



## Employee Handbook



### Welcome

Current employee? Prospective candidate? Inquisitive visitor? This handbook is here to answer all your questions about how we do things at Heritage Interpreting.

We've open-sourced our handbook so that anyone can see how the company runs daily, anytime, anywhere. It also means when new staff joins, there won't be any surprises about benefits or expectations - it's part of our effort to be transparent with our employees.

Here at Heritage Interpreting, we want you to feel safe, happy, free, and able to express yourself authentically. We promote freedom of expression and open communication. We will not tolerate any form of inappropriate behavior, discrimination, or harassment. If any of this is happening, or you have the slightest feeling of discomfort, please speak up. We will support you.

### Our social code

We expect you to foster a well-organized, respectful, and collaborative environment. You should avoid offending, participating in heated altercations, and disrupting our workplace. We will not tolerate anyone intimidating, pestering, humiliating, victimizing, or sabotaging others at Heritage Interpreting. We also prohibit discrimination based on age, sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, race, religion, or disability. This is not an exhaustive list; it gives an indication - use your common sense. We encourage you to follow our inclusion and allyship policy in all aspects of your work, from recruitment and performance reviews to interpersonal relationships. In general, treat others the way you would want to be treated.

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## First Day

We know starting a new job can be stressful, but we hope to help you feel at ease when you arrive at Heritage Interpreting! So read on to find out a little more about what to expect on your first day and first week here.

**This really is the employee handbook.** Yep - it's public so anyone, anytime, anywhere can see how the company runs day to day. So when you sign on Day 1, there won't be any surprises about benefits or expectations - it's part of our effort to be transparent with our employees. That being said, we don't expect you to have memorized every policy before you arrive (or ever!). You'll want to go ahead and bookmark this page though since you'll refer back to it throughout your time working with us.

**There will be a lot of meetings this week.** It's only for the first week or so and it's because we want to introduce you to everyone you'll be working with and get you up to speed quickly. We think these face-to-face meetings will give you plenty of time to ask questions too. If at any point during this week, you're feeling like you need some time to digest and take a break, let us know! All meetings can be rescheduled.

**Slack is our "office" (kind of).** We're a distributed team, and we think it's particularly important that every new hire understands that we consider Slack our office. That's simply because it's where all important company communication happens - not around the water cooler, coffee pot, or tea kettle. We have cool Slack channels like "Happiness Questions of the Day" that will help you get to know your remote coworkers as well.

**We're so excited you're here!** Last but certainly not least, we offered you a position at Heritage Interpreting because we believe you have not only the skills, but the passion and innovation to contribute to the team and the communities we serve. There are no imposters here, only capable people working to make Heritage Interpreting the best interpreting agency ever. Welcome!



## **Mission, Vision, and Values**

*These values are designed for us to capture the beliefs that define our work at Heritage Interpreting and to be a reference we can use when making decisions. Our values should be a daily tool for doing our job and defining our goals. Many of our values support the idea that “we don’t work alone”, emphasizing collaboration, communication, and responsibility.*

**Mission:** Heritage Interpreting is dedicated to enriching communities by bridging language barriers, fostering authentic human connections, and nurturing trust. Rooted in the transformative power of language, our mission is to cultivate an environment where everyone is seen and heard, and every connection counts.

**Vision:** To promote lasting excellence and trust in interpreting, freeing up communities to focus on what truly matters.

At Heritage Interpreting, our **values** are more than just words - they are the principles we live by. Here is how we bring our values to life and what we avoid to maintain a positive and productive work environment.

### **Authenticity**

*We Embrace:* Transparency, setting boundaries, humility, seeking help, self-pride, wholeness

*We Avoid:* Overextending ourselves, conformity, and pretense

### **Connection**

*We Embrace:* Open communication, community, prioritizing individuals, teamwork, empathy, being open to learning

*We Avoid:* Placing profit over people, selfishness, and imposing our beliefs onto others

### **Humanity**

*We Embrace:* Celebrating diversity, investing in others, mutual support, courage, self-acceptance

*We Avoid:* Comparisons, judgment, diminishing feelings, negative self-talk



## **Guide to Working Remotely at Heritage Interpreting**

Whether you've worked remotely before or this is your first remote position, this guide will help you prepare to be remote and outline our remote benefits and expectations. We strive to create a "remote-centric" culture, meaning we default to remote best practices.

