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1. Introduction Smart Group HR Policy

The aim of this Employee Policy Handbook is to provide comprehensive guidelines for Smart Group employees to understand their rights, responsibilities, and the expectations set by the organization. This handbook covers a range of topics related to employment, compensation, benefits, work hours, health and safety, code of conduct, training and development, leave of absence, disciplinary actions, grievance procedures, performance management, employee relations, compliance with labor laws, and reporting violations.

1.1 Purpose:

The purpose of this Employee Policy Handbook is to establish a clear and consistent set of policies and procedures that govern the employment relationship between Smart Group and its employees. It serves as a guide for both parties to ensure transparency, fairness, and compliance with relevant labor laws in Bangladesh.

1.2 Scope:

This handbook applies to all employees of Smart Group, including those working in the numerous companies and divisions that make up the group's portfolio. Regardless of position, level, or length of employment, all employees are expected to adhere to the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook.

1.3 Policy Statement:

Smart Group is dedicated to providing a safe, inclusive, and supportive work environment that values diversity, upholds ethical standards, promotes professional growth, and ensures compliance with all applicable labor laws in Bangladesh. This policy statement reflects our commitment to maintaining a fair and respectful workplace culture.

1.4 Definitions:

To ensure clarity and consistency, this handbook includes definitions of key terms and phrases used throughout the document. These definitions help employees better understand the policies, procedures, and expectations outlined in the handbook.

2. Employment

Introduction:

Smart Group recognizes the profound impact of effective employment practices on the success and sustainability of any organization. In this section we will explore various aspects of employment within Smart Group, highlighting its commitment to equal employment opportunity, recruitment and selection, terms and conditions of employment, probationary periods, promotion and transfer, performance management, grievance procedures, and termination of employment. By adhering to these practices, Smart Group aims to create a thriving work environment that fosters fairness, growth, and opportunity for all employees.

Equal Employment Opportunity:

Smart Group firmly believes in the principles of equal employment opportunity and is committed to providing a workplace that is free from discrimination and prejudice. The company embraces diversity and supports the fair and equitable treatment of all employees, regardless of their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected characteristic. Smart Group provides equal employment opportunities for all its employees in recruitment, selection, promotion, training, and other aspects of employment.

Recruitment and Selection:

Smart Group understands the critical role of recruitment and selection in building a skilled and diverse workforce. The company employs fair and objective criteria in the selection process, ensuring that candidates are evaluated based on their qualifications, skills, experience, and potential to contribute to the organization. To attract top talent, Smart Group embraces innovative and inclusive recruitment practices, ensuring a level playing field for all candidates throughout the selection process.

Terms and Conditions of Employment:

Smart Group has a comprehensive policy regarding the terms and conditions of employment that ensures fair and competitive employment arrangements for its employees. The policy includes several components:

- **Clear Communication:** Smart Group ensures that employees receive clear and transparent communication regarding their terms and conditions of employment. This includes providing written employment contracts to all directly recruited employees. The contracts outline the terms of employment, including job responsibilities, compensation, benefits, working hours, and other entitlements. These contracts serve as a reference for both the employer and employees throughout their employment journey.
- **Competitive Compensation:** Smart Group is committed to providing competitive wages to its employees. The company conducts regular market surveys and benchmarking to ensure that the compensation packages are in line with industry standards and local labor market conditions. Smart Group aims to attract and retain talented individuals by offering fair remuneration for the work performed.
- **Benefits and Entitlements:** In addition to competitive wages, Smart Group also provides a comprehensive range of benefits and entitlements to its employees. This may include health insurance, retirement plans, paid time off, sick leave, maternity and paternity leave, transportation allowances, and other relevant benefits as per the labor laws of Bangladesh. The company regularly reviews and updates its benefit programs to meet the evolving needs of its workforce.
- **Working Hours:** Smart Group complies with the working hour regulations specified by the labor laws in Bangladesh. The company ensures that employees' working hours are within the prescribed limits and takes measures to prevent excessive overtime. Smart Group also provides appropriate rest periods and break times to promote a healthy work-life balance for its employees.
- **Employment Number and Records:** Each employee at Smart Group is assigned a unique employment number. This number serves as a reference for salary processing, personnel records, and official correspondence. By using employment numbers, the company can maintain accurate and organized records for each employee throughout their employment tenure.

Joining Formalities :

Smart Group has a comprehensive policy in place for new employee joining, which includes the submission of certain certificates/documents and information. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all necessary information and documents are collected from new employees to facilitate their onboarding process and maintain accurate employee records. The following are the details of the required certificates/documents and information:

- *Employee Joining Form Fill-up:* The new employee is required to complete the employee joining form, which includes personal and contact information, emergency contact details, and other relevant information.
- *Photocopies of all academic certificates:* The new employee needs to submit photocopies of all their academic certificates, including degrees, diplomas, and other educational qualifications. These documents are necessary for verification and record-keeping purposes.
- *NID copy:* A copy of the National Identity Card (NID) of the new employee must be submitted. This is required for identification and legal compliance purposes.
- *TIN Certificate copy:* The new employee needs to provide a copy of their Tax Identification Number (TIN) certificate. This is essential for tax-related purposes and compliance with tax regulations.
- *Birth Certificate of Child (if applicable):* If the new employee has a child, a copy of the child's birth certificate should be submitted as proof. This information may be required for benefits or leave-related purposes.
- *NID copy of Spouse (if applicable):* If the new employee is married, a copy of their spouse's NID should be provided. This information may be necessary for certain benefits or legal documentation.
- *Photocopy of the bank cheque for salary disbursement issue:* The new employee is required to submit a photocopy of their bank cheque to facilitate the disbursement of their salary. This ensures efficient and accurate salary processing.
- *Experience letter (if applicable):* If the new employee has previous work experience, they are requested to provide an experience letter from their previous employer(s). This documentation may help verify their work history and qualifications.
- *Release letter (if applicable):* If the new employee is joining from another organization, they may need to provide a release letter from their previous employer, indicating their release from contractual obligations or any pending legal matters.
- *3 copies of passport-size photographs:* The new employee is required to submit three passport-size photographs. These photographs may be used for identification purposes, employee records, or official documentation.

Probationary Period:

During the probationary period, Smart Group implements a reasonable timeframe to assess an employee's suitability and performance within the organization. This period allows both the employee and the employer to evaluate the employee's skills, capabilities, and cultural fit. Feedback and support mechanisms are in place to assist employees in their transition into Smart Group, creating a foundation for a successful long-term employment relationship.

- **Period:** The probationary period is at the discretion of the management. During this time, new employees are expected to familiarize themselves with their assigned responsibilities and perform satisfactorily. Depending on the appraisal, the probationary period may extend up to three months from the date of joining if needed.
- **Monitoring Performance:** The head of department (HOD) will monitor the performance of new employees, with the assistance of designated supervisors. This monitoring helps evaluate the employee's progress during the probationary period.
- **Extension of Probation:** If necessary, the concerned HOD or supervisor may recommend extending the probationary period for up to three months based on careful evaluation and documentation. If an extension is granted, a new end-of-probation appraisal form will be completed before the completion of six months of employment.
- **Unsatisfactory Performance:** If an employee's performance is deemed unsatisfactory during the probationary period, their employment may be terminated before the completion of the six-month probationary period.
- **Letter of Confirmation:** Upon successful completion of probation, the HR department will issue a "Letter of Confirmation." This letter signifies the employee's transition from a probationary employee to a permanent employee at Smart Group.

Promotion and Transfer:

Smart Group values the growth and development of its employees and recognizes that promoting and transferring employees within the organization can bring numerous benefits. To facilitate this, the company has put in place transparent and merit-based processes for promotions and transfers.

- **Internal Growth:** Smart Group believes in fostering a culture of internal growth, where employees are encouraged to hone their skills, seek new challenges, and advance in their careers within the company. The organization recognizes that promoting from within not only boosts employee morale but also retains valuable talent.
- **Transparent Processes:** The promotion and transfer processes at Smart Group are designed to be fair, transparent, and based on merit. The company ensures that all eligible employees are provided with equal opportunities to apply for promotional or transfer positions. This approach minimizes favoritism and ensures that employees see a clear path for growth.

- **Professional Development:** Through promotions and transfers, Smart Group aims to provide employees with opportunities for professional development and growth. The organization offers training programs, mentorship, and support to help employees enhance their skills and prepare for higher-level positions.
- **Talent Recognition and Retention:** By prioritizing candidates from within the organization, Smart Group highlights its commitment to recognizing and retaining talented employees. This approach creates a sense of loyalty and motivation among employees, as they know that their hard work and dedication can lead to career advancement opportunities.
- **Performance Evaluation:** Promotion and transfer decisions at Smart Group are based on objective criteria, such as performance evaluations, skills assessments, and demonstrated potential. This ensures that deserving employees are rewarded and given opportunities to take on new roles and responsibilities.

Performance Management:

Smart Group recognizes the importance of performance management in promoting a culture of excellence and continuous improvement. The company has implemented a robust performance management system that encompasses several key components:

- **Clear Performance Goals:** Smart Group establishes clear performance goals for each employee, aligned with the organization's overall objectives. These goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART), providing employees with a clear understanding of what is expected of them.
- **Ongoing Feedback and Coaching:** To support employee growth and development, Smart Group emphasizes regular feedback and coaching. Managers provide timely and constructive feedback to employees, acknowledging their strengths and identifying areas for improvement. Through ongoing coaching, managers help employees enhance their skills, overcome challenges, and achieve their performance goals.
- **Performance Evaluations:** Smart Group conducts periodic performance evaluations to assess employee performance objectively. These evaluations are designed to be fair, transparent, and based on established criteria. Both quantitative and qualitative measures are used to evaluate employee performance, taking into account factors such as meeting targets, demonstrating core competencies, and exhibiting desired behaviors.
- **Performance Improvement Plans:** In cases where an employee's performance is below expectations, Smart Group offers support through performance improvement plans (PIPs). These plans outline specific areas for improvement, set realistic targets, and provide guidance on how to enhance performance. PIPs serve as a roadmap for employees to address any performance gaps effectively.
- **Recognition and Rewards:** Smart Group believes in recognizing and rewarding outstanding performance. The company acknowledges and celebrates employee achievements through

- various means, such as awards, incentives, and public recognition. This not only motivates employees but also reinforces a culture of excellence and performance-driven behavior.
- **Career Development:** Performance management at Smart Group goes beyond evaluating current performance. The company also considers employee potential and growth opportunities. Through performance discussions and career development conversations, Smart Group identifies employees' aspirations and helps create individual development plans to support their career progression within the organization.

Grievance Procedure:

At Smart Group, we value the well-being and satisfaction of our employees, and we understand that addressing grievances is vital in maintaining a positive work environment. Therefore, we have implemented a well-defined grievance procedure to provide employees with a fair and confidential mechanism to voice their concerns or complaints.

- **Reporting Grievances:** Smart Group encourages employees to report any grievances they may have, regardless of the nature of the concern. Grievances can be related to workplace practices, work conditions, relationships, policies, or any other matter affecting the employee's experience at work. Employees are assured that reporting grievances will not result in any form of reprisal or adverse consequences.
- **Confidentiality:** Smart Group ensures the confidentiality of the grievance procedure to protect the privacy of the employees involved. This confidentiality allows employees to feel safe and secure in reporting their concerns without the fear of their identities being disclosed or their reputations being compromised.
- **Documentation and Investigation:** Once a grievance is reported, Smart Group initiates a thorough investigation. The company maintains written records of the grievance, including the details of the complaint, individuals involved, and any supporting evidence or documentation. An impartial and objective investigation is conducted to understand the situation fully.
- **Fair Resolution:** Smart Group is committed to resolving grievances in a fair and satisfactory manner. The findings of the investigation are analyzed, and appropriate actions are taken based on the severity and nature of the grievance. The company aims to address grievances promptly and transparently, striving to find a resolution that is acceptable to all parties involved.
- **Appeals Process:** In the event that an employee disagrees with the initial resolution or feels that their grievance has not been adequately addressed, Smart Group provides an appeals process. This allows employees to escalate their concerns to a higher level of management or a designated grievance committee for further review and consideration.
- **Continuous Improvement:** Smart Group recognizes the value of using the feedback received through the grievance procedure to drive continuous improvement. The company reviews and analyzes trends and patterns in grievances to identify underlying issues and implement

necessary changes in policies, procedures, or practices to prevent similar concerns from arising in the future.

Termination of Employment:

Smart Group understands that termination of employment is a sensitive matter and aims to handle it in a fair and considerate manner, following legal requirements and ethical considerations. There are various circumstances that may lead to termination, including a government directive, ongoing poor performance, misconduct, or other inadequacies.

- **Fair Notice and Notice Period:** Smart Group ensures that employees are provided with written notice of termination, in accordance with the employee's contract of employment. The notice period may vary based on the length of service and relevant labor laws. This advance notice allows employees to prepare for the transition and seek alternative employment if needed.
- **Severance Pay:** Smart Group recognizes that severance pay may be applicable in certain cases, as mandated by labor laws or employment contracts. The company provides necessary compensation to employees who are eligible for severance pay, acknowledging their contributions to the organization and assisting them during their period of transition.
- **Waiving Notice Period:** While the company generally adheres to the specified notice period, Smart Group reserves the right to waive the notice period in exceptional circumstances. In such cases, the company compensates the employee with salary in lieu of the notice period. This may occur when it is in the best interests of both parties or when certain circumstances require immediate separation.
- **Support during Transition:** During the termination process, Smart Group strives to provide necessary support to employees. This may include assistance in job search, counseling, or other resources to aid in the transition. The company aims to mitigate the impact of termination on employees' lives and help them move forward in their careers.
- **Legal Compliance and Ethical Considerations:** Smart Group strictly adheres to all applicable labor laws and regulations governing termination of employment. The company ensures that the termination process follows legal requirements, protects employee rights, and maintains ethical standards.

3. Compensation and Benefits :

Smart Group takes pride in its comprehensive compensation and benefits policy, which is designed to attract and retain top talent while promoting employee satisfaction, well-being, and long-term success. Let's delve into each aspect in detail:

Pay Structure and Payment:

- **Fair Compensation and Retention:** Smart Group is committed to compensating its employees at salaries that attract and retain qualified personnel. By conducting thorough job

evaluations, market analysis, and salary surveys, the company ensures that employees are compensated fairly based on their roles, responsibilities, and market standards. This helps in creating a workplace where employees feel valued and motivated to stay with the organization.

- *Equitable Alignment of Employees:* Smart Group's pay structure also aims to ensure equitable alignment of personnel performing similar work. This means that employees who have similar job roles and responsibilities are compensated fairly, taking into account factors like qualifications, experience, and performance. This approach promotes fairness and helps maintain a harmonious work environment.
- *Recognizing Differences in Job Value:* The pay structure recognizes significant differences in the relative value of different jobs within the organization. Jobs that require higher qualifications, greater responsibilities, or specialized skills are compensated accordingly. This ensures that employees feel their contributions are recognized and encourages them to further develop their skills and expertise.
- *Payment Processes:* Smart Group implements payment processes accurately and in a timely manner, adhering to legal and ethical standards. Employees are entitled to receive their salary monthly, net of any deductions, either in cash or directly credited to their bank accounts. By ensuring accurate and timely payments, the company reinforces trust and promotes job satisfaction among employees.
- *Starting Salary and Contract Details:* Prior to the commencement of employment, the starting salary for employees is fixed. The salary and benefits details are clearly specified in the contract of employment. This provides clarity and transparency for both the company and the employee, ensuring that all parties understand the compensation package.
- *Salary Review and Increments:* The granting of increments is at the discretion of the Management and there are no fixed increments in place. Increments are determined by factors such as the financial performance of the Group, the individual companies, and the performance of the individual employee.

Overtime:

Smart Group recognizes that employees may occasionally need to work extra hours beyond their regular schedules. To manage overtime effectively, the organization has clear policies in place. This includes guidelines on how overtime is calculated and compensated in accordance with legal regulations. Smart Group ensures that employees are fairly compensated for their additional efforts and time, while also promoting work-life balance and preventing burnout. By valuing and rewarding employees for their commitment, Smart Group cultivates a positive and supportive work environment.

Leave and Holidays:

At Smart Group, we understand the importance of work-life balance and believe that employees should have the opportunity to take time off to rejuvenate and recharge. We recognize that

employees who are well-rested and refreshed are more likely to be productive and engaged in their work. To support our employees, we offer a comprehensive range of leave options. These include earned leave (E.L), casual leave (C.L), sick leave (S.L), leave due to accident/occupational diseases, maternity leave, and special leave. In this discussion, we will explore the details and entitlements of each type of leave, ensuring that our employees have a clear understanding of their options when it comes to taking time off. Let's delve into the world of Smart Group's leave policies and discover how we prioritize the well-being and needs of our employees.

- **Earned Leave (E.L):** Earned Leave, also known as annual leave or vacation leave, is provided to employees to take time off for personal reasons such as travel, rest, or pursuing personal interests. The number of leave days granted may vary based on factors like an employee's length of service, job level, or the company's policy. Earned Leave is typically accrued over a specific period of time and can be utilized by employees to rejuvenate and revitalize themselves, ultimately enhancing their work productivity.
- **Casual Leave (C.L):** Casual Leave is available for employees to address unexpected or immediate personal needs. It is designed to offer flexibility in situations where employees require time off for short durations due to personal reasons that cannot be anticipated in advance. The number of Casual Leave days granted may vary based on the company's policy and employment regulations.
- **Sick Leave (S.L):** Sick Leave allows employees to take time off when they fall ill or require medical attention. It enables employees to prioritize their health and well-being without worrying about loss of income. The number of Sick Leave days provided may vary based on factors like length of service, employment regulations, or the company's policy.
- **Leave due to Accident/Occupational Diseases:** Smart Group understands that employees may require leave due to accidents or occupational diseases arising from their work environment. In such cases, the company provides leave to ensure employees have the necessary time to recover and receive medical treatment. The duration of this leave may vary based on the individual case and the company's policy.
- **Maternity Leave:** Smart Group recognizes the importance of supporting employees during the significant life event of becoming a parent. Maternity Leave is provided to female employees to allow them to take time off before and after childbirth. The duration of Maternity Leave is typically determined by local employment laws, although the company may provide additional benefits above the minimum requirements.
- **Special Leave:** Special Leave is granted for specific circumstances that may require time off but do not fall under the other leave categories. This can include leave for personal emergencies, bereavement, attending to legal matters, or other situations deemed necessary by the company. The duration of Special Leave provided may vary based on the circumstances and the company's policy.

Medical and Health Benefits:

Smart Group offers a robust and comprehensive medical and health care benefit program to its employees. This program, known as the Smart Group Medical and Health Care Benefit, is designed to prioritize the well-being and provide financial support for the medical needs of its employees and their eligible family members. With a focus on comprehensive coverage and accessibility, Smart Group ensures that its employees have access to quality healthcare services while reducing the financial burdens associated with medical expenses. By prioritizing the health and welfare of its employees, Smart Group demonstrates its commitment to creating a supportive and inclusive work environment.

Group Medical Benefit Scheme :

Smart Group's Group Medical Scheme is a comprehensive healthcare benefit program designed to provide financial coverage for medical and hospitalization expenses for employees and their eligible family members within Bangladesh. This scheme aims to ensure that employees have access to quality healthcare services without the burden of high costs.

The Group Medical Scheme is available to all permanent employees of Smart Group, including both executive and non-executive staff. It also covers their spouses and dependent unmarried children up to the age of 18 years. This means that all eligible employees and their immediate family members can benefit from the scheme.

One of the key features of the Group Medical Scheme is the coverage for in-hospital treatment expenses. In the case of general hospitalization, the scheme provides coverage for up to 50,000/- per employee per hospitalization. This means that if an employee is hospitalized, the scheme will cover a maximum of 50,000/- of the total expenses incurred during the hospital stay. This coverage can be utilized twice a year, allowing employees to access these benefits as and when needed.

The scheme also provides specific limits for different aspects of hospitalization. For example, when it comes to room charges, the scheme covers a maximum of 3000/- per day. This ensures that employees and their family members have access to comfortable accommodations during their hospital stay without worrying about the costs. The maximum coverage for room charges is provided for a maximum of 7 days.

For female employees, the Group Medical Scheme offers maternity benefits. The maximum coverage for normal delivery is 15,000/-. This means that all expenses related to a normal delivery, including hospital charges, doctor fees, and other associated costs, up to a maximum of 15,000/-, will be covered by the scheme. In the case of a cesarean section, the coverage is increased to a maximum of 35,000/-. This higher coverage recognizes the additional expenses and risks associated with a c-section delivery.

Male employees also have access to spouse maternity benefits under this scheme. If their spouse requires maternity-related medical care, the scheme provides financial support for medical expenses. The maximum coverage for normal delivery is 10,000/-, and for a cesarean section, it is 20,000/-. These benefits ensure that male employees can support and provide for their spouse's medical needs during the maternity period.

The Group Medical Scheme offered by Smart Group is designed to provide comprehensive coverage for medical and hospitalization expenses. It aims to alleviate the financial burden associated with healthcare expenses, ensuring that employees and their families have access to quality healthcare services when needed. The scheme's specific coverage limits for different situations, such as general hospitalization and maternity, demonstrate Smart Group's commitment to the health and well-being of its employees.

On duty accidental Benefit :

Smart Group understands the importance of employees' well-being and recognizes the potential risks they may face while performing their duties. As a result, Smart Group provides an On Duty Accidental Benefit as part of its comprehensive employee benefits program. This benefit is specifically designed to offer financial support and assistance to employees in the unfortunate event of an accident that occurs while they are on duty.

The On Duty Accidental Benefit covers medical expenses that arise directly from an accident that occurs during work-related activities. This may include accidents that happen at the workplace, while on business trips, or during any other work-related tasks. The aim of this benefit is to alleviate the financial burden on employees and their families during a challenging time.

Under this benefit, eligible employees are entitled to receive financial support for necessary medical treatment and hospitalization expenses. The coverage typically includes expenses such as doctor's fees, surgical procedures, diagnostic tests, medication, and hospital charges. The specific coverage limits and reimbursement processes may vary depending on the terms and conditions outlined by Smart Group.

To avail the On Duty Accidental Benefit, employees are generally required to report the accident to the designated department within a specified timeframe. It is crucial to provide relevant documentation related to the accident and medical expenses incurred, such as medical reports, bills, and receipts. The claim process may involve filling out claim forms and submitting the required documents to initiate the reimbursement process.

Death Benefit:

In the unfortunate event of an employee's death, Smart Group provides a Death Benefit to support the employee's family. The Death Benefit typically includes a payout or lump-sum amount to the designated beneficiaries or the employee's legal heirs. This financial assistance can help the family

cover immediate expenses, such as funeral or burial costs, outstanding debts, and ongoing financial obligations.

Permanent Disability Benefit:

In the event of an employee suffering from permanent disability due to an accident or illness, Smart Group offers a Permanent Disability Benefit. This benefit is designed to provide financial assistance and support to the employee during their recovery and rehabilitation, as well as to help them adjust to their new circumstances.

The Permanent Disability Benefit usually includes a lump-sum payment that is determined based on the severity and nature of the disability, as well as any applicable terms and conditions outlined by Smart Group. The benefit aims to help the employee cover medical expenses, ongoing care or therapy costs, modifications to living arrangements or vehicles, and other associated expenses that may arise due to the disability.

Process and Eligibility:

To avail the Death and Permanent Disability Benefits, employees or their designated beneficiaries are typically required to notify Smart Group within a specified timeframe. They must provide relevant documentation, such as death certificates or medical reports confirming the permanent disability. Smart Group may have specific procedures and forms in place for the efficient processing of claims.

4. Work Hours and Attendance

Smart Group has developed a comprehensive work hours and attendance policy that aims to ensure smooth operations, productivity, and employee satisfaction. This policy encompasses various important aspects, including work schedules, attendance, punctuality, and breaks/rest periods.

Work Schedule:

Smart Group understands the importance of work-life balance and strives to offer flexible work schedules whenever possible. The company aims to accommodate employees' personal needs and preferences while ensuring that business demands are met. Depending on the role and department, employees may have the option to work traditional nine-to-five hours, flextime, compressed workweek, or even remote work arrangements. This flexibility allows employees to manage their work and personal commitments more effectively.

Attendance and Punctuality:

Smart Group follows the guidelines outlined in the Labour Law of Bangladesh regarding office timings. These limits have been set to ensure the well-being and work-life balance of employees, as well as to align with industry standards and meet business objectives.

- *Office Timings:* Smart Group follows the standards set by the Labour Law of Bangladesh for office timings. Office staff are required to work a maximum of 48 hours per week, while manual staff can work up to 60 hours per week. These limits ensure that employees have a reasonable work schedule and that their well-being is not compromised.
- *Work Timings for Each Division:* The specific work timings for each division within Smart Group are established in accordance with industry practices and aligned with the company's business plans. This approach ensures that all divisions operate efficiently and effectively, while also considering the unique requirements and demands of each division.
- *Attendance Recording:* To accurately record attendance, Smart Group requires all employees to use either a fingerprint or face detection system. This method ensures that attendance records are reliable and prevents any fraudulent practices, such as proxy attendance.
- *Going Out of the Office/Workplace:* If an employee needs to leave the office or workplace during working hours for official or personal reasons, it is mandatory for them to inform their superiors. This communication allows the organization to maintain transparency and make necessary arrangements or adjustments to work schedules if required.
- *Late Attendance or Absences:* Smart Group places high importance on punctuality and attendance. Employees who are consistently late or absent without valid reasons may face disciplinary action. This policy aims to ensure that employees fulfill their work responsibilities and maintain a productive work environment.
- *Recording Other Employee's Attendance:* Recording the attendance of other employees is strictly prohibited at Smart Group. Any employee found engaging in such behavior will face strict disciplinary action. This policy is in place to maintain the integrity of attendance records and create a fair and transparent work environment.

Breaks and Rest Periods:

Smart Group values employee well-being and recognizes the importance of taking regular breaks and rest periods to maintain productivity and avoid burnout. The company provides employees with designated break periods during the workday to recharge and relax. The duration and frequency of breaks may vary depending on the local labor laws and the nature of the job. Smart Group ensures that employees are aware of their rights to breaks and rest periods, and any required documentation or approval processes are clearly communicated.

5. Health and Safety

Smart Group places a high priority on the health and safety of its employees and has implemented a comprehensive health and safety policy to ensure a safe and secure working environment. This policy encompasses various aspects, including occupational health and safety, workplace hazard

assessment, accident reporting and investigation, emergency procedures, health and safety training, personal protective equipment, hazardous substances, and ergonomics.

Occupational Health and Safety Policy:

Smart Group is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all employees, contractors, and visitors. The company adheres to all relevant local health and safety regulations and strives to go beyond the legal requirements to maintain the highest standards of safety.

The occupational health and safety policy outlines Smart Group's commitment to identifying and minimizing workplace hazards, promoting safe work practices, providing adequate training, and fostering a culture of safety awareness.

Workplace Hazard Assessment:

Smart Group regularly conducts comprehensive workplace hazard assessments to identify potential risks and hazards. This assessment includes examining physical, chemical, biological, and ergonomic factors that could impact employee health and safety. By identifying these hazards, Smart Group can take proactive measures to mitigate risks and prevent accidents and injuries.

Accident Reporting and Investigation:

In the event of an accident, Smart Group has clear procedures in place for reporting and investigating incidents. Employees are required to report any accidents, injuries, or near misses to their supervisors or the HR department immediately. The company then conducts a thorough investigation to determine the cause of the incident and implement measures to prevent similar incidents in the future.

Emergency Procedures:

Smart Group recognizes the importance of having well-defined emergency procedures in place. Employees are familiarized with emergency evacuation plans, emergency contact information, and procedures to follow in case of fire, natural disasters, or other emergencies. Regular drills and training sessions are conducted to ensure employees are prepared to respond effectively in an emergency situation.

Health and Safety Training:

Smart Group provides regular health and safety training to employees to ensure they are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to maintain a safe working environment. This includes training on hazard identification, safe work practices, emergency response procedures, and the proper use of personal protective equipment.

Personal Protective Equipment:

Smart Group ensures that appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided to employees based on the specific hazards identified in the workplace hazard assessment. This may include items such as safety glasses, gloves, helmets, hearing protection, and protective clothing. Employees are trained on the correct usage, maintenance, and storage of PPE.

Hazardous Substances and Materials:

Smart Group has policies in place to handle hazardous substances and materials safely. This includes proper storage, labeling, handling procedures, and the provision of safety data sheets. The company also provides training to employees on the potential risks associated with these substances and promotes safe handling practices.

Ergonomics:

Smart Group recognizes the importance of ergonomic considerations to prevent musculoskeletal disorders and promote employee well-being. The company ensures that workstations and equipment are designed ergonomically, taking into account factors such as proper lighting, adjustable furniture, and adequate seating. Employees are also educated on ergonomic best practices to minimize the risk of injuries and discomfort.

6. Code of Conduct

Smart Group maintains a comprehensive code of conduct policy that outlines the company's expectations regarding ethical behavior, professional conduct, conflict of interest, confidentiality and data protection, prohibited practices, social media and internet usage, dress code and personal appearance, as well as gifts and entertainment. This policy serves as a guide for all employees and sets the standard for behavior and decision-making across the organization.

6.1. Ethical Standards:

Smart Group is committed to upholding the highest ethical standards in all aspects of its business operations. The code of conduct emphasizes honesty, integrity, and transparency. It requires employees to act with fairness, respect, and responsibility in their interactions with colleagues, clients, customers, suppliers, and the general public.

6.2. Professional Conduct:

Smart Group expects its employees to maintain a professional demeanor at all times. This includes treating others with respect, refraining from discriminatory practices, and adhering to applicable laws and regulations. Employees are expected to contribute positively to a collaborative and inclusive work environment, promoting team dynamics and displaying professionalism in their work and communication.

6.3. Conflict of Interest:

Smart Group has implemented a policy to address conflicts of interest, recognizing the importance of maintaining transparency and impartiality in business operations. The policy requires employees to disclose any potential conflicts that may arise between their personal interests and their responsibilities within the organization.

- *Importance of Managing Conflicts of Interest:* Smart Group understands that conflicts of interest can impact fair decision-making and undermine the trust and integrity of the organization. By addressing and managing conflicts of interest, Smart Group aims to maintain transparency, promote ethical conduct, and ensure that employees fulfill their professional responsibilities objectively.
- *Disclosure of Conflicts:* To manage conflicts of interest effectively, Smart Group emphasizes proactive communication and disclosure by employees. The policy encourages employees to disclose any potential conflicts they may have, ensuring that relevant information is brought to the attention of the appropriate authorities within the organization.
- *Types of Conflicts:* Smart Group's policy recognizes various types of potential conflicts, including financial interests, outside employment, and personal relationships. Employees are expected to disclose any situations where their personal interests could have an influence on their decisions or actions within the organization.
- *Transparency and Impartiality:* Transparency and impartiality are crucial in managing conflicts of interest at Smart Group. By disclosing potential conflicts, employees enable the organization to assess the situation objectively and take appropriate actions to mitigate any potential risks. This transparency ensures that decisions are made in the best interest of the company and all stakeholders involved.
- *Conflict Resolution:* Once a conflict is disclosed, Smart Group takes necessary measures to manage and resolve the situation. This may include reassigning responsibilities, implementing safeguards, or even prohibiting certain actions or transactions to avoid any undue influence or bias.
- *Confidentiality and Protection:* Smart Group treats all conflict disclosures with confidentiality, protecting employees from any retaliation or negative consequences for making disclosures in good faith. This encourages open and honest communication, ensuring that employees feel safe to report potential conflicts without fear of retribution.
- *Training and Awareness:* Smart Group conducts regular training and awareness programs to educate employees on the significance of avoiding conflicts of interest and promoting ethical conduct. These programs help employees recognize potential conflicts and understand the potential risks associated with them, enabling them to make informed decisions in line with the company's values.

6.4. Confidentiality and Data Protection:

Smart Group places great importance on safeguarding confidential information and data protection. The code of conduct policy highlights the responsibility of employees to maintain confidentiality

regarding proprietary information, intellectual property, client data, and any other sensitive information they may have access to during their employment. Employees are required to follow data protection regulations, internal policies, and guidelines to ensure the security and privacy of information.

- *Responsibilities of Employees:* The code of conduct policy at Smart Group emphasizes the responsibility of employees to maintain confidentiality. Employees are expected to refrain from disclosing proprietary information, intellectual property, or any other confidential data to unauthorized individuals or third parties.
- *Handling of Proprietary Information:* Smart Group's policy prohibits employees from using or disclosing proprietary information for personal gain or to the detriment of the organization. This includes strategies, trade secrets, financial information, or any other confidential data belonging to Smart Group.
- *Data Protection Regulations:* Smart Group adheres to applicable data protection regulations and laws. The organization ensures that employees are aware of their obligations in relation to data protection, including the processing, handling, storage, and sharing of personal or sensitive data.
- *Internal Policies and Guidelines:* Smart Group has established internal policies and guidelines to provide clear instructions and procedures for handling confidential information. These policies define the scope and limitations of accessing, using, and sharing sensitive data within the organization.
- *Security Measures:* Smart Group takes necessary steps to implement robust security measures to protect confidential information from unauthorized access, loss, or misuse. This includes encryption, access controls, firewalls, and regular security audits to identify and address vulnerabilities.
- *Confidentiality Agreements:* Smart Group may require employees to sign confidentiality agreements to further enforce the importance of safeguarding proprietary information and client data. These agreements serve as legal contracts that outline the expectations and consequences of breaching confidentiality obligations.
- *Training and Awareness:* Smart Group provides regular training and awareness programs to educate employees about the importance of confidentiality and data protection. These programs cover topics such as handling sensitive information, recognizing and reporting data breaches, and best practices for maintaining data security and privacy.
- *Incident Reporting and Response:* Smart Group has established a system for employees to report any suspected or actual breaches of confidentiality or data protection. This allows for prompt investigation and appropriate action in response to any incidents.

6.5. Prohibited Practices and Actions:

Smart Group has implemented a comprehensive policy regarding Prohibited Practices and Actions to ensure a respectful and inclusive work environment for all employees. This policy explicitly outlines

the practices and actions that are strictly prohibited within the company. Adherence to these guidelines is expected from all employees, both within the workplace and in any professional interactions outside of work.

The Prohibited Practices and Actions policy of Smart Group addresses various areas of misconduct and unethical behavior to maintain a safe and healthy work environment. Some of the main prohibited practices and actions include:

- **Harassment:** Smart Group strictly prohibits any form of harassment, including sexual, verbal, physical, or psychological harassment. This includes unwanted advances, offensive jokes or comments, discriminatory slurs, and any behavior that creates an intimidating or hostile work environment.
- **Discrimination:** Discrimination based on factors such as gender, race, religion, nationality, age, disability, or any other protected characteristic is strictly prohibited. Smart Group promotes equal employment opportunities and expects employees to treat each other with respect and fairness.
- **Bullying:** Bullying behavior, which involves the deliberate targeting, intimidation, or humiliation of colleagues, is strictly prohibited at Smart Group. Employees are expected to foster a supportive and friendly work environment.
- **Theft and Fraud:** Any form of theft or fraud, including embezzlement, misappropriation of funds, or unauthorized use of company resources, is strictly prohibited. Employees must always act with integrity and honesty in their dealings with company assets.
- **Substance Abuse:** Smart Group maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards substance abuse. Employees are strictly prohibited from using illegal drugs or alcohol in the workplace or during working hours. This includes arriving at work under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- **Violence:** Any form of violence, including physical or verbal threats, intimidation, or aggression towards colleagues, clients, or visitors, is strictly prohibited. Smart Group aims to maintain a safe work environment for everyone, and employees are expected to resolve conflicts and disagreements peacefully and professionally.
- **Illegal or Unethical Behavior:** Any behavior that violates local laws or regulations or engages in unethical practices is strictly prohibited. This includes activities such as bribery, corruption, insider trading, or any other form of illegal or unethical conduct.

6.6 Social Media and Internet Usage:

Smart Group acknowledges the influence and impact of social media and internet usage on individuals as well as the reputation of the organization. To ensure responsible use of social media and the internet, the company has incorporated guidelines within its code of conduct policy.

The policy emphasizes the importance of employees using social media and the internet in a manner that does not harm Smart Group's image, compromise confidential information, or violate any legal

or ethical standards. The guidelines provided are aimed at promoting responsible behavior and maintaining professionalism both online and offline.

Here are some key points that the policy covers:

- ***Separation of personal and professional accounts:*** Employees are encouraged to maintain separate social media accounts for personal and professional use. This separation helps in distinguishing between personal opinions or activities and those that may reflect on the organization. It reduces the likelihood of confusing personal views with the official stance of the company.
- ***Confidential information:*** Employees are expected to exercise caution when sharing information about Smart Group's business operations, clients, or colleagues. Confidential and proprietary information should not be disclosed on personal social media accounts or any public platforms. This helps protect sensitive data and ensures compliance with legal obligations and client confidentiality.
- ***Respect and professionalism:*** The policy emphasizes the importance of treating others with respect and professionalism, both in person and online. Employees are discouraged from engaging in any form of cyberbullying, harassment, or derogatory remarks on social media or the internet. It encourages employees to maintain a positive and constructive online presence that reflects well on themselves and the organization.
- ***Responsible sharing:*** Employees are advised to use good judgment when sharing information online. It is important to verify the accuracy of information before sharing it and to be mindful of the impact it may have on others or the organization. They should avoid spreading rumors, misinformation, or sensitive information that could potentially harm the reputation of Smart Group or its stakeholders.
- ***Compliance with company policies and laws:*** The policy reminds employees of the need to comply with all company policies and applicable laws when using social media and the internet. This includes adhering to intellectual property rights, copyright laws, and guidelines related to online behavior. Employees must not engage in any illegal activities, including online harassment, cybercrime, or any other activities that could harm the company or its stakeholders.

6.7. Dress Code and Personal Appearance:

Smart Group values professionalism and consistency in its employees' appearance. The code of conduct policy outlines the dress code requirements, ranging from formal attire for client-facing roles to smart casual for non-client-facing roles. It emphasizes the importance of maintaining cleanliness and appropriateness in personal grooming and appearance, aligning with the company's image and industry standards.

6.8. Gifts and Entertainment:

Smart Group has guidelines in place regarding the acceptance and offering of gifts and entertainment to maintain integrity and fairness. The code of conduct policy outlines the permissible value, frequency, and circumstances in which gifts and entertainment may be accepted or offered. The policy ensures compliance with legal and ethical requirements and aims to prevent conflicts of interest or the perception of impropriety.

7. Training and Development

Smart Group places a strong emphasis on the training and development of its employees. The company recognizes the importance of continuously equipping its workforce with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in their roles and contribute to the company's overall success.

7.1. Training Needs Assessment:

The first step in Smart Group's training and development policy is conducting a comprehensive training needs assessment for each employee. This assessment process involves identifying the specific skills, knowledge, and competencies required for each job role within the company. By understanding the training needs of its employees, Smart Group can tailor its training programs to address any skills gaps or areas for improvement. Lets explore in detail :

- **Skills Assessment:** This involves identifying the specific skills required for each job role within Smart Group. It can include technical skills, such as proficiency in certain software or tools, as well as soft skills like communication, leadership, or problem-solving abilities. Assessing skills helps determine if employees have the necessary capabilities to perform their job effectively and identifies any gaps that need to be addressed through training.
- **Knowledge Assessment:** Another important aspect of the training needs assessment is evaluating the knowledge required for each job role. This includes industry-specific knowledge, product knowledge, compliance regulations, or any other information that is critical for employees to perform their duties. Assessing knowledge helps identify if employees have the required expertise and if there is a need for additional training to enhance their knowledge in specific areas.
- **Competency Assessment:** Competencies are a combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors that contribute to successful job performance. Assessing competencies involves identifying the key competencies needed for each job role within Smart Group. This can include leadership, teamwork, adaptability, problem-solving, or customer service skills, depending on the nature of the job. Assessing competencies helps identify areas where employees may need development to meet job expectations.
- **Job Analysis:** Conducting a thorough job analysis is an integral part of the training needs assessment process. Job analysis involves examining the tasks, responsibilities, and requirements of each job role. It helps identify the critical skills, knowledge, and competencies needed for successful performance in the role. Job analysis can be done

through interviews with employees and supervisors, observation of job tasks, and analysis of performance evaluations or job descriptions.

- **Feedback and Performance Evaluation:** Gathering feedback from employees, supervisors, and other stakeholders is essential for identifying training needs. Engaging in regular performance evaluations can provide valuable insights into areas of improvement. Feedback and performance evaluations can be collected through surveys, interviews, focus groups, or performance appraisal systems. Employees may also self-assess their own training needs, highlighting areas where they believe additional training would be beneficial.

7.2. Training Programs:

In today's fast-paced business environment, organizations must constantly adapt and equip their employees with the necessary skills and knowledge to stay competitive. Smart Group recognizes the significance of investing in employee development and, as a result, offers a wide range of comprehensive training programs. This essay explores the various training areas Smart Group covers, the interactive and engaging learning methodologies utilized, and the company's commitment to staying updated with the latest industry advancements.

- **Training Areas:** Smart Group's training programs focus on four key areas: technical skills, soft skills, leadership development, and industry-specific knowledge. These areas address the diverse needs of employees, ensuring they are equipped with the tools necessary to excel in their roles. Technical skills training covers the mastery of specific software, tools, and technologies relevant to their job functions. Soft skills training hones interpersonal and communication abilities, teamwork, problem-solving, and time management.

Leadership development programs target employees aspiring to take on managerial or leadership positions. These programs nurture leadership qualities, strategic thinking, and decision-making skills. Lastly, the industry-specific knowledge training keeps employees up-to-date with the latest trends, regulations, and advancements in their respective fields, ensuring they remain relevant and effective in their roles.

- **Interactive Learning Methodologies:** Smart Group understands that engaging employees in the learning process is crucial for effective knowledge acquisition. To achieve this, the company employs a mix of interactive and engaging learning methodologies. Classroom-based sessions encourage interaction and discussion, enabling employees to learn from both the instructor and their peers. Hands-on workshops provide practical experience and allow employees to immediately apply the knowledge gained. This approach not only solidifies learning but also builds confidence in executing new skills.

Online modules supplement classroom-based training, offering flexibility and accessibility. Employees have the freedom to set their own learning pace, accessing training materials and resources conveniently through Smart Group's learning management system (LMS).

These online modules are interactive and often feature video tutorials, quizzes, and simulations to ensure engagement.

- *Engaging Trainers and Subject Matter Experts:* To ensure the effectiveness of their training programs, Smart Group leverages the expertise of experienced trainers and subject matter experts. These instructors possess deep knowledge and practical experience in their respective fields, enhancing the quality of learning experiences. By drawing on the knowledge and insights of experts, employees gain valuable insights and practical advice, ensuring relevance and applicability in their day-to-day work.
- *Staying Updated with Industry Advancements:* Smart Group's commitment to employee development extends beyond its internal training programs. The company actively encourages employees to participate in relevant industry conferences, seminars, and workshops. By attending external learning opportunities, employees gain exposure to the latest industry advancements, expand their professional networks, and gain new perspectives. This continuous learning culture enables employees to stay ahead of market trends, bringing fresh insights and innovation to Smart Group's operations.

7.3. Career Development:

Career development and growth are crucial aspects of any organization's human resource strategy. Recognizing this, Smart Group has implemented a comprehensive training and development policy to enhance the skills and advance the careers of its employees. By promoting initiatives such as job rotations, mentorship programs, and succession planning, Smart Group strives to create an environment where employees can thrive and achieve their career goals.

- *Job Rotations:* One key aspect of Smart Group's career development program is the implementation of job rotations. This practice allows employees to gain exposure to different departments and roles within the organization. By doing so, employees can broaden their skill sets, develop a deeper understanding of the company as a whole, and discover areas of interest that align with their career aspirations. Job rotations also foster cross-functional collaboration, improve problem-solving abilities, and encourage adaptability – traits that are highly valued in today's dynamic business environment.
- *Mentorship Programs:* Smart Group recognizes the significance of mentorship in career development. Thus, the company has established mentorship programs that connect experienced employees with those who seek guidance and support. These programs facilitate the transfer of knowledge, foster professional relationships, and provide employees with valuable insights from seasoned professionals. Mentors not only offer career advice but also act as sounding boards, helping mentees navigate challenges and make informed decisions. Such mentorship programs create a culture of continuous learning, promoting personal and professional growth within the organization.

- **Succession Planning:** To ensure a pipeline of talented individuals for future leadership positions, Smart Group emphasizes succession planning. This proactive approach identifies high-potential employees and prepares them for senior roles within the organization. Through training, mentoring, and exposure to progressively challenging projects, employees identified as potential leaders are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to assume greater responsibilities. This not only ensures the future stability of the organization's leadership but also provides employees with a clear career trajectory, fostering a sense of purpose and motivation.
- **Career Goals and Development Plans:** At Smart Group, employees are encouraged to set clear career goals and are supported in the creation of personalized development plans to achieve them. By aligning individual aspirations with organizational objectives, employees gain a sense of direction and purpose in their work. The company offers resources such as training workshops, seminars, and professional courses to equip employees with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in their chosen fields. These development plans are regularly reviewed and updated, ensuring employees remain engaged and motivated throughout their careers.
- **Performance Feedback and Recognition:** Smart Group recognizes the importance of providing regular performance feedback and recognition to employees. Through structured performance evaluations, managers provide constructive feedback, highlighting areas for improvement and acknowledging achievements. This feedback enables employees to identify their strengths, areas for development, and opportunities for growth. Additionally, Smart Group fosters a culture of recognition by acknowledging employees' accomplishments and contributions through awards, promotions, and public recognition. Such practices boost employee morale, encourage further development, and create a positive work environment.

7.4. Education Assistance:

In addition to the in-house training programs, Smart Group also provides education assistance to further support the professional development of its employees. This may include financial support for employees pursuing higher education, professional certifications, or specialized courses that are relevant to their job roles or career aspirations. The company believes that investing in the education and development of its employees not only benefits the individuals but also contributes to the overall growth and success of the organization.

8. Leave Of absence :

At Smart Technologies (BD) Ltd. (STBL), the empowerment and well-being of employees are greatly valued. Recognizing the need for employees to recharge and rejuvenate, STBL encourages the utilization of various types of leave. This approach not only enhances individual work productivity but also promotes a healthy and balanced work-life integration. STBL offers a comprehensive leave

of absence policy that includes earned leave, casual leave, sick leave, leave due to accident/occupational diseases, maternity leave, and special leave.

- **Earned Leave (EL):** All employees at STBL are entitled to earned leave. It is calculated based on actual attendance at work, excluding any other types of leave or holidays. Continuous service for the previous year is a prerequisite for the utilization of earned leave. This flexible leave option enables employees to plan and take time off to relax and pursue personal interests, ensuring their overall well-being.
- **Casual Leave (CL):** STBL grants 10 days of casual leave to employees annually. This type of leave allows employees to attend to personal or unforeseen circumstances, providing them with the necessary flexibility to address immediate needs without disrupting their routine work schedules.
- **Sick Leave (SL):** STBL values the health and well-being of its employees. Thus, 14 days of sick leave are provided each year to employees facing health issues. This leave can be taken in case of illness or injury, allowing employees to recover without worry or stress.
- **Leave due to Accident/Occupational Diseases:** STBL recognizes that accidents and occupational diseases can occur during the course of employment. In such situations, employees are entitled to leave following specific procedures. This leave can be taken for a maximum of three months at a time, with a total of two occasions permitted during an employee's tenure. By offering this leave, STBL prioritizes the physical and mental well-being of its employees, ensuring they have the necessary time to heal and recuperate.
- **Maternity Leave:** STBL acknowledges the significance of supporting the unique needs of its female employees. A four-month maternity leave is provided to pregnant executives/officers. This leave cannot be adjusted with any other type of leave. By offering maternity leave, STBL promotes a supportive work environment that accommodates the physical and emotional demands associated with pregnancy and childbirth.
- **Special Leave:** STBL recognizes that some situations may warrant additional leave beyond the available options. In cases where an employee faces sickness without any remaining payable leave, special leave may be granted based on humanitarian grounds. This leave must be recommended by the company's medical officer or a registered medical practitioner. Additionally, special leave may be granted to employees unable to join their duties in a timely manner due to circumstances beyond their control.

9. Disciplinary Action :

Smart Group maintains a comprehensive policy regarding disciplinary actions to ensure a professional work environment and uphold company values and standards. The policy outlines the expected conduct and behavior of employees and provides a framework for addressing any violations or misconduct effectively and fairly.

9.1. Disciplinary Policy:

The disciplinary policy of Smart Group sets clear expectations for employee behavior and conduct. It defines what constitutes misconduct, which may include actions such as insubordination, harassment, dishonesty, negligence, or violation of company policies or procedures. The policy communicates the consequences of such behavior and establishes the procedures for handling disciplinary actions.

9.2. Progressive Disciplinary Process:

Smart Group follows a progressive disciplinary process that provides a framework for addressing misconduct in a fair and consistent manner. The process includes multiple steps, starting with informal counseling or verbal warnings to address minor infractions. If the misconduct persists or escalates, the process progresses to more severe disciplinary actions, such as written warnings, suspension, or ultimately, termination of employment.

The progressive nature of the disciplinary process allows employees the opportunity to improve their behavior and rectify any issues. The focus is on corrective action rather than punitive measures, with the aim of helping employees understand their mistakes, understand the impact of their actions, and modify their behavior accordingly.

9.3. Disciplinary Actions:

Smart Group's disciplinary actions are tailored to the specific circumstances and severity of the misconduct. These actions may include verbal or written warnings, temporary suspension, transfer or reassignment, reduction in pay or benefits, or termination of employment. The policy ensures that disciplinary actions are proportionate and appropriate, taking into account factors such as the seriousness of the offense, previous disciplinary history, and potential for behavior improvement.

To maintain transparency and fairness, all disciplinary actions are documented and communicated to both the employee involved and relevant stakeholders within the organization. The policy also ensures that any disciplinary action is administered impartially and without bias, after conducting a thorough investigation and giving the employee an opportunity to present their side of the story.

9.4. Appeals Process:

Smart Group recognizes the need for an appeals process to address any concerns or disputes related to disciplinary actions. The policy outlines an appeals process through which an employee can request a review of the disciplinary action imposed. This process typically involves submitting a written appeal to a designated authority, who will review the case and consider any additional evidence or information provided.

The appeals process ensures that employees have an avenue to present their case if they believe the disciplinary action was unjust or disproportionate. The policy specifies the timeframes within which appeals must be lodged, as well as the steps and authorities involved in the review process. The aim

is to provide a fair and objective assessment of the disciplinary action and ensure that any errors or miscarriages of justice are corrected.

9.5. Provision of Punishment :

In any organization, maintaining discipline and ensuring accountability are essential for a productive and harmonious work environment. Smart Group recognizes the significance of enforcing disciplinary measures to uphold company values and standards. The company has implemented a comprehensive provision of punishments to address misconduct and promote responsible behavior among its employees. These provisions aim to create a sense of accountability and ensure that all employees adhere to established guidelines.

Types of Punishments:

Smart Group's provisions of punishment outline various courses of action in response to misconduct. The severity of the punishment depends on the nature and severity of the misconduct committed. The following provisions may be applied:

- *Dismissal from the services of the company without any benefits:* This severe disciplinary action is taken when an employee's misconduct is deemed grave and irreparable. Dismissal serves as a strong deterrent and emphasizes the importance of upholding company values and policies.
- *Discharge from service:* This penalty involves terminating an employee's employment contract due to serious misconduct. It signifies a breach of trust and demonstrates the company's commitment to maintaining a professional and ethical work environment.
- *Degradation to lower ranks:* In cases where an employee's misconduct warrants disciplinary action but does not warrant termination, the employee may be demoted to a lower rank within the organization. This serves as a reminder of the consequences of inappropriate behavior and provides an opportunity for the employee to rectify their actions.
- *Suspension without pay:* This disciplinary measure involves temporarily suspending an employee's service for a period of up to two months without any remuneration or benefits. Suspension without pay serves as a penalty for serious disciplinary infractions and allows time for the employee to reflect on their actions.
- *Holding up/cancellation of annual increment:* Smart Group may hold up or cancel an employee's annual increment as a consequence of misconduct. This serves as a financial penalty and communicates the importance of adhering to company policies and standards.
- *Holding up promotion:* If an employee's misconduct is less severe, but still requires disciplinary action, Smart Group may hold up their promotion for a year or more. This provides an opportunity for the employee to rectify their behavior and serves as a reminder of the importance of meeting performance expectations.
- *Warning letter:* In cases where an employee's misconduct is less severe or their first offense, Smart Group may issue a warning letter. This formal communication highlights the specific

misconduct and urges the employee to rectify their behavior promptly. However, if an employee receives four warning letters within a twelve-month period, it may constitute further misconduct.

10. Grievance Procedure :

Smart Group maintains a comprehensive grievance procedure to ensure that employees have a fair and effective means of raising and resolving workplace concerns or grievances. The procedure aims to promote open communication, address issues promptly, and maintain a positive work environment.

Filing a Grievance:

Employees are encouraged to raise their concerns promptly and in writing to the appropriate authority within the organization. This could be their immediate supervisor, the human resources department, or a designated grievance officer. The policy specifies the process and channels available for filing a grievance, ensuring that employees have multiple options to ensure confidentiality and impartiality.

Investigation and Resolution:

Upon receipt of a grievance, Smart Group initiates an investigation process to gather relevant information and evidence. The investigation is conducted in a fair and objective manner, ensuring that all parties involved are given an opportunity to present their perspective and provide any supporting evidence. The company may assign an impartial investigator or an investigation committee to conduct the inquiry, ensuring transparency and neutrality.

Once the investigation is complete, the findings are shared with the relevant stakeholders, including the employee who filed the grievance. Smart Group takes appropriate action to address the issues raised and resolve the matter. The resolution may involve disciplinary actions, changes in policies or procedures, mediation, conflict resolution, training, or any other appropriate measures to prevent recurrence and restore a positive work environment.

Appeal Process:

In the event that an employee is dissatisfied with the outcome of the grievance resolution, Smart Group provides an appeal process. The policy outlines the steps and channels available for employees to appeal the decision. This typically includes submitting a written appeal to a designated authority within a specified timeframe.

