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## Benching Policy

### Purpose

At Antier Solutions, we strive to create a workplace that champions innovation, client excellence, and employee growth. This policy governs the management of employees who are temporarily unassigned to billable projects ("on the bench"). It is designed to ensure organizational efficiency, financial sustainability, and meaningful development opportunities. This policy promotes transparency, fairness, and productivity during bench periods while preparing employees for future high-impact roles.

### Scope

This policy applies to all full-time employees at Antier Solutions, particularly those in technical, consulting, and project-based roles, who may experience non-billable periods between client engagements.

### Definitions

* **Bench Time**: The duration during which an employee is not assigned to a billable client project but remains on the company payroll.
* **Bench Strength**: The pool of employees available for deployment to new projects or roles, maintained to ensure business continuity and scalability.
* **IJP (Internal Job Posting)**: A mechanism allowing employees to explore and apply for opportunities within other teams or projects through the Resource Pool Manager.

### Policy Guidelines

#### Bench Time Duration

* The maximum bench time allowed is **30 days**, unless an extension is granted by HR under exceptional circumstances (e.g., awaiting critical client projects or niche skill requirements).
* If no suitable assignment is secured within 30 days, HR will review the case and may initiate a **mutual separation process**.

#### Temporary Assignments During Bench

* During the bench period, employees **may be engaged in short-term or temporary assignments** (e.g., support tasks, internal projects, or quick consulting deliverables) that could range from **a few hours to 3–5 days**.
* These temporary assignments **do not signify the end of the bench period**.
* To be officially considered off the bench, an employee must be engaged in a **long-term billable assignment** or have a confirmed project allocation that aligns with business goals.

### Utilization During Bench Time

Employees on the bench are expected to contribute in ways that align with Antier’s culture of innovation and learning:

* **Upskilling/Reskilling**: Enroll in relevant training programs, certifications, or courses (e.g., blockchain development, AI, Web3, leadership) to enhance future project readiness.
* **Internal Contributions**: Assist with non-billable but strategic internal initiatives such as internal tool development, process improvements, or technical research.
* **Collaboration & Mentorship**: Engage with cross-functional teams through job shadowing or provide mentorship to junior colleagues.

Employees must submit a **bi-weekly progress report** to their manager, outlining completed activities, learnings, and contributions.

### Compensation During Bench Time

* Employees will continue to receive **full salary** during the bench period.
* **Performance-based incentives** tied to billable hours or client work will not be applicable.
* After 30 days, if no long-term assignment is secured, HR will evaluate the case and may initiate discussions around a **mutual exit** with support and respect.

### Redeployment Process

* **Internal Job Posting (IJP)**: Employees are encouraged to explore roles listed through internal job postings. The Resource Pool Manager will help facilitate internal transfers.
* **Skill Mapping**: HR maintains an internal skill inventory to match bench employees with upcoming project needs or department requirements.

### Performance Monitoring

* Managers or assigned mentors will provide **bi-weekly feedback** to ensure the employee is actively engaging in upskilling or contributing internally.
* If feedback indicates low engagement or lack of participation, HR will initiate a **Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)** to support the employee.
* Continued underperformance or non-availability of a suitable project after 30 days may lead to a mutual separation process.

### Separation Process

* If no suitable opportunity is identified within 30 days, HR will engage in a **mutual separation discussion**, aiming for a positive and respectful exit.
* No negative remarks will be included in the **experience or release documents**, unless the exit is due to policy violations.
* If termination occurs, a **formal notice** will be issued, which may reflect during **background verification (BGV)** checks. Antier remains committed to ensuring fair and amicable exits.

### Manager Responsibilities

* Actively monitor the progress of bench employees and support their learning goals.
* Collaborate with HR to identify and assign suitable redeployment opportunities.
* Ensure that bench employees remain engaged in productive activities aligned with Antier’s mission.

### HR Responsibilities

* Identify skill gaps in the bench pool and organize targeted upskilling or reskilling programs.
* Maintain real-time updates on project demands and resource availability.
* Regularly review this policy to ensure alignment with Antier’s evolving needs and employee feedback.

### Eligibility for Incentives During Bench Separation

Employees on the bench may still be eligible for the following incentives, **subject to certain conditions**:

* The employee must have received **positive feedback** from their Department Head.
* The exit must be due to the **non-availability of suitable projects or roles**, not due to performance issues.
* All exit formalities must be duly completed.

**Eligible Payouts:**

* Referral Bonuses
* Retention Bonuses
* Variable Pay
* Performance Incentives

### Review and Amendments

This policy will be reviewed annually, or as needed, to stay aligned with Antier Solutions’ strategic goals and industry best practices. Any changes will be communicated via email and updated on the HRMS portal.

### Contact

For questions or clarifications, please contact the HR team at:  
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