and vacation accounts by checking the Sick and Vacation Pay list outside the Accounting Office. Balances are updated on the Monday following each payday. Upon leaving Wheatsville after more than three months of employment, the balance of your sick and vacation pay will normally be paid to you on the payday after your last regular paycheck, unless you request otherwise.

Sick and vacation pay are non-cumulative. The total amounts accumulated and available to be drawn by the end of the fiscal year (May 31) must be paid no later than July 31 of the same year or they will be forfeited. Regular Part-Time and Substitute employees do not accumulate either sick or vacation pay. Whether your discharge is voluntary or involuntary, you will be compensated for all benefits accumulated, subject to the condition that you have successfully passed the initial three-month trial period.

Salaried Employee Sick and Vacation Pay

If a salaried employee (1) works less than 76 hours in a pay period, (2) is absent for one or more full work days during that pay period, and (3) does not make up those days by working additional days in the same pay period or preceding pay period, then the employee's base salary will be prorated in full day increments based on the number of days worked. Unless the employee requests otherwise, sick and/or vacation pay, if available, will be added to the employee's check in order to pay the full salary amount, drawing first from the larger of the two funds. If there are insufficient sick and/or vacation funds available, then the employee may receive less than full salary for that pay period. The Employee's supervisor may make exceptions to this policy to assure that an employee is properly compensated for all work performed.

Insurance

Workers' Compensation: Wheatsville has workers' compensation insurance for on-the-job injuries. Coverage at the time this policy was drafted was provided by Texas Mutual Insurance Company. After that date, other carriers may be selected to provide coverage. Specific information will be posted on the staff bulletin board. You can get more information about your workers' compensation rights from any office of the Texas Workers' Compensation Commission, or by calling 1-800-252-7031. You may elect to retain your common law right of action if, no later than five days after beginning employment, you notify the general manager or finance manager in writing that you wish to retain your common law right to recover damages for personal injury. If you elect your common law right of action, you cannot obtain workers' compensation income or medical benefits if you are injured.

Group Insurance Plans: Full-time employees who have completed 90 days of employment are eligible to enroll in several insurance plans offered at Wheatsville. You should have received information about this in your New Hire Packet. If you have any questions, please see the HR Coordinator.

An employee whose actual hours are temporarily reduced, involuntarily, to a level no lower than five hours per week below that required for participation in our group insurance plans will not be considered ineligible for coverage on that account. If after 90 days, however, the number of regularly scheduled hours does not return to the minimum required, then the benefits will be reduced or eliminated accordingly.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

All Wheatsville staff members and their families are encouraged to use the EAP. It provides free, confidential counseling for personal, legal and financial issues. Examples of problems the EAP can help you with: stress, parenting, relationships, landlord conflicts, drug or alcohol abuse, eating disorders, communication with co-worker or manager, etc. You can find the free 800 number on posters in the break room or ask Human Resources.

401(K) Retirement Plan

After three months of Regular Full Time employment and completion of the trial period, Wheatsville staff members may be enrolled in the 401(K) retirement plan. Any whole percentage of gross income may be invested, and Wheatsville will contribute a percentage in addition. The contributions are not taxed until withdrawal, which allows you to earn returns/ interest on a larger sum. Any funds put in this type of retirement plan are intended to be withdrawn after the 61st birthday. Money withdrawn early is taxed 20% and fined 10%. Whether you plan to enroll or decline, contact Human Resources prior to three months of Full Time employment.

Benefits for the General Manager

All sick and vacation pay, as well as insurance benefits, for the general manager are set by the Board of Directors.

Advances

Before a regular payday, any Wheatsville staff member may request an advance of all or part of the wages and/or sick-and-vacation pay that has been accumulated as of the date of the request, less an allowance for taxes and other deductions (generally 25%). Instructions for receiving an advance are posted at the advance station in the office building. All requests for advances on wages must be signed by your team manager or, in his/her absence, by another manager, to verify that sufficient hours have been worked to cover the advance. Advances are limited to one per pay period. Additional advances must be approved by the general manager. Advances are processed Monday through Friday, except that no advances are provided on payday, and no advances are provided on Wednesday or Thursday before payday if the payroll that would be affected is already being calculated. Advances are a privilege and not a right, and

the general manager may at any time, for budgetary or other reasons, restrict the availability of advances for either specific individuals or for all staff members.

Staff Charge Account

Each employee who has regularly scheduled hours can establish a staff charge account. The default limit is \$50.00 per pay period.. Full-time employees can increase their limit up to \$100.00 by notifying the Operations Manager. The balance due on your staff charge account is deducted from your paycheck each pay period.

You are responsible for ensuring that your after-tax wages will cover your staff charges. Employees who fail to do so may have their charge privileges revoked.

Staff Development

Wheatsville believes in training and development of staff. Periodically, Wheatsville will send key personnel to training sessions in Austin and elsewhere. Wheatsville may also pay for classes for individual staff people that will directly benefit Wheatsville. All staff development is decided on a case by case basis.

Credit Union Membership

All Wheatsville employees are eligible to join the University Federal Credit Union. To open an account, go to the credit union and tell them you're a Wheatsville employee. You should bring a paycheck stub to verify employment. As a UFCU member, you can utilize the ATM in the store without a transaction fee, and membership in the UFCU is lifetime even if you leave Wheatsville at a later date.

HOUSE RULES

Professional Courtesy

Our co-workers are “internal customers” and we provide each other good customer service by doing our jobs well and treating one another with consideration. Rudeness to co-workers will no more be tolerated than rudeness to customers. Each department depends on the other departments to do what is expected of them in order to make everything run smoothly. Find out how you can help your co-workers have a delightful time at work. Processing your invoices promptly, making sure every item is priced correctly and signage is correct, or telling the floor manager if you leave the building, are simple tasks that when left undone, can create a problem for other staff members. Treat your co-workers in the manner that you like to be treated. Gossip about co-workers is not appropriate in the workplace. Always treat your fellow staff members with respect, both to their faces and behind their backs.

Dress Code

Good personal hygiene and appropriate attire are a necessity for our employees. All staff members must appear clean and approachable while at work, and all applicable health and safety regulations must be followed.

- Please do not wear anything which might be offensive to our customers. This includes text and graphics that contain foul language or symbols as well as items that advocate violent, racist, sexist, or homophobic sentiments.
- Do not wear anything which advertises our competitors.
- Refrain from wearing any strong perfumes, including those that are natural.
- Staff name tags are to be worn visibly on the chest area by all employees while on the clock and should be free of stickers or writing.
- If an employee arrives in inappropriate or overly revealing clothing, he/she will be sent home to change without pay.

In addition to these rules, certain positions and departments have specific requirements that may be related to health or safety regulations or other job responsibilities (e.g., hair coverings, aprons, closed-toe shoes), and all staff members are expected to follow the directives of their supervisors with respect to dress and hygiene.

All staff members are encouraged, but not required, to purchase Wheatsville attire which is available for a special price through the Human Resources department. See the HR Coordinator or your team manager for details.

Schedule and Absenteeism

You are expected to be present and ready to begin work ON TIME each day you are scheduled. For proper customer service and as a courtesy to your co-workers, it is crucial that you follow this policy conscientiously. Some positions have more flexibility in arrival time than others. You must meet your direct supervisor's expectations for timeliness. If you will be late, you must notify your department manager or, if your department manager is not available, the floor manager, as far in advance as possible. If you do not communicate directly with your department manager or the floor manager concerning your absence or tardiness, you will be subject to disciplinary action including possible termination. Although your manager may assist you in unusual circumstances, you are expected to make every effort to arrange coverage for your shift. All schedule substitutions must be approved by the department manager before the person originally scheduled is excused from the shift.

Weather Emergencies

You are expected to come to work in every weather situation unless travel to work would endanger life and/or limb. You are required to call your department manager and/or floor manager by 8:30 a.m. to inform them of your anticipated absence or delay.

Using the Time Clock

All hourly staff members are expected to clock in when starting a shift and clock out when finished with a shift. If you forget to clock in or out, or if you are unsure whether your clock in/out worked, ask the floor manager (FM) or your team manager to correct your time card as soon as possible. It is each employee's responsibility to ensure that they are paid for hours worked. Intentionally falsifying punches for yourself or for another employee so that compensation will improperly be paid to that employee or yourself may be considered "theft of time" and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

If you use your break time on the store premises, you do not need to clock in or out. If you take a break away from the store, you must clock out and clock back in upon returning. You will still be paid as long as the break is not longer than your usual break time for the shift. To indicate that you are taking a break away from the store for your regular amount of break time, swipe your card and push "break" and "enter." This is the way to clock in *and* out from an "off campus" break. If you are leaving the store for *longer* than your paid five minutes per hour break allotment, swipe your card and push "lunch" and "enter." You will not be paid for this type of extended break.

Breaks

For every hour you work, you are entitled to take 5 minutes of paid break time. Refer to your department manager for scheduling your break. If you work less than four hours in your shift, you will not receive a break. Many departments and staff have set break times. In these areas no break should be taken outside of these designated times. All staff must inform their supervisor or the floor manager when they go on break and when they come back to work.

Leaving the Store

If you leave Wheatsville premises during your shift, you should punch out and then punch back in when you return. There are two exceptions:

1. If a staff member is injured and must be taken to a physician for emergency treatment, neither person is expected to punch out. Both will be paid for the time spent taking care of the injury.
2. If you leave the premises on Wheatsville business and then return, you do not have to punch out.

Whenever you leave the premises, it is necessary to tell the floor manager and your department manager or supervisor.

Phone Calls

Personal phone calls may be made or received by staff while on break. Please keep your calls brief and infrequent. If you answer the phone and the caller wishes to speak to a staff member who is busy, offer the caller voicemail (if the staff person has it), or take a message and give it to the staff member, or put it in his or her mailbox.

Cell phones must be set to silent mode while at work, except during breaks. It is never permissible for staff to use a cell phone on the sales floor for personal use.

Computer Use

All computers at Wheatsville Food Co-op are intended to be used for business purposes. Staff who wish to use a computer for anything other than official co-op business must first ensure that the computer in question is not needed for work purposes. Additionally, should an employee require a computer for official co-op business, any staff person occupying a workstation for personal use must *immediately log off and yield the workstation* to the other party. Staff are never guaranteed an available workstation for personal use.

Staff whose jobs require regular computer use will be issued an individual network login. All staff with an individual login must use that login for all computer use and must log off before leaving the workstation. This prevents confidential files from being accessed by non-authorized personnel.

Any electronic document or file created or received in the course of official co-op business is considered the property of Wheatsville Food Co-op. Unless there is no possible reason why it would be needed at a later date, it *must* be saved to the network server rather than to an individual workstation or desktop. This ensures that all necessary documents will be retrievable via backup storage and can be accessed from any workstation on the network. Because any individual workstation can break down at any time, it is not safe or acceptable to store necessary work files to an individual computer.

Non-Disclosure

The protection of confidential business information is vital to the interests and success of Wheatsville Food Co-op and its owners. Because each situation is unique, you should not release information you know or have reason to believe is confidential without explicit approval from the general manager. Employees who improperly use or disclose confidential business information will be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

Parking

To ensure that Wheatsville's shoppers receive adequate parking, employees are not permitted to park their vehicles on premises during their shift. You may park in the nearby neighborhoods except where signage indicates that a residential permit is required. When you visit Wheatsville as a customer, you are welcome to park in any available space. Bike parking is available for staff behind the store. Please avoid parking your bike in the racks in front of the store as these are intended for customers. Bikes are not permitted in any building or work area. Exceptions to this policy may be made with approval of the General Manager.

Violence and Weapons

Violence or the threat of violence by any staff person toward any other person will not be tolerated and will be grounds for immediate dismissal or other disciplinary action. Knives may be carried and used as work tools, but may not be brandished toward any other person. No other weapons may be carried on one's person while on Wheatsville property.

Tobacco Use

If an employee wishes to use tobacco during work, they may use break time to do so. Tobacco consumers are not allowed extra break time. It is very important to inform your supervisor when you leave and return from a tobacco break. Please practice courtesy at all times. Respect fellow employees' requests not to be subjected to secondhand smoke, and safely dispose of used tobacco in trash cans. Smoking is not permitted within fifteen feet of doorways, including the backdoor and offices. Smoking in any Wheatsville building is strictly forbidden. Employees must thoroughly wash their hands before returning to work and take measures to prevent emitting a strong smoke smell (freshen breath, wear clean clothes—see dress code policy).

Travel

Wheatsville will pay for travel, lodgings, regularly scheduled hours, and registration fees of a conference or trade show when attendance is authorized by the general manager. Reimbursement of meals and other expenses will be negotiated in advance by the general manager and attendees with a maximum of \$25.00 per day, *provided receipts are furnished to Wheatsville for documentation of such expenses*. An expense report must be filled out with such charges and detailed information of the trip. All travel and expenses must be pre-approved by the general manager.

NCGA Reimbursement: Wheatsville will reimburse approved staff expenses for any NCGA trips per the NCGA Reimbursement policies. Wheatsville will reimburse staff and get

reimbursement from NCGA. Staff must submit all receipts and an NCGA reimbursement form in a timely manner in order to be reimbursed.

Reimbursement of Other Expenses

Expenses will only be reimbursed to the employee if there are accompanying receipts, and reimbursement is agreed to by the general manager.

Company Credit Cards

No company credit cards may be used for personal use. In the extraordinary circumstance that personal charges are made on a company card, the employee will be expected to reimburse Wheatsville within a reasonable period of time agreed upon by the general manager or finance manager. If restitution is not received as agreed upon, Wheatsville reserves the right to deduct the payment from the wages of the employee.

Press/Photos

Floor Managers will speak to any customer or member of the press taking photos or video, or interviewing other customers. Address the Floor Manager with any concerns you may have about someone taking photos or video in the store.

Staff members should not give interviews or quotes without prior permission from the General Manager. If a pressperson asks you for an interview or quote, please direct them to the Floor Manager.

