

BFTA Employee Manual



BIGFOOT TRAIL ALLIANCE

Updated 03/19/2026

This handbook isn't a contract or a guarantee of employment.

Equal Opportunity Employment

Bigfoot Trail Alliance (BFTA) is an equal opportunity employer. We do not tolerate discrimination based on protected characteristics including gender, age, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnicity, religion, disability, or veteran status.

All employees, board members, volunteers, and partners are expected to treat one another with respect and professionalism.

BFTA is committed to addressing and correcting discriminatory, offensive, or inappropriate behavior. Employees are encouraged to report any discriminatory actions directed toward themselves or others to the Executive Director.

BFTA will not retaliate against any individual who files a complaint or participates in a discrimination investigation. Any employee who engages in discrimination or retaliation may face disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Attendance

Employees are expected to be present and ready to work during their scheduled work hours.

If an emergency or illness prevents you from reporting to work, notify your supervisor as soon as possible. BFTA provides work schedules with adequate notice and expects employees to honor scheduled commitments.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

BFTA is committed to protecting confidential information related to our organization, employees, partners, and clients.

Examples of confidential information include:

- Employee records
- Unpublished financial information

BFTA Employee Manual

- Partner, customer, or vendor data
- Customer lists (existing and prospective)
- Unpublished organizational goals, forecasts, and initiatives marked as confidential

Employees must handle confidential information responsibly and may not:

- Use confidential information for personal gain or profit
- Share confidential information with anyone outside the organization without authorization

Workplace Harassment

Harassment is any behavior that creates an intimidating, hostile, or uncomfortable work environment.

Examples of harassment may include:

- Behavior that intentionally makes someone feel uncomfortable or unsafe
- Sabotaging another person's work
- Repeated unwanted advances of any kind
- Derogatory comments about a person's race, religion, gender, or identity
- Spreading rumors about a person's personal life
- Publicly ridiculing or singling out an employee for inappropriate tasks

Sexual harassment, bullying, and hostile conduct are strictly prohibited at Bigfoot Trail Alliance.

These standards apply to employees, volunteers, board members, agency partners, and anyone representing the organization.

Violations may result in disciplinary action, including immediate termination.

Employees found to have engaged in harassment, bullying, or hostile conduct may not be offered an opportunity to correct behavior and may be dismissed immediately depending on the severity of the incident.

Reporting Concerns

If you experience or witness harassment, bullying, or hostility:

1. Record relevant details such as dates, times, and individuals involved.
2. Report the incident to your direct supervisor.

If your supervisor is involved or you do not feel comfortable reporting to them, contact the Executive Director.

If the Executive Director is involved, you may contact a member of the Board of Directors.

BFTA takes all reports seriously and will address them promptly and appropriately.

BFTA Employee Manual

Health and Safety

BFTA is committed to maintaining a safe workplace. Because our work often occurs in remote and rugged environments, certain hazards may be present.

We promote safety through prevention, training, