



## EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Welcome to our company. We want you to enjoy working here and we want to be proud of you as an employee. We look forward to a lasting relationship and your future growth as an employee.

This handbook has information to assist you in becoming more familiar with the policies and procedures of Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. This handbook does not contain all of the details regarding company policies and procedures on every subject mentioned, but we hope that it will touch on most of the major topics of interest to you.

Please take the time to read through the material and keep it handy to use as a reference. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask your supervisor or the owner about any information you don't understand. We will have answers for you or will know how to get them for you.

Good luck for success and satisfaction in your new job with Green Earth Landscaping, Inc.

Sincerely,  
Green Earth Landscaping, Inc.  
Edward Dubisz  
President

### **Green Earth Landscaping, Inc.**

Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. was founded by Edward Dubisz, who started the business by maintaining neighborhood homes in the Charlotte area. The business began in 2006 as a part-time job. After one year, the business grew to a full-time job. The business was originally created to do residential mowing, landscape installation, pine needles and other miscellaneous jobs but quickly turned into something much larger. In 2007, we incorporated under the name of Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. The business has expanded every year since and is presently involved in commercial landscape maintenance as well as residential landscaping.

Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. is currently involved in all segments of the landscape industry including landscape installation, lawn maintenance, irrigation installation and maintenance as well as sodding, seeding, aeration, pine needles and flower installation. We pride ourselves in being a full-service landscape company.

We at Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. pride ourselves on our quality and experienced professional work, as stated in our mission statement:

“Our Mission is to enhance the beauty and value of every client’s property while exceeding their expectations every step of the way”

Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. is guided by four core values which create the framework for all our business decisions.

Our 4 Core Values:

1. **Quality** - As a team, we are committed to doing everything correctly utilizing the best possible method, the first time. We use the best materials, hire the best people and continually strive to improve. We are dedicated to providing continuing education for all team members.
2. **Leadership** - We strive to be a leader in the industry and work within our community to be good environmental stewards. As a leader, we act with integrity and professionalism in everything that we do.
3. **Teamwork** - We maintain that communication within the organization creates a team atmosphere. By working together with clients, vendors, team members and the community, we are able to achieve the stated goals.
4. **Service** - Providing quality service is the backbone of our organization. We want to be there anytime we are needed. Committing the time and energy to your property will build a long lasting relationship.

Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. uses these core values as the premise for our daily lives as well as our business model and we hope that you will join us in promoting these values as well.

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## I. Company Policies

### Equal Employment Opportunity

It is the policy and intent of our company to provide equal opportunity to all qualified persons. This policy prohibits discrimination.

The company's policy applies to all phases of the personnel process, including recruitment, hiring, placement, training, promotion, benefits, compensation, company sponsored social activity and all other terms and conditions of employment.

### Harrassment

We are committed to maintaining a working environment free of harassment and intimidation. Racial and ethnic slurs, unwelcome sexual advances, request of sexual favors and other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature is considered to be in conflict with company policy. Violations of this policy on the part of any employee may be cause for termination of employment.

If you feel you have been a victim of harassment, immediately report any such activity to a supervisor or owner.

### Privacy/Personnel Records

The company maintains personnel records about every employee. We have guidelines about the information in this file concerning the types of employee information that will be collected and maintained and who may have access to it. Our basic guidelines concerning your personnel file are:

- Collect and maintain information about you only for employee relations or legal reasons.
- Limit internal access to those with legitimate reason to know.
- Allow you to review the file for accuracy if you deem necessary.

The personnel records are routinely checked in order to verify dates of employment, current or last position. Current address, phone number, W-2, I-9 and other tax related information will be updated for payroll reasons. Any medical history, insurance and any other records will be kept confidential and generally not disclosed except where required by law or when legally permitted.

## Alcohol & Drugs

Your reputation and health as well as the reputation of Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. could be seriously damaged by your possession of illegal drugs, being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, and using illegal prescription drugs while on duty.