Generally speaking, you may work from anywhere that you feel you can be most productive. For meetings that benefit from a distraction-free environment, we ask that you have a consistent workspace for your office, ideally with a door that closes. This can be a room in your home or a coworking space.

We value flexibility and comfort when working remotely. The consequence of this flexibility is that your work must speak for itself. It's not about face-time, a "race to the office" in the morning, or a competition to see who can be there the latest... output is what matters.

### **What you'll need:**

Other than having a consistent distraction-free workspace, a reliable internet connection. You should be able to easily participate in video calls wherever you're working. If you're not sure if your internet connection will be sufficient, please talk to us so we can work it out.

In order for your team to work efficiently, it's important that you set working and available hours and communicate them to your team. We're always happy to be flexible, and in those cases advance notice and communication are key.

### **What we will provide:**

Heritage Interpreting will be providing you with a laptop. If you find you're in need of anything, you can go ahead and purchase it, and expense it on our [budget spreadsheet](#). For anything costing more than \$50, it will require approval from your supervisor. Please feel free to ask for anything that you feel that you need for an optimal working environment.

### **Remote tips:**

Setting aside some time to get fresh air and a bit of exercise can go a long way. Please take a proactive approach to this. More on life-work balance in our "Being Your Best Self" presentation.



## Company Communication & Meetings

Heritage Interpreting has always aimed to nurture a culture that is welcoming and respectful. We strive to be good communicators so that we foster a healthy work environment where we can be productive and do great things together.

### Daily

**Working Hours** - our day usually starts between 8 AM and 9 AM. We end our days approximately 8 hours after you started, no later than 5 PM. At Heritage Interpreting, your coworkers won't even @ mention you in Slack when it's outside of working hours, and **if something is shared during non-work times, there's no expectation that you'll respond until you're back at work.**

There are exceptions for roles where people are on-call or special cases like events or unusual circumstances, but on a day-to-day basis, we are enormously productive by letting people live their lives and have their downtime.

**Meetings** - Every meeting is remote, with every person in the meeting joining on video chat. No one should be left feeling disconnected or forgotten. When organizing meetings that will cover specific topics, we encourage you to create an agenda. Here, you can use our [template](#) (please be sure to make a copy) 😊.

### Monthly

**Heritage Huddle** - This monthly meeting is focused on critical updates, strategy, alignment, and progress on goals. Each meeting starts out with a 10-15 minute meditation, followed by each team member sharing something that they're grateful for and/or something that they are proud of. Agendas and notes will be posted in our [Heritage Huddle Google Drive folder](#).

### Communication tools

- **Google Drive** - the hub for all company activity.
- **Slack** - for ongoing conversations within and across teams. Note: sometimes Slack is used for external communications. In these cases, the channel name is preceded by a dash (like -convo-friends)
- **Video conference tools** (Zoom, Google Hangouts, etc.) - Sometimes it's easier to get a point across when you can see and hear the person you're speaking with. We use video conferencing for team meetings and to share a virtual room with colleagues.
- **Email** - We use email for especially urgent company-wide alerts, and to work with people

at other companies. For ordinary chat, we prefer to use Slack, and for lengthier conversations, we write out our ideas in full and share them for feedback and comment.

## How we communicate (using Non-Violent Communication as a guide)

How we communicate is equally as important as the words that we are using. We are a proudly distributed team, so the way we communicate shapes our shared virtual workplace. In order to work effectively across multiple teams, we narrate our work so that our colleagues and customers understand what decisions we are making and why. This means sharing mistakes and lessons with one another to encourage accountability and welcome feedback.

We want our feedback to be constructive, specific, and communicated with respect. When giving feedback, consider your *observation*, the *emotion* that arose, what you *need*, and what your *request* will be.

### Observation

Using Non-Violent Communication (NVC) methods, stating clearly what happened, without judgment or evaluation, makes it easier for someone to hear us and to work toward a solution. Also, beginning with the pronoun “I” rather than “you” shifts the focus from the other person to our direct experience. Verbs like “see” or “hear” help us focus on the specific event rather than our interpretation of the event. Please consider a few pointers on making observations:

- Separate what you actually know from assumptions or interpretations.
- Avoid using words that exaggerate or interpret: *always, never, ever, whenever, rarely.*
- State your experience in the first person, “When I see / hear / notice...” rather than “When you said / did...”

Below are some examples of differences between an evaluation and an observation:

| Evaluation  | Observation   |
|---|---|
| “You rarely come home on time”<br>“You’re always late.” | “I noticed you came home twenty minutes after you said you would...”                |
| “You’re so amazing.”                                    | “When I see the things you’ve accomplished...”                                      |
| “When you’re rude to me...”                             | “When I hear you say that...”<br>“When I see this certain expression on your face.” |

### Emotions & Needs

When explaining the impact on you, consider the following. Emotions are a natural part of being human that gives us important information about our needs. Being mindful of our emotions develops our capacity to identify emotions (emotional recognition), feel emotions with balance

(emotional regulation), and hear and express emotions without blame (emotional expression). Click [here](#) for a list of emotions. If emotions are *how* you feel about a situation, needs are the answer to *why* you feel the way that you do. In NVC, and the work of many psychologists and social theorists, the term *need* refers to something very specific, different from ordinary usages.

Colloquially, we might say, “I need you to listen to me,” or “I need you to be on time.” These are strategies - ideas about how to meet our needs. Needs are what matter beneath our strategies. If I want you to listen to me, I may need understanding. A desire for more punctuality may be about valuing respect, teamwork, or efficiency. Click [here](#) for a list of universal human needs.

## Request

When we are able to parse the actual observations that are most relevant to a situation, the emotions associated with this event, and the deeper concern and needs from which these feelings arise, we may now proceed with the behavior we are requesting moving forward. The clearer we are about what we want and why, the more creative we can be about how to make it happen. A request is a question about one’s willingness to perform a specific action to meet needs. Requests are strategies and are distinct from demands. To make this as clear as possible, it’s best to formulate requests with three qualities:

1. Positive: requests state what we *do* want rather than what we *don’t* want.
2. Specific: requests are concrete and doable rather than vague and abstract.
3. Flexible: requests are distinct from demands; they offer a suggestion for how to move forward, with openness to other ideas.

A request contains an inner orientation of flexibility that takes another’s needs into account. Essentially, it is a proposal: “How about this?”, “Would you be willing to...”, “Could it work for you to...”

## No

Hearing “no” can be hard. Instead of taking it personally, we can view their “no” as a source of information. Is there something else more important preventing them from saying “yes” to our request? We can maintain our connection by affirming the other person’s needs and sharing our understanding of their needs and expressing our interest in finding a way to meet them.

Lastly, when our comments are rooted in honesty and respect, we create safe communication spaces where people feel comfortable sharing ideas and asking questions.





## **Benefits**



## Health Insurance

Medical insurance is provided via Aetna. Open enrollment is in April every year, with new coverage beginning June 1. Marriages/domestic partnerships and children are covered.

Employee-portion of medical insurance premium per month:

|                                      | AETNTL-HDHP MC Copay<br>4000-100% | AETNTL MC OA<br>2000-80% |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Employee-only medical coverage       | \$153.69                          | \$268.54                 |
| Employee-partner medical coverage    | \$592.12                          | \$841.14                 |
| Employee-child(ren) medical coverage | \$537.02                          | \$764.08                 |
| Employee-family medical coverage     | \$853.75                          | \$1,214.25               |

We also offer Flexible Spending Accounts and Health Savings Accounts.



## **Dental Insurance**

Dental insurance is provided via Guardian. The company pays 50% of the premium and the employee pays the other 50%. Open enrollment is in April every year, with new coverage beginning June 1. Marriages/domestic partnerships and children are covered.

Employee-portion of medical insurance premium per month:

- Employee-only medical coverage: \$9.18
- Employee-partner medical coverage: \$18.36
- Employee-child(ren) medical coverage: \$19.08
- Employee-family medical coverage: \$29.13



## **Vision Insurance**

Vision insurance is provided via VSP. The company pays 100% of the premium. Open enrollment is in April every year, with new coverage beginning June 1. Marriages/domestic partnerships and children are covered.



## **401k Benefit**

A 401(k) plan is a special type of savings account that is offered through your employer. This account allows you to defer part of your salary today, for future use in retirement. Best of all, you can invest your 401(k) dollars so they can grow!

### **Heritage Interpreting offers two options when choosing 401(k) plans:**

- A Traditional 401(k) plan where you are not taxed on the money you contribute until you begin to take it out at retirement. That means fewer taxes today and more savings for you! (tax-deferred retirement savings)
- A Roth 401(k) plan where you invest money now after paying taxes, but when you withdraw it when you retire, you pay no tax on the gains. (after-tax retirement savings)

There are benefits to both options so you should do a little research or consult with your financial adviser, if you have one, before making the decision which works best for you. And know that you can change your enrollment ratio at any time.

Remember that if you withdraw your money early, you may have to pay penalties and taxes. There are a few exceptions that allow you to access your money early.

### **Contribution and Matching Information**

Our 401(k) provider is ADP. All paperwork is done online. Within your first month, you'll have an enrollment email waiting for you.

Also, Heritage Interpreting will match your contributions! We'll match 100% up to 4% of your salary. If you're contributing any less than 4% of your salary, you're throwing away money!



## **Time Off (PTO)**

### **Using the Time Off Calendar**

We use a Google calendar called "Time Off" (you can search in Gcal to view it) to track all employee time off for two reasons:

1. This public calendar allows everyone to see who is working and who is out for the day. As a company that respects life-work balance, we don't want to be pinging you in slack all day while you're at home sick or catching some sun on the beach. Logistically it helps us schedule meetings when everyone is available or plan out other projects.
2. The calendar helps the admin staff track your time off and reconcile anything in payroll.

Anytime you're absent from work, whether planned or unplanned, it's your responsibility to communicate with your team and add the time off to the "Time Off" calendar.

To keep things consistent in the calendar, here's a handy key on how to enter your time off though it's pretty intuitive:

- VAC: Yourname (planned vacations)
- SICK: Yourname (for when you're out sick or out caring for a sick family member)
- APPT: Yourname (any sort of appointment)
- TRVL: Yourname (out of office due to travel for work)
- PL: Yourname (parental leave)
- OUT: Yourname (can be a catch-all for other events that do not fall into these other categories or if you prefer to keep the reason for your absence private, for instance, medical leave or bereavement)

You can also add (AM) or (PM) to the keys if you'll only be out 1/2 the work day. For instance, if you plan to leave early on Friday for a long weekend you would put "VAC (PM): Yourname" in the calendar.

If you'd like to add additional info to your calendar entry, please add it in parentheses after your name. For instance: "VAC: Will (going to the beach!)"

### **Sick Leave**

Is it weird to assume no one gets sick on purpose? Heritage Interpreting offers unlimited sick days for all employees. Put simply, we think you'll do your best work when you're well. This time off is to be used only for your own personal well-being. Rest, go see a doctor, or do whatever you need to do to get back to feeling 100%. This applies to your mental health as well. Do whatever you need to be well. That's the intention behind an unlimited sick leave policy. These days should be entered into the calendar using the SICK notation from above.

#### **How to take a sick day**

- Notify your direct reports.
- Notify in #general: Post that you will be out sick in the Slack general channel to let everyone know that you won't be on that day.
- Update the "Time Off" Calendar: Mark yourself out as SICK directly to the company Google calendar so your coworkers will know you are out. Use the "SICK: Name" notation from above.

### **Vacation**

I don't need to explain much because someone already did all the talking [here](#). We've come to the same conclusion and have implemented the same policy! A minimum vacation policy: each team member is expected to take at least 4 weeks off throughout the year with at least one week or longer vacation. Here is our [Time Off Board](#) (internal use only).

#### **How to take vacation time**

- Give plenty of notice: Request time off when you know you'll be taking it. This means talking to your supervisor before booking any travel. If you're taking more than 3 days off, please give at least one week's notice - the earlier, the better! That being said, we know the unexpected will occur and will do everything possible to accommodate last-minute emergencies and time away. Our default answer is to approve time away promptly.
- Get approval: Please talk to your supervisor and get approval for the time away first. Please be considerate and always coordinate to make sure everything is covered while you're away.
- Update "Time Off" calendar: Once your supervisor has approved your request, add your time off directly to the vacation calendar so we all know if you're out. Use the VAC notation from above.

## **Parental Leave**

Everyone at Heritage Interpreting is entitled to take parental leave when a new family member arrives, including adoptive and foster parents. For all caregivers, including adoptive and foster parents, leave is up to 12 weeks off at 100% pay and full benefits. For additional weeks off, your pay will decrease to 75% of your salary and full benefits for up to 16 total weeks. We strongly recommend that all caregivers, including adoptive and foster parents, take at least 6 weeks off (at 100% pay) to bond with their new family member.

## **Part-time & Flex time**

After you've taken whatever amount of leave, we'll offer you the option to work half time (20 hours per week) at half pay, while maintaining full benefits, for up to one year. You can take full advantage of this regardless of how long you've been at Heritage Interpreting.

We also recognize that flex time is particularly important to new parents. It is important that flex time is taken with respect to your role. For example, business hours are 8am-5pm ET so business roles should take flex time with that in mind. In all cases, we expect people to work up to 40 hours a week and be reachable by their team during predictable hours.

## **Unpaid Leave of Absence**

In addition to our parental leave policy, we allow unpaid leaves of absence in accordance with the FMLA and when we can find a temporary replacement for the employee. If you'd like to take unpaid leave, please come and talk to us.

## **Company Holidays**

Official company holidays are:

**New Year's Day**

**Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

**President's Day**

**Memorial Day**

**Juneteenth**

**Independence Day**

**Labor Day**

**Indigenous Peoples' Day**

**Thanksgiving**

**Native American Heritage Day**

**Christmas Eve (Half Day)**

**Christmas Day**

**New Year's Eve (Half Day)**





## Learning and Development

Continuous learning and professional development are incredibly important at Heritage Interpreting. We support our employees in their quest for knowledge in any way possible; e.g., conferences, workshops, asynchronous courses, books, etc.

Speak with your supervisor prior to booking to get approval for your professional development ventures. Heritage Interpreting employees have \$4,000 at their disposal each year. This may be used to cover travel, lodging, registration fees, and/or materials for professional development events. Everyone makes their own travel, hotel, and conference arrangements and will get reimbursement. Refer to our Travel Policy for more details.

You're strongly encouraged to share knowledge with your coworkers, either by giving a presentation during our Heritage Huddles or by sharing a write-up.

### Tuition Reimbursement

Yes, you read that right. To reiterate, we at Heritage Interpreting believe that continuous learning and professional development are incredibly important. That's why we are proud to offer a comprehensive tuition reimbursement program to further support your educational pursuits.

- **Eligibility and Scope:** All full-time employees who have been with Heritage Interpreting for at least one year are eligible for tuition reimbursement. This benefit is designed to cover a wide range of educational opportunities, including undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs that align with your career growth and our company's goals.
- **Reimbursement Details:** We offer full reimbursement of your tuition costs. This includes tuition fees, mandatory course materials, and relevant examination fees. To ensure alignment with our company objectives, courses or programs must be related to your current role or a foreseeable future position within Heritage Interpreting.
- **Impact on Raises/Bonus:** From the time of your enrollment in an educational program until its completion, you will not be eligible to receive any raises or

bonuses. This adjustment is necessary to manage our financial resources effectively, considering the substantial investment we are making in your education and future potential within the company.

- **Application Process:** Before enrolling, submit a tuition reimbursement application to your supervisor for approval. This should include the course details, cost breakdown, and a brief explanation of how the course relates to your professional development at Heritage Interpreting.
- **Post-Course Requirements:** After successfully completing the course, submit your grades along with the tuition payment receipt to HR for reimbursement processing. We expect employees to maintain a minimum grade of 'B' or its equivalent in the program to qualify for reimbursement.
- **Continued Service Agreement:** Employees who take advantage of the tuition reimbursement program are required to sign a continued service agreement. This commits you to stay with Heritage Interpreting for at least two years after the reimbursement. If you leave before this period, you will be required to repay a prorated amount of the reimbursement.

We encourage you to seize these opportunities to grow your skills and enhance your career. Your growth is integral to the success of Heritage Interpreting, and we are excited to support you on this journey of continuous learning.



## **Travel Policy**

Broadly speaking, if we've asked you to travel to a location, this is covered under our travel policy. This policy also encompasses conference travel.

### **Summary**

When traveling for the company we'll generally book your accommodations for you in advance. The exception to this is when you're traveling for a conference, where you'll submit your expenses for reimbursement.

- Flights: Over 5 hours: Business/Premium Economy; Less than 5 hours: Coach
- Hotel: Private room
- Rental Car: Not for NYC/other mass transit-accessible cities
- Train: Always Business Class
- Taxi/Lyft/Uber: Reimbursable
- Meals: Eat conference/office-provided meals when possible

### **Best Practices**

- Book early
- Submit expenses no more than 30 days after the trip - keep your receipts!
- Keep emergency contact/health insurance information nearby
- Ensure your cellphone is set for international travel ahead of time
- The Golden Rule - Treat the company's money as if it were your own

### **Travel Expenses and Reimbursements**

The following are expense/reimbursable:

- Flights
- Lodging
- Rental car / Public transit costs
- Meals
- Tolls
- Taxis/Lyft/Uber
- Baggage fees
- Laundry and dry cleaning when a trip is longer than four (4) consecutive nights

- Internet connectivity in hotels, airplanes, and other public places.
- ATM fees when withdrawing money on your personal card for business-related expenses.
- Mileage on personal cars will be reimbursed at the IRS business mileage rate.

The following are NOT reimbursable:

- Expenses submitted without a receipt or explanation for its absence.
- Lost luggage and contents. Employees should work with the airline and their credit card insurance carrier to recover damages.
- Health club/spa services (Ex: massages, manicures, fees incurred to access hotel fitness center)
- Hotel incidentals (Ex: room damage, pay-per-view, minibar, etc.)
- Personal travel expenses (Ex: sundries or recreational reading.)
- Parking citations, speeding tickets, and other law-enforcement penalties.
- Expenses incurred by friends and family of the employee
- Phone charges due to failure to plan for international travel. Charges that are part of planning will be covered.
- Expenses not submitted within 30 days of their acquisition.

### **Flights**

- Employees should notify us as soon as possible so that travel arrangements can be made.
- Flights more than five (5) hours will be booked in Business Class or Premium Economy
- Employee airline preferences will be considered, and employees are entitled to any airline loyalty points awarded.

### **Lodging**

- All employees are guaranteed their own private hotel room.
- Employee hotel preferences will be considered, and employees are entitled to any hotel loyalty points awarded.
- A personal credit card is required at check-in for incidentals.

### **Rental Cars**

- For any travel over two hours, you are welcome to book a rental car.
- If the destination requires it, an economy car can be booked on the employee's behalf.
- Employees traveling to New York City and other mass-transit-friendly cities do not require a rental car.
- Employee rental car company preferences will be considered, and employees are entitled to any car rental loyalty points awarded.
- In case of emergency, a midsize car can be booked on-site and submitted for reimbursement.
- Insurance policies should be accepted at the rental counter. This is reimbursable.
- Pre-paying for gas should be accepted.

### **Meals**

- Be reasonable. You don't need to eat at McDonald's, but a \$100 steak dinner is probably overkill. Eat where you would eat if you were spending your own money.
- Tips shouldn't exceed 20% of the total bill and should be appropriate to the location, service level, and local protocol.
- Heritage Interpreting will cover one alcoholic beverage per meal.