DISCIPLINE, TERMINATION, & RESIGNATIONS

Discipline and Termination

All staff members are expected to adhere to the policies set forth in this manual, to follow the directions of their supervisors and others in authority, to exercise prudent judgment and integrity in the fulfillment of their duties, to maintain an attitude of goodwill and positive commitment to the goals of the co-op, and to act at all times in the best interests of the members of the co-op. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Although Wheatsville reserves the right to terminate an employee for any legal reason or no reason when circumstances warrant, graduated discipline is desirable in any employment situation. Wheatsville's management is committed to providing constructive criticism and proper training, which foster growth in employees and can help avoid terminations. Employees who commit to hearing and acting on constructive criticism and take responsibility for the effectiveness of their training are more likely to succeed and feel part of the team. In the event that an employee does not adhere to Wheatsville's policies or his/her performance does not meet satisfactory standards, a verbal warning or written reprimand may be given. Specific objectives

for improved behavior should be established at that time. If further action is required to produce the desired behavioral result, more stringent measures may be taken including reassignment of duties, adjustment of work schedule, postponement of raises or promotions, or reduction of pay level for a specified period. For every disciplinary action beyond the initial warning or reprimand, a written record documenting the disciplinary action is to be created. This documentation should specify the disciplinary action taken, the reason for the action, the behavioral change required including specific goals, and the agreed timeframe within which those goals are to be met. This record is to be signed and dated by the employee, the team manager, and the general manager, and it becomes a part of the employee's personnel file, with a copy being provided to the employee for his/her records. When a period of time is established for an employee to meet certain disciplinary goals, the employee will be considered to be on probation, and any further disciplinary action required during that time may result in immediate termination. At the end of the probationary period, a written statement signed and dated by the employee, the team manager, and the general manager is to be placed in the employee's personnel file, with a copy being provided to the employee for his/her records. This statement may indicate that the employee has successfully completed the requirements of the probationary period or it may specify further actions to be taken. The employee has the right to have his/her own written statement regarding any disciplinary action included in the file as well. If you feel you have been treated unfairly or wish to appeal any disciplinary action taken, see **Grievances and Complaints**.

Although disciplinary actions are generally considered confidential in order to protect the privacy of individual employees, a brief statement of the reasons for an employee's termination may be released by management to the staff if it is determined that the privacy interests of the employee are outweighed by the broader benefits to staff of transparency and clarification of the policies and procedures involved. A terminated employee may request in writing, however, that the details of his/her separation remain confidential, and in this case, the request may be cited by management in refusing to release information about the termination.

In some situations of misconduct, a staff member may be sent home for violating a policy. They may be suspended (without pay) until their team head has had a chance to assess the situation and made a determination on how to proceed. Floor managers or other supervisors may send employees of another team home in some situations.

The disciplinary procedures outlined above apply to team managers as well as other employees. Any team may also call for dismissal or replacement of its manager by submitting a petition signed by 2/3 of the department staff. The general manager will then meet with both the team and its manager separately and, if necessary, jointly, and determine what action to take, if any. The general manager may only be dismissed by the Board of Directors under guidelines specified in board policies. The staff may, however, submit a petition signed by 2/3 of its members calling for an immediate review of the general manager with a view toward dismissal, and the Board will respond to such a petition as specified in the board policies.

When You Leave Wheatsville

Although all staff members are “at-will” employees and may resign without notice, you are requested to notify your team manager at least two weeks in advance of your last day. Failure to do so may affect your eligibility for rehire. Managers are requested to give at least 30 days’ notice.

When an employee resigns or is terminated, an exit interview with the team manager should be conducted and all final paperwork should be completed. This includes confirmation of mailing address for the W-2 form (and final paycheck, if desired), statement of reason for leaving, eligibility for rehire or not, and signing of the termination section of the employee information sheet in the personnel file. Arrangements must be made to return keys and pay for any outstanding phone calls, etc. **Group insurance participants must complete termination paperwork, including an election whether to continue benefits, with the HR Coordinator.** If you leave without contacting the HR Coordinator regarding insurance coverage, your coverage will be terminated and you will be deemed to have waived your continuation rights. The team head should then submit a status change form to the HR Coordinator. All exiting employees are invited to submit their comments, both positive and negative, and to share with the general manager in person or in writing their suggestions for improving Wheatsville.

Problem Solving at Wheatsville

We hope that Wheatsville will be a fun and rewarding workplace for everyone, but if problems arise, we will work towards helping you resolve them. Wheatsville will be responsive to your concerns, and our management is committed to providing a prompt and fair resolution of problems raised by employees. Your manager has signed a code of conduct stating their commitment to resolving problems using fair and consistent disciplinary measures as appropriate.

At Wheatsville, there are established channels of communication that can help you in resolving a problem, beginning with speaking directly to the person you have a problem with. These channels of communication also include other resources in addressing your issue, including Team Heads, the General Manager, HR, and the Communications Team. Please refer to the handout on Channels of Communication provided in your new hire packet (or ask HR for a copy).

If you are unable to resolve your problem through these means, Wheatsville provides a formal grievance procedure to protect employees from illegal, unfair and discriminatory practices and from retaliation for exercising their rights. The grievance policy includes information on what complaints can be resolved through filing a grievance.

Please speak to HR if you have an unresolved problem to determine whether or not it is appropriate to use the grievance procedure, and for assistance in resolving your issue.

Grievance Procedure

Wheatsville's grievance procedure is one avenue that is available to redress perceived improprieties in the workplace. This procedure may be used by any staff member who has successfully completed her/his initial 3-month trial period. It is provided to protect you from illegal, unfair, and discriminatory practices and to protect you from retaliation for exercising your rights. Wheatsville's management is committed to providing a prompt and fair resolution of complaints raised by staff members, and before initiating a grievance, you should first attempt to resolve issues through our established channels of communication.

To assure that employees are able to lodge complaints and receive a fair hearing without fear of reprisal, any employee who takes retaliatory action in response to a grievance process will be subject to severe disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Not all complaints are appropriate for resolution through a grievance procedure. A grievance may be filed by an employee who has been subjected to disciplinary action or adversely affected by enforcement or lack of enforcement of written policy where:

1. S/he has first gone through appropriate channels including an appeal to the general manager,
2. S/he believes:
 - a. existing policy has been violated,
 - b. discretion in the enforcement of policy has been abused,
 - c. the fairness or legality of policy as written or enforced is called into question,
or
 - d. the situation is one for which no written policy exists and management has taken action that is improper.
3. No more than 30 days have elapsed since the occurrence of the last incident giving rise to the grievance.

If our normal channels of communication fail to resolve your problem, you may contact our Finance Manager and/or HR Coordinator. They will help you as our human resources (HR) representatives to determine whether the issue is appropriate for resolution through a grievance process and will provide assistance to you throughout the process.

Grievance Committee

When a grievance is filed, an ad hoc committee will be formed, consisting of one staff member selected by the aggrieved employee, one staff member selected by the general manager, and a third staff member selected by the other two.

Confidentiality

To protect the privacy of the individual filing the grievance and other employees who may be involved, and to help assure an objective process, all grievances should be kept confidential throughout the procedure. Within thirty days after the completion of a grievance procedure, however, a notice will be posted in the store stating the fact that a grievance was filed, the general nature of the grievance (e.g., “improper denial of benefits allegation”), the date the process was initiated, the date a committee was formed, and the date the committee’s final report was filed. The general manager may provide additional information if it is deemed to be in the interest of the organization as a whole. A copy of the committee report, with names of the individuals involved redacted, will be made available to the board of directors if requested by the board president for policy monitoring purposes.

Budget

The budget for a grievance procedure will not exceed a total of 10 paid hours for each member of the committee itself (including salaried hours) and a total of 10 paid hours for other staff involved at the request of the committee. The person filing the grievance is not paid for time spent in the grievance process. It is the responsibility of the committee to monitor and report the time spent during the grievance procedure. Committee members will not be paid for time exceeding this budget.

Timeline

From the time the grievance is filed with the general manager, the committee must form and meet within seven days, and a report must be issued within 21 days of their first meeting.

Procedure

1. With the help of our HR representatives, the aggrieved employee will prepare a written request including citation of policies involved, a statement of relevant facts and issues, and a description of the remedy being sought. This request will be presented to the general manager along with the name of the individual selected by the aggrieved employee to serve on the committee.
2. The general manager will designate an individual to serve on the committee, and these two committee members will select a third staff member to be on the committee. If requested to do so, HR may help identify qualified individuals who would be willing to participate.
3. HR will schedule an initial meeting of the committee and will provide them with the written grievance request as well as additional materials to assist them in fulfilling their responsibilities under this policy.
4. If the committee determines that the matter is appropriate for resolution through a grievance process, it will investigate the grievance in the manner it deems appropriate. This may include meetings with the employee filing the grievance, with managers, or with others directly involved in order to obtain a full understanding of the facts of the situation. Confidentiality will be asked of each person with whom the committee has contact.

5. The committee will meet privately to decide its recommendation and prepare its report. The committee's report must meet the following requirements:
 - (a) *In cases of complaints concerning alleged violations of existing policy*, the committee determines whether there was a policy violation. If so, it recommends that action be taken consistent with policy.
 - (b) *In cases of alleged abuse of discretion in the enforcement of policy*, the committee considers whether the enforcement decision was clearly wrong and therefore an abuse of discretion. The committee should not simply substitute its own opinion or preference for that of management. If there was an abuse of discretion, the committee may recommend to the general manager alternative actions under the policy.
 - (c) *In cases where the fairness of an existing policy is questioned*, the committee considers the purpose of the policy and then determines whether or not it is unfair as applied and, if so, on what grounds. The committee may recommend to the general manager a change in the policy, for consideration by the Personnel Policies Committee. If the legality of a policy is questioned, and the committee feels the complaint may have merit, the committee may recommend that an independent legal opinion be obtained by the general manager. In either case, an immediate solution for the case at hand may be recommended, or it may be recommended that the case be settled after the policy in question has been reviewed for fairness and legality.
 - (d) *In cases of a complaint of an unfair situation for which there is no applicable policy*, the committee determines whether the situation is in fact covered by existing policy and, if not, considers whether a policy is needed to cover the situation. The committee may then recommend a policy to the general manager, for consideration by the Personnel Policies Committee. An immediate solution for the case at hand may be recommended, or it may be recommended that the case be settled when a new policy is adopted.
6. The committee's preliminary written recommendations will be provided to our HR representatives who will review them to assure they fulfill the requirements of the grievance procedure. When the committee's report has been finalized, HR will place it in the personnel file of the employee filing the grievance and provide copies to both the general manager and the aggrieved employee. (If there is no consensus, majority and minority recommendations may be made by the committee, and the committee report will include both.)
7. Within seven days after the committee report has been filed, the general manager will provide a written acknowledgement to the members of the grievance committee and a response to the committee's recommendations which will be provided to the aggrieved employee and placed with the committee report in the employee's file.
8. To contest the committee's findings or recommendations, the aggrieved employee must introduce new facts within seven days after the committee report has been filed in order to

reopen the case. The assent of two of the three committee members is required to review the case in the light of new facts.

Final Report

The written committee report is the entire work product of the grievance committee. Unless the case is reopened in the light of new facts, no further action or clarification is expected from the committee, and committee members are expected to maintain confidentiality regarding the process. *It is very important, therefore, that the report of the committee be able to stand on its own, without additional interpretation.*

In determining the ultimate disposition of the case, the general manager will give earnest consideration to the committee's report as an expression of peer sentiment with regard to the issues raised in the grievance.

Whatever actions may or may not be taken by the general manager in response to the grievance, the final grievance report may also be used by the aggrieved employee to provide additional documentation of circumstances surrounding the grievance. This may be helpful to the employee in the context of subsequent performance reviews, legal or administrative reviews such as Texas Workforce Commission appeals, or for prospective employers in case the employee is terminated.

OTHER POLICIES

Safety Rules

The personal safety and health of each and every employee of Wheatsville Co-op is of primary importance. The time to think about safety is before an accident occurs, not afterward. Here are a few simple guidelines to follow to make our work environment as safe as possible:

1. Do not operate, adjust, or repair any machines or equipment unless you have been fully trained to do so. For example, the forklift, the cardboard baler, the deli slicer, the pallet jack, and the meat department equipment all require training prior to operation. Don't be afraid to ask for help.
2. If you are injured on the job, even slightly, *you must immediately notify your team manager and/or the floor manager*. For minor injuries, the first aid kit is located in the back store next to the time clock; for more serious mishaps, a trip to the minor emergency clinic may be necessary. Wheatsville carries workers compensation insurance to assure the availability of proper medical care and other benefits for injured employees, as required by state law. Details about your rights are posted on the bulletin board. All injuries involving lost work time or medical care must be reported within one day to the finance manager to assure compliance with OSHA and Workers Compensation reporting requirements.
3. If you see a spill, broken glass, etc., notify a floor manager or better yet, clean it up yourself.
4. Always use proper lifting techniques. "Lift with your legs, not with your back," and keep the weight close to your body. With items weighing more than 50 lbs, ask for assistance if necessary. Use a cart or a two-wheeler when taking items from the backstock areas to the main floor. Safety belts are provided for use during lifting.
5. In case of an emergency requiring an ambulance, police, or the fire department, dial 911.
6. When dealing with the various street people, transients, or other homeless folks, be polite, yet firm. Make eye contact and acknowledge their presence; nothing helps defuse a possible confrontation like a little common courtesy. However, if someone is panhandling or acting aggressively towards customers or employees, seek the help of fellow employees and the floor manager in dealing with the situation. Also, no alcohol consumption is permitted on the premises; inform the transgressor that drinking is not allowed or tolerated. Finally, remember that all homeless people are not automatically thieves; learn to tell the difference between those who are merely down on their luck and those who are genuinely threatening.
7. Everyone should always watch for shoplifters. If you see someone acting suspicious, approach them and say, "May I help you find something?" Alert other staff members, especially the floor manager. If you see someone in the act of stealing, never let them out of your sight. If you are absolutely positive that someone has shoplifted, wait until after the suspect has checked out and not paid for the item. Take them aside from the main flow of

customers and ask to check their bag, pockets, etc. Remain calm but firm; do not threaten physically. Have one employee remain with the suspect while another calls the police, and always record all incidents in the FM log in the cashier office.

8. Know the locations, contents, and use of the fire-fighting equipment and fire exits.

Drugs & Alcohol

Wheatsville Co-op has a duty to provide a safe work environment to all employees. The co-op is also entitled to expect employees to work without being under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Wheatsville Co-op does not, therefore, condone the use of drugs or alcohol among the staff, nor does Wheatsville tolerate any staff member being under the influence of substances while working or representing Wheatsville as an employee of the co-op.

1. The possession, use, sale, or transfer of illegal substances on company property is prohibited.
2. Being under the influence of alcohol or other substances while on company property or while conducting company business is prohibited.
3. The use of alcohol or other substances off company property is prohibited when it affects the employee's work performance or other employee's safety.

Any of the above behavior may result in immediate dismissal or other disciplinary action. If you are taking any medication which can cause any degree of impairment, you are required to notify your supervisor or, in their absence, the floor manager. Failure to notify your supervisor or floor manager may result in disciplinary action and/or loss of benefits in case of injury.

Discrimination & Harassment

Wheatsville is committed to providing a work environment that is free of unlawful discrimination. Unwelcome actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's gender, sexual orientation, race, national origin, age, religion, disability or any other legally protected characteristic are prohibited, and such characteristics will not be the basis for favorable or unfavorable treatment of any employee.

Likewise, Wheatsville is committed to providing a work environment that is free of unlawful harassment. Vulgar, abusive, humiliating, intimidating, or threatening behavior or language by staff members will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment, including unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, inappropriate physical contact, or other behavior that is personally offensive is prohibited, and no manager or supervisor has the authority to require any employee to submit to sexual harassment as a condition of continued employment, advancement, or other preferential treatment.

All such discriminatory or harassing conduct is subject to immediate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Wheatsville encourages all staff members to report any incidents of discrimination or harassment to their supervisor, even if they were not personally involved. Employees can raise concerns about discrimination and harassment without fear of reprisals, and

complaints may be taken to any team manager to insure the utmost in confidentiality. Any manager who receives a complaint or observes harassing conduct is required to report such matters to the general manager. All complaints will be promptly investigated in a discreet manner, and remedial action will be taken as appropriate. If the offending behavior is not terminated, the complaint should be taken to the general manager directly.

Privacy

Personnel matters are considered confidential, and access to personnel files is limited so as to protect your privacy. You have access to your, and only your, personnel file. The general manager has access to all personnel files; department and team managers have access to all their department members' personnel files, and the finance manager has access to personnel files as necessary to service the payroll and human resources responsibilities of the position. There are some restrictions, however. There are limited keys to the personnel file cabinet and it is kept locked at all times because of the confidentiality of its contents. Ask your department manager to arrange access to your file. In his/her absence, you may request a copy of a specific document from the general manager or finance manager. You may view the entire contents of your file only while accompanied by your department or team manager. General, limited information from your personnel files and/or computer payroll files such as employment dates, position held, and pay rate may be released upon inquiry when it is deemed to be in your good interests – e.g., job or housing reference requests – unless you specifically request, in writing, that such information be withheld. At the general manager's discretion, relevant documents from your file may be produced for review by a grievance committee or other official or administrative body in connection with a grievance review or other disciplinary or legal proceeding where appropriate, taking into consideration the confidential nature of the documents.

In the event of substantial evidence of violation of Wheatsville policy regarding controlled substances, theft, or weapons, Wheatsville reserves the right to request that an employee submit to a search of their person or any possessions on Wheatsville property, taking into account the sensitive and personal nature of this request. If an employee declines the request of their superior or other agent of Wheatsville to conduct a search, disciplinary action, including termination, may be followed as appropriate, in accordance with Texas At-Will Employment law.

Substantial evidence of violation of the above mentioned policies includes, but is not necessarily limited to: firsthand reports of the violation of the policy, behavior indicative of intoxication, missing merchandise apparently visible on the employee's person, or reports of the employee's threatening fellow employees or shoppers with a potential weapon. *All searches require the assent and cooperation of the employee in question.* In the event that an employee is asked to allow a search of their vehicle or other possessions which are on Wheatsville property, but not on their immediate person, evidence must be presented that they have accessed these possessions in conjunction with their alleged violation of Wheatsville policy, and that, in order to rule out wrongdoing on the part of the employee, a search is necessary.

Wheatsville's privacy policy is based on certain assumptions:

1. That all employees are valued members of the Wheatsville staff, and are therefore entitled to privacy, respect, and explanation in the event that a search or other measures are deemed necessary.
2. That authority and responsibility are always meant to be present in equal parts, and that therefore an incident report should be filled out by the person requesting the search or other measures immediately after the fact, and that a copy of the report be placed in the files of both the employee the search or other measures are requested of, and the person making the request. This report should state the reason for the request, the policy allegedly violated, the evidence that the policy was violated, the response of the employee, the results of the search, and any other pertinent details regarding the incident. The purpose of this report is that any requests for a search or similar measures be taken gravely, and that all parties be held accountable for their actions at any future review of the personnel files.
3. That all employees are equally subject to the Wheatsville privacy policy, no matter their position or seniority.
4. That all actions taken by Wheatsville or its agents that may be perceived as infringing upon the privacy of the employees be voluntary and transparent to all involved parties.

Leave & Jury Duty

Leave of Absence

If you are a Regular Full-Time or Regular Intermediate-Time employee, you may request a leave of absence after one year of employment at Wheatsville. Each request will be considered individually and must be approved by the general manager and team manager. An agreement regarding return date, position, hours scheduled, and any other specifics must be made in writing and signed by the employee, the team manager and general manager. See also the **General Provisions Regarding Leaves**, below.

Military Leave

Wheatsville provides military leave to Regular Full-Time and Regular Intermediate-Time employees. Employees in the military who are called to active duty are entitled to return to the same jobs unless Wheatsville's circumstances have changed so much that reinstatement is impossible. An employee must notify his/her supervisor immediately when called to active duty. Notice should include anticipated duration of service and when the employee expects to return to work. See also the **General Provisions Regarding Leaves**, below.

Bereavement Leave

If you are a regular full time or intermediate time employee, you may take up to three consecutive paid days off for the death of an immediate family member or partner. Staff must inform their supervisor as soon as possible if they intend to take time off under this policy.

Jury Duty

The policy for Military Leave applies to jury duty as well. In addition, an employee is expected to return to work immediately after the case concludes or the court recesses for the day if there is a reasonable amount of time remaining in the work day. Wheatsville will pay you for your regularly scheduled hours, up to two weeks, for the duration of your jury duty, minus the amount you are compensated by the government for your service.

Family and Medical Leave

Wheatsville offers eligible workers up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave, plus any sick and vacation time accumulated, during a 12-month period for birth or adoption; to care for a seriously ill parent, spouse or child; or to undergo medical treatment for their own serious illness. To be able to take family and medical leave, you must have been employed at Wheatsville for at least 12 months and have worked a minimum of 1,250 hours (this is an average of 25 hours per week). The 1,250 hours must have been performed during the 12 calendar months immediately prior to the beginning of the leave. To take leave for a personal health condition, you must be able to demonstrate that you are medically unable to perform the functions of your job before being eligible to take leave. When you return to work after taking family and medical leave, you are guaranteed the job you held before the leave or an equivalent position, without any particular shifts being specified and at the same pay rate as when the leave began. During your leave, Wheatsville will continue to pay the same percentage of your insurance premiums as before the leave began. (If you do not return to work within 12 weeks, you will be required to reimburse Wheatsville for its portion of premiums paid.) You are not required to exhaust all your sick and vacation time accumulated before being granted leave. An employee may request an extension of unpaid leave from their supervisor; such requests are considered on a case by case basis. See also the **General Provisions Regarding Leaves**, below.

General Provisions Regarding Leaves

During your leave of absence, military leave, or family and medical leave, you will not be paid, but you will return at the same pay rate you had at the time the leave began, adjusted for any cost of living increase enacted while you were gone. You will not accumulate sick and vacation benefits, of course, and Wheatsville will not contribute to your health and dental insurance for any monthly premium period during which you are gone the entire period on leave, except during a family and medical leave. (Before departing for any leave, you *must* make arrangements with the finance manager to pay Wheatsville for your insurance premiums, or your policy may be allowed to lapse.) When you return, your evaluation and benefits accrual dates will be adjusted to reflect the leave time, excluding any sick and/or vacation time which may have been applied to your absence. You are expected to give two months notice of any leave if circumstances permit. At least 30 days notice is required for family and medical leave, or notice

as soon “as practicable” if less than 30 days. With any leave, unauthorized failure to return to work as agreed may affect rehir

PERSONNEL POLICIES COMMITTEE (PPC)

The Personnel Policies Committee exists to provide staff input regarding the revision or creation of the policies in this manual. It consists of the Communications Team, appointed Team Heads, and the HR Coordinator. The committee should consist of not more than 8 or less than 6 members, and should be equally representative of both the staff and management in its composition. Appointments to the PPC will be made by either nomination of a willing staff member, or by voluntary sign-up. Should more than 8 people total sign up or be nominated to the PPC, an election of the staff shall be held within one week to determine which of the potential committee members will serve. Appointment procedures are determined by the PPC as it deems appropriate. The General Manager as appoints the chair of the committee. One member of the committee, other than the chair, serves as recorder for the meetings of the PPC.

PPC meetings will be scheduled by the chair as needed, or at the request of two-thirds of the staff. Changes to the Policy Manual may be initiated by the same procedures outlined above. Additionally, any staff member may submit a written proposal to the PPC, or ask to attend a meeting of the committee if possible, given the assumption that they are there to listen to discussion, or present their proposal to the committee when given the floor. All staff should feel that the discussion and decision making procedures of the PPC are transparent, and efforts will be made to include the entire staff in the adoption of a new policy manual. Official changes in the Policies Manual will take effect when posted and approved. Notice of changes made to the manual will be posted on the HR bulletin board, in departmental log books, and in a memo with the employee's next paycheck. Updated copies of the manual will be made available as soon as it is practical.

*If you have a suggestion to improve these Personnel Policies, talk to anyone on the PPC.
Written proposals should be submitted to the general manager in the following format:*

PERSONNEL POLICIES MANUAL PROPOSED REVISIONS

Submitted by _____

(Date)

Page # _____

CURRENT POLICY:

(Write out current policy here)

PROPOSAL:

(Insert proposed wording here)

ADDENDUM

Distribution of Personnel Policies Manual

This Personnel Policies Manual will be available to Wheatsville staff in electronic format on the Wheatsville website and on the “Public” folder of the network drive. Each team will have a physical copy (see the appropriate Team Head to determine the location) and a physical copy will be available in the Employee Information Binder located in the staff break area. Anyone who wishes to receive their own physical copy may request one from the HR Coordinator. Revisions to the Personnel Policies Manual will be published in departmental log notes and in a memo accompanying paychecks.