Let it be clearly understood that our company policy strictly prohibits the possession and/or use of illegal drugs, the illegal use of prescription drugs or alcohol on company premises, personal vehicles while on company parking lots, company vehicles and/or equipment and/or job sites. Also, reporting to work under the influence of illegal drugs, the illegal use of prescription drugs including alcohol is strictly prohibited.

We reserve the right to conduct a random unannounced Drug and Alcohol test on any employee.

Any and all drug use is strictly prohibited and means for immediate termination. If you know an employee that is using illegal drugs at anytime, it is your responsibility as an employee of Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. to immediately notify a supervisor or owner.

## **II. Employee Development**

### Classification of Employees

#### Introductory:

An employee appointed to a regular position by the company shall be considered introductory for a period of three (3) months. During the introductory period, an employee may be terminated from employment at anytime without the right of appeal.

#### Regular Full-Time:

An employee who has successfully completed the introductory period shall be considered regular. Regular employees are full-time if they are regularly scheduled to work at least 40 hours per week with the intent to work on a year round basis.

#### Regular Part-Time:

After completing the introductory period, an employee will be described as part-time if employed to perform work which can be accomplished on less than a full-time weekly schedule.

### Seasonal:

An employee who works during the peak seasons only will be considered seasonal. Although subject to the introductory period, once this is completed, the seasonal worker will not have to re-complete that period if they stop working and return later for another reason.

### Training

At Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. we believe it is to our mutual benefit to provide the very finest job preparation. The training will be on-the-job under the supervision of an experienced person. You will acquire the skills and knowledge to use tools and equipment that are essential to the position for which you were hired. The training process will be on going and will enable you to learn the operation of more advanced equipment and new techniques in the field. At times, we will provide workshops, seminars and clinics to help sharpen your skills, update your knowledge and provide a better understanding of your job and the industry in general.

### Tuition Reimbursement Policy

Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. supports the continuous learning and education of our employees. With that in mind, we have established a reimbursement program for expenses incurred through accredited academic institutions.

If you are a regular full-time employee and have been employed for at least one (1) year, you are eligible for participation in this program. The course must be approved in advance and be job related.

Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. will reimburse up to a maximum of 90% of tuition for the continuing education through an accredited program that either offers growth in an area related to your current position or that might lead to promotional opportunities. This can include college credit courses, continuing education unit or certification tests. A passing grade of "B" or a certification is required to receive any reimbursement. Expenses must be validated by receipts, course outline showing content and hours, and a copy of the final grade or certification.

Contact Edward Dubisz for more information.

### Performance Review

The ability to do your job well is critical. The philosophy of Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. is one of continuous quality improvement in the work that we do, services we provide and professional working relationships that we maintain. We ask that you should continuously evaluate your performance as your manager or department head will do. If you every have

questions about your performance or opportunities for improvement or professional growth, please talk to your supervisor or owner.

We conduct formal performance reviews after 30 days of employment and again at periodic intervals. A yearly performance review will take place on or about the employee's anniversary date. New employees will be given an oral evaluation at the end of the introductory period to help insure future success with the company. A performance review may also be conducted in the event of a promotion or change in duties and responsibilities. Should an employee's performance indicate a need for that improvement, a follow-up review will occur after a period of time to allow for that improvement. When a written appraisal has been prepared, you review it and add any comments you wish. We will ask you to take advantage of this process and to develop the skills necessary to perform your job satisfactorily.

If at any time you feel your job performance could be improved, please discuss it with a supervisor or owner as soon as possible to help alleviate any undue stress or pressure.

### **III. Compensation**

While job satisfaction is made up of many factors in addition to the amount of your paycheck, salary is important. Our salary policy is designed to reward outstanding performance and to compensate employees on a fair and equitable basis.

#### Salary Structure

Our salary structures are established according to the marketplace through our participation in salary surveys. By using these survey results, we are able to monitor the relative value of a wide variety of positions. Most starting positions with Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. start out at a pay rate of \$8.50 and go up from there depending on prior experience and education.

#### Your Paycheck

You will receive your paycheck every other week on Friday. There are twenty-six (26) pay periods per year. The pay period starts on Monday and ends on a Sunday.

#### Salary Actions

The most common salary actions result from the following:

**Merit Review:** This program is designed to recognize and reward individual performance. The amount of merit increase, if any, follows internal guidelines used by a supervisor or owner. These guidelines follow a strict criteria that enables star



performers to be compensated for outstanding work and capabilities in their jobs.

**Promotional Increases:** Promotional increases, if applicable, may occur throughout the year and are directly linked to changes in job responsibilities.

**Decreases:** While infrequent, salary decreases can happen. Usually this occurs when your job duties and responsibilities decrease. Other concerns may be economic changes that are out of our control.

### Deductions

There are payroll deductions. The company is required to make a deduction from each paycheck for your contribution to federal, state and local governments. Another deduction is for your Social Security. For participating employees, you can authorize additional deductions for insurance and other programs that the company may choose to offer at future times.

### Time and a Half for Overtime

Time and a half will be paid to hourly employees for over forty (40) hours per week of actual time worked (the 40 hours cannot include paid time off and/or holiday pay) as part of the 40 hours worked.

Another option is to have your overtime hours carried over for times when business is slow. This would include rain days, summer months, winter. This will allow you to receive a regular paycheck when we do not work a regular work week.

## **IV. Company Procedures**

### Safety

Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. is dedicated to the safety of its workers. The utmost care must be taken at all times to ensure that safe work practices are utilized. This means using all guards on equipment, eye protection and appropriate work boots or foot wear, safe use of chemicals, no smoking near flammable materials and cautious and courteous driving. Following all posted speed limits is mandatory and reduced speeds in residential areas. The safety of employees as well as the public is of the utmost importance. Speeding and reckless driving will not be tolerated.

With assistance from the field, we can utilize our resources to identify and control work related hazards. All employees are encouraged to actively participate by notifying your supervisor or company President of any needed safety improvements. All field workers are required to attend safety meetings and to complete the safety sheet for attendance.

If any injury or accident occurs, these procedures should be followed:

- Report all accidents to your supervisor immediately, regardless of the nature or severity.

- Seek medical assistance if the situation warrants. Failure to receive treatment may result in serious complications and may jeopardize your eligibility for medical benefits under our workers' compensation policy.

Failure to report an injury or accident immediately is in direct violation of an important company procedure.

### Seatbelt Policy

We value the lives and safety of our employees. Because it is estimated that seat belts reduce the risk of dying in a motor vehicle crash by 45 percent, we have adopted the following policy concerning employee seat belt usage.

“In addition to following all traffic regulations, all employees and their passengers are Required to use seat belts when traveling in any vehicle while in the course of conducting company business. The requirement applies to business travel in a vehicle owned by the company, in a rental vehicle and in any other vehicle utilized for company use.

If any employee is provided a company-owned vehicle that is used in the course of his/her employment and is also available for that employee's personal use, that employee, together with all passengers who occupy the vehicle at any time and for any purpose, whether business related or personal, are required to use seat belts at all times the vehicle is in motion.

The use of seat belts is to be considered a condition of employment with this company. Failure to abide by this stated policy will be considered a breach of employment and subject the person to disciplinary action, including suspension and possible termination.

### Attendance

In no area do we have more employees than our needs require. This means that when an employee is absent, it may cause a change in other employee's work schedules or cause jobs to go undone. Therefore, a conscientious effort should be made by all employees to be prompt and on the job when they are scheduled to work.

If you are going to be late or absent from work, notice of at least one (1) day is required or notice as soon as practical. If you are going to be late, call as soon as possible and let a supervisor know so we can plan accordingly. Unexcused absences or tardiness' are considered unacceptable conduct and will lead to disciplinary action. Any time missed due to illness, absence or tardiness will not be compensated for. For extended periods of sick time, a physician's statement will be required to verify illness. This would be for any amount of time over 2 days.

Rules for salaried employees are subject to the terms agreed upon in the employment agreement.

### Care of Equipment and Company Property

It is the duty of all employees to take extreme care with regard to company equipment and property. Part of the pride you have in the company is shown in the manner you treat its property. Any breakage that occurs to any equipment should be reported to a supervisor immediately. This will eliminate unnecessary down time for the piece of equipment and allow for proper and timely completion of the job as well as the repair to the equipment.

It is understandable that equipment will break under normal operating conditions, but carelessness and abuse in using the equipment will make that user responsible for repair and replacement of that equipment or property. Take ownership of your mistakes and don't allow everyone to suffer. If no one admits to the breakage, then the entire crew will bear the cost. The repair cost or replacement cost will be shown to the employee and the cost may be deducted from their paycheck, in accordance with federal and state wage and hour laws. Willful or careless destruction and damage to company property will not be tolerated.

Company vehicles and Company Gas cards are to be used for Company Business ONLY. Company vehicles are to be used to and from work ONLY- Any other use is PROHIBITED. Drivers must be approved in advance to drive company vehicles.

### Internet, Phone and Email Usage

Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. email and internet system are intended to be used for business purposes only. Personal use is not prohibited but email and internet records will be monitored. As a condition of initial and continued employment, all employees acknowledge Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. right to monitor, review and/or disclose email message and internet records, when appropriate, without notification to or permission from the employee sending or receiving messages. Employees should always ensure that the business information contained in email/internet messages is accurate, appropriate and lawful. Specifically, usage related to pornography and racially derogatory, discriminating, threatening or abusive communication is prohibited. Abuse of email and Internet systems, through excessive personal use, or use in violation of the law will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Personal cell phone use is prohibited during work hours. Lunch breaks are the only exception to this company policy. If an emergency arises, have family and friends call a supervisor to get a hold of you. Use of personal cell phones for any reason will result in disciplinary action and/or termination.

## Uniforms and Equipment

Every employee is required to wear Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. attire. This includes company shirt, hat, sweatshirts and jackets. Each employee will receive 7 shirts, 2 sweatshirts, 2 jackets, and 5 pairs of pants. Each employee will be responsible for purchasing the uniforms at the companies cost at time of hire. This cost will be divided into 7 equal payments. If you are terminated or quit before your uniforms are paid for, all associated costs will be deducted from your final paycheck. Each employee will own the uniforms and be able to keep them at the end of their employment.

The care and maintenance of the uniforms are your responsibility. Other parts of the necessary uniform that must be worn daily and provided by the employee are as follows:

Appropriate work boots or footwear  
Khaki pants or shorts  
Hand pruners

Our public image is very important, so it is mandatory that you be in uniform when you are at work. Wearing an incomplete uniform or not meeting appearance standards is unacceptable and you will be sent home without pay.

## Conduct

As an employee of Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. you are required to abide by certain Standards of Conduct. These standards are ever changing and the following list is not all-inclusive and represents just some examples of unacceptable employee conduct:

Not following instructions of supervisor  
Improper or inadequately performing duties  
Leaving work without permission  
Negligence  
Theft or attempted theft of property

## Transportation

It is the responsibility of each employee to provide transportation to and from work. This is a precondition of your employment and there are no exceptions. Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. will provide transportation to and from the job sites.

## Current Address and Telephone Number

It is imperative that we have your correct address and home telephone number as well as any cell phone number you have for emergencies. Emergency contact information is

important and should be provided if possible. Notify a supervisor of any changes in address or telephone numbers for company records.

### Criticisms and Grievances

We welcome constructive criticism on the part of every member of our company. Airing grievance with a fellow worker often enhances the problem, whereas a discussion of the same problem with your supervisor may bring about a speedy and satisfactory solution. We expect your cooperation in this matter. No employee may be subject to retaliation or reprisal for airing a criticism or grievance with his/her supervisor.

### Solicitation of Customers

Employees are prohibited from soliciting any current clients or prospective clients. Employees are prohibited from distributing information or literature to clients and/or work requests. As a precondition of employment an employee will be required to sign a Non-Compete Agreement which outlines all information in regards to client contact.