### **Flexible Stay**

- Employees wanting to fly earlier/later than required for personal time in the destination may do so.
- If this flexibility results in flights that cost more, the employee will need to cover the difference.
- If this flexibility results in additional lodging and meal costs, the difference will be paid by the employee.



## **Inclusion & Allyship**

One of our values is to make a welcoming workplace. We believe that embodies our goal to value and respect every person at Heritage Interpreting without regard to location, context, or background. We encourage an inclusive, diverse workplace culture and work to show our gratitude to our colleagues and community.

### **Allyship Best Practices**

Allyship is leveraging our own privilege to take action and be an advocate for those individuals or groups that have systemically been disempowered to speak for themselves. Here are some best practices we can all use to be allies within the workplace:

- ask questions
- listen (no, really)
- show up
- speak up
- bring authenticity
- be yourself, but be aware!
- stop waiting for an invitation

Read more on how to be an equality ally [here](#).

### **Workplace Inclusion Tips**

- Instead of using "hey guys," try "hey y'all/folks/team"
- Avoid the term "culture fit" during recruiting and hiring, think about how candidates are value fits and add to our company culture
- When speaking about someone's partner, use neutral terms like spouse, partner or significant other (or follow someone's lead if they refer to their SO as a boyfriend, wife, etc.)
- Gently correct someone if they use the wrong pronouns for someone you know, then move on.
- Consider adding your pronouns to Slack, email, etc.
- Rather than complimenting someone on their appearance, focus on the amazing things they contribute to their team and Heritage Interpreting.

Read [this excellent piece](#) from Jay Bendett of the Argo Collective for more gender inclusion hacks.



## Whistleblower

Heritage Interpreting is committed to ethical conduct and compliance with laws and regulations. In order for the company (and its people) to remain healthy, it is important that all suspected misconduct be reported as quickly as possible.

We encourage and enable all employees to raise serious concerns internally so that we can address and correct inappropriate conduct and actions. You are encouraged to send your concerns to either our CEO, Will Estes, at [will@heritageinterpreting.com](mailto:will@heritageinterpreting.com) or by using [this form](#). All reports will be kept confidential to the extent possible, and your identity will be protected if you wish to remain anonymous. Reported concerns will be investigated promptly and thoroughly to assure employees that their reports will lead to concrete action.

Heritage Interpreting prohibits retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, reports a suspected violation. Retaliation refers to any adverse action taken against an individual as a result of that person reporting, in good faith, misconduct or violations of policy or law within the organization. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Termination or demotion of the employee.
- Reduction in salary or denial of promotion.
- Reassignment to a less desirable position.
- Unwarranted disciplinary action or excessive scrutiny of work.
- Intimidation, harassment, or bullying.
- Other actions that would dissuade a reasonable person from making or supporting a report of misconduct.

Retaliation is not limited to actions by superiors against subordinates; it can also include actions by colleagues or even subordinates.

The consequences for individuals found to have engaged in retaliation include, but are not limited to:

- **Disciplinary Action:** This may range from a formal warning to termination of employment, depending on the severity and nature of the retaliation.
- **Legal Repercussions:** In many jurisdictions, retaliation against whistleblowers is illegal, and perpetrators may face legal action, including fines and potential criminal charges.
- **Mandatory Retraining:** Individuals who have engaged in retaliation may be required to undergo retraining on company policies, ethical conduct, and the importance of a safe and open reporting environment.
- **Reputation Damage:** Retaliation can significantly damage the reputation of the individual involved, impacting their professional relationships and future career prospects.
- **Liability for Damages:** The individual may be held liable for any damages suffered by the victim of the retaliation, which could include compensation for lost wages, emotional distress, and legal fees.
- **Restoration Measures:** If possible and appropriate, steps should be taken to restore the victim of retaliation to their previous position or status within the company.



## **Sexual Harassment, Discrimination, and Harassment Policy**

Heritage Interpreting is committed to maintaining a workplace free of unlawful discrimination and harassment based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical condition), gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, disability, veteran status or any other factors prohibited by law (“prohibited behavior”). The company considers such behavior unacceptable and contrary to our core values in that it undermines our goal of providing an inclusive environment. The company does not tolerate any violation of this policy.

This policy also specifically prohibits sexual harassment as defined by various laws and regulations. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment takes place when any of these occur:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

The following are examples of types of prohibited behavior that are not allowed:

- Verbal harassment: epithets, derogatory comments, negative stereotypes, offensive remarks, or slurs. Examples: name-calling, belittling, jokes, sexually explicit or degrading words to describe an individual, comments about an employee’s anatomy and/or dress, questions about a person’s sexual practices, use of patronizing terms or remarks, verbal abuse or graphic-verbal commentaries about the body, or requiring or suggesting that an employee wear sexually suggestive clothing.
- Physical harassment: assault, impeding or blocking movement, or any physical interference with normal work or movement, when directed at an individual. Examples: touching, pushing, pinching, patting, grabbing, brushing against, or poking another employee’s body.
- Visual harassment: offensive or sexually explicit material (whether electronic or paper). Examples: discriminatory or sexually-oriented pictures, posters, cartoons, writings, or objects; viewing, displaying, or permitting the display of sexually explicit, discriminatory, or hate-based materials on a computer, or over the Internet; obscene letters, love letters, or notes, invitations, e-mails, or other forms of Web-based communications such as chat



rooms. Visual harassment may also include staring at an employee's anatomy, leering, or making sexually oriented gestures.

- Sexual favors: unwanted sexual advances that condition an employment benefit upon an exchange of sexual favors. Examples: continued requests for dates; promises of advancement or additional wages in exchange for sexual favors; any threat of demotion, termination, or similar adverse job action if requested sexual favors are not given; making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances or propositioning an individual.

It is impossible to define every action or all words that could be reasonably interpreted as harassment or discrimination. The examples listed above are not meant to be a complete list of prohibited behavior, nor do they always constitute unlawful harassment or discrimination. However, the company prohibits not only conduct that is severe enough to constitute a violation of the law but also conduct that, although not unlawful, is still determined by the company to be inappropriate in the workplace.

Although it depends upon the circumstances, sexual harassment generally involves behavior that is uninvited, unwelcome, and repeated. Sexual harassment may occur regardless of the intention of the person. Sexual harassment may involve an employee at any level or gender or an individual conducting business with or for the company.

Sexual harassment also may occur outside the workplace, depending upon the circumstances. The same standards of acceptable behavior applicable to employees' regular work environment also apply to all company-sponsored business activities taking place outside the workplace. Outside business activities, including entertainment, should not be conducted at establishments where sexually explicit or offensive entertainment is offered. Employees should take care not to engage in any work-related activity (inside or outside the workplace) that could reflect poorly upon the company or otherwise cause damage to the company's business reputation.

#### **Reporting sexual harassment or other prohibited behavior**

- Do not tolerate prohibited behavior, including sexual or other unlawful harassment or discrimination. You should report such conduct even if you are not the target. Managers should report the conduct to the CEO.
- If you believe you are being sexually harassed, you may consider confronting the harasser and asking them to stop, if it is appropriate and sensible to do so. The person may not realize the advances or behaviors are offensive. Sometimes a direct discussion ends the situation.
- Report prohibited behavior including sexual harassment, other unlawful harassment, or discrimination by contacting your manager or any other manager at the company.
- Although you may feel reluctant or embarrassed to make such a report, we encourage you to do so. Employees may not be discriminated against or retaliated against for reporting what they reasonably believe to be prohibited behavior, including harassment or discrimination. Reporting may be done either in writing or verbally.
- The company does not tolerate discrimination or unlawful harassment of any kind. It investigates reported incidents of prohibited behavior and retaliation. Investigations are conducted in as discreet a manner as is compatible with a thorough investigation of the complaint. If the company finds this policy was violated or other inappropriate conduct of a sexual, discriminatory or retaliatory nature has occurred, disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination from employment, may result.