The appeal process ensures a fair and unbiased review of the grievance resolution. The designated authority or a separate committee reviews the appeal, considering any additional evidence or information provided by the employee. After reviewing the appeal, the authority makes an independent assessment and determines whether the original decision should be modified, upheld, or further investigated.

Smart Group's grievance procedure ensures confidentiality, impartiality, and fairness throughout the process. Employees are protected from any form of retaliation for filing a grievance, and the company ensures that all disclosures and discussions related to the grievance are treated confidentially to maintain trust and transparency.

11. Performance Management :

Smart Group places a strong emphasis on employee performance management to ensure that employees are motivated, engaged, and aligned with the company's goals and objectives. The company's comprehensive policy covers various aspects of performance evaluation, development plans, and recognition and rewards.

11.1 Performance Evaluation:

Smart Group has a comprehensive policy for performance evaluation to ensure that employees' performance and contributions are assessed in a fair and objective manner. The policy can be divided into several key topics, which include goal setting, ongoing feedback and coaching, formal performance reviews, evaluation criteria and methodologies, and the impact on career development and training. Let's explore each of these topics in more detail:

- **Goal Setting:** Smart Group emphasizes the importance of setting clear performance goals and expectations for employees. These goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART). By setting clear goals, employees have a clear understanding of what is expected from them and can work towards achieving those goals.
- **Ongoing Feedback and Coaching:** Managers at Smart Group are encouraged to provide continuous feedback and coaching to their team members. This ongoing feedback helps to guide employees, identify areas for improvement, and recognize strengths and achievements. Regular coaching conversations enable employees to stay on track and receive the necessary guidance and support to succeed in their roles.
- **Formal Performance Reviews:** Smart Group conducts formal performance reviews at regular intervals, usually annually or bi-annually. These reviews provide a structured opportunity for managers and employees to have in-depth discussions about performance, progress towards goals, and overall contributions. They are a two-way conversation where employees can share their perspectives and managers provide a comprehensive assessment of performance.
- **Evaluation Criteria and Methodologies:** Smart Group utilizes a range of evaluation criteria and methodologies to ensure fairness and objectivity. These may include objective metrics and key performance indicators (KPIs), which assess specific, measurable aspects of an employee's performance. Additionally, self-assessments and supervisor assessments may be included to gather multiple perspectives on performance.
- **Career Development and Training:** The performance evaluation process at Smart Group goes beyond assessing performance; it also serves as a platform for goal alignment, career

development discussions, and the identification of training or skill enhancement needs. Managers and employees discuss career aspirations, growth opportunities, and the necessary steps to attain career goals. Any skill gaps or development areas identified during the evaluation process are addressed through training programs or other developmental initiatives.

Development Plans:

Based on the performance evaluations, Smart Group creates individualized development plans for employees. These plans are designed to support employee growth, skill enhancement, and career progression. The development plans outline specific actions and training programs that employees can undertake to improve their skills, knowledge, and capabilities.

Smart Group encourages employees to take ownership of their learning and development by providing resources such as mentorship programs, access to online courses, workshops, and seminars. The company also supports employees in pursuing relevant certifications or advanced degrees to further enhance their expertise.

By promoting employee development, Smart Group aims to foster a culture of continuous learning, professional growth, and career advancement within the organization.

Recognition and Rewards:

Smart Group recognizes and rewards employees for their exceptional performance and contributions to the company. The policy outlines various recognition programs and initiatives that are in place to acknowledge and appreciate employee efforts.

The company may implement a variety of recognition methods, such as formal appreciation programs, employee of the month/year awards, peer recognition programs, or spot bonuses. These recognition efforts help to motivate and engage employees, boost morale, and create a positive work environment.

Smart Group also ensures that rewards are aligned with performance by implementing merit-based compensation and incentive structures. High-performing employees may be eligible for salary increases, bonuses, promotions, or other forms of monetary or non-monetary incentives.

The policy emphasizes the importance of fair and transparent recognition and rewards, ensuring that employees are recognized for their achievements in an equitable and consistent manner.

12. Employee relations :

Smart Group recognizes the importance of strong employee relations and has implemented a comprehensive policy to foster a positive and engaging work environment. The policy includes several components:

Communication Channels:

Smart Group ensures effective communication channels are in place to enable open and transparent communication between management and employees. This includes regular team meetings, departmental updates, and company-wide announcements. The company also utilizes digital communication tools such as email, instant messaging, and intranet platforms to facilitate communication across various departments and levels of the organization.

Employee Feedback:

Smart Group values employee feedback and provides opportunities for employees to express their opinions, suggestions, and concerns. Regular feedback sessions are conducted, such as employee satisfaction surveys, focus groups, suggestion boxes, and one-on-one meetings with managers. The company maintains confidentiality and anonymity when necessary to encourage honest and open feedback.

Employee Engagement Initiatives:

Smart Group actively invests in initiatives to enhance employee engagement and job satisfaction. This includes organizing employee recognition programs, team-building activities, and company-wide events. The company encourages employee participation and involvement in decision-making processes through cross-functional teams, employee committees, and suggestion schemes. Employee engagement initiatives are designed to foster a sense of belonging, pride, and loyalty among the workforce.

Employee Events and Activities:

Smart Group recognizes the importance of work-life balance and organizes various events and activities to promote employee well-being and social interaction. This includes wellness programs, sports events, social gatherings, and employee appreciation events. The company encourages employees to participate in community service initiatives, volunteering programs, and other corporate social responsibility activities, promoting a sense of shared responsibility and a positive company culture.

13. Compliance with labor laws :

Smart Group is committed to complying with all the labor laws of Bangladesh and ensuring a safe, fair, and respectful working environment for its employees. The company's policy includes several measures to ensure compliance:

Compliance with Bangladeshi Labor Laws:

Smart Group has a dedicated team responsible for monitoring and ensuring compliance with all applicable labor laws in Bangladesh. The team stays up-to-date with the latest legal requirements and regulations and works closely with legal advisors to ensure adherence.

Working Hours and Rest Periods:

Smart Group strictly adheres to the working hour regulations specified by the Bangladeshi labor laws. The company ensures that employees work within the prescribed daily and weekly limits and that adequate rest periods are provided. This includes following the guidelines for maximum working hours, mandatory breaks during the workday, and weekly rest days.

Child Labor and Forced Labor:

Smart Group has a zero-tolerance policy for child labor and forced labor. The company conducts rigorous pre-employment verification processes to ensure that all employees are of legal working age. Smart Group also prohibits the use of any forced labor, including any form of human trafficking or coercion. The company actively monitors its supply chain to ensure that suppliers also comply with these principles.

Anti-Discrimination and Harassment:

Smart Group is committed to creating a workplace free from discrimination and harassment. The company strictly prohibits any form of discrimination or harassment based on race, gender, age, religion, disability, or any other protected characteristic. Smart Group provides training to employees on diversity and inclusion, raising awareness about the importance of treating everyone with respect and dignity. Employees are encouraged to report any incidents of discrimination or harassment, and appropriate measures are taken to address and resolve such issues.

14. Reporting Violation :

Smart Group has a comprehensive policy in place regarding reporting violations. The policy aims to create a safe and confidential environment where employees can report any concerns or violations without fear of retaliation. The policy includes the following components:

Whistleblower Policy:

Smart Group has a dedicated Whistleblower Policy that encourages employees to report any violations, misconduct, or unethical behavior within the organization. The policy defines what constitutes a violation and outlines the procedure for reporting such incidents. The policy assures employees that their identity will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law and that they will be protected from any form of retaliation.

Reporting Procedure:

Smart Group provides clear instructions and guidelines on how employees can report violations. Employees are informed about the designated reporting channels, such as a dedicated hotline, email address, or a designated person within the organization. The company ensures that the reporting procedure is easily accessible to all employees and clearly communicates the importance of reporting any concerns promptly.

Non-Retaliation:

Smart Group emphasizes its commitment to non-retaliation against individuals who report violations in good faith. The policy explicitly states that any form of retaliation against whistleblowers will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. The company encourages employees to come forward without fear of adverse consequences and assures them that their rights and well-being will be protected.