### Lunch Time Regulations

Lunch time varies every day but is most often taken between 11:00 am and 11:30 am. A half hour lunch break is most common but in some instances a 45 minute lunch is acceptable. Time sheets must reflect the time for lunch.

Employees can bring lunch or purchase lunch with the rest of the crew. Lunch is often at a local eatery in the area of the job site and most often there is no place to heat food. All members of the crew are to have lunch as a group in the same area. Eating in company vehicles is acceptable but understand that all lunch items should be removed from company vehicles and disposed of properly by the end of the day.

Employees are encouraged to bring a cooler or water jug to work for fresh water or drinks during the day. Frequent stops at the store for beverages is prohibited.

## **V. Employee Benefits**

### Holidays

Employees with a regular full-time classification will be entitled to Three (3) paid holidays after one (1) year of employment

Christmas Day  
New Year's Day  
Thanksgiving

To be eligible for holiday pay, you must work the last scheduled work day prior to the holiday and the first scheduled work day following the holiday. Any exception to this policy must get prior approval from supervisor or owner. Should the occasion arise that you are expected to work on one of these days (snow removal) please accept it gracefully. The company will provide you with another day off.

### Vacation Policy

All regular full-time employees are entitled to paid vacation per the following schedule of service (in addition to holiday pay):

Completion of:

1 year	4 days
2-5 years	5 days (1 week)
6- 10 year	10 days (2 weeks)

Vacation time is based upon a calendar year. Unused vacation time cannot be carried over into the next calendar year. Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. has a “use it or lose it” vacation policy unless a specific exception has been approved by the President of the company.

Vacation requests should be submitted to your supervisor at least thirty (30) days prior to date of vacation requested. Part-time and seasonal employees are not entitled to paid vacations.

Due to the seasonal nature of this business, vacation time between the months of March and June, September and mid November cannot be guaranteed. Please try to schedule them during the slowest times of the year.

Any earned but unused vacation time will be paid out upon termination of employment unless termination is for a major crime against the company or no notice is given.

### Company Socials

The company generally sponsors various social affairs during the year for the employees. The dates will be announced as they occur.

### Other Benefits

The company pays substantial Social Security tax which when added to a like amount paid by the employee, is designed to provide Social Security retirement benefits.

The company pays Worker's Compensation insurance. This is designed to provide benefits to you when you are ill or injured as a result of a work-related incident resulting from a covered disability during employment time.

## **VI. Resignation/Termination**

### Resignation

Employees who wish to resign should be aware that there is a proper procedure. For hourly employees, a two (2) week notice is required. For Supervisor/Management positions, a thirty (30) day notice is required. Following this procedure can be advantageous if you wish a reference completed that does not reflect a Quit Without Notice Statement. If notice is not provided in accordance with this policy, Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. will not pay out the employee's earned, unused vacation leave.

### Involuntary Termination

Since you are employed at the will of both yourself and the company, the employment is terminable at any time with or without cause or notice at the option of the company. Even though this is true, the company has a human resource investment in trained employees. It is to our benefit to provide an opportunity to correct behavior for individual's whose performance is unsatisfactory.

The following are steps that we may take to provide that opportunity for correction. These steps, however, in no way alter, amend or modify the at-will nature of your employment relationship. We reserve the exclusive right to terminate an employee at anytime, or to skip any of these steps list below.

Except in cases of discharge for cause, you may be first warned verbally that your performance or conduct is unsatisfactory. If the unsatisfactory performance continues, a written warning may be issued restating what was discussed in the verbal warning and informing you that if the problem continues, either suspension or termination will follow. You may be shown specific problem areas and given suggestions on how to perform the job satisfactorily. If your performance remains poor or you are suspended, the length of the suspension will be determined according to the offense.

Upon return to work after suspension and your performance is still unacceptable, termination will likely result. Although dismissal action is instituted by your supervisor, the approval of management is required for the actual dismissal.

# **EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

I acknowledge that I have read and understand Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. Employee Handbook. I agree that I will abide by Green Earth Landscaping, Inc. policies.

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Employee Signature

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Employee Printed Name

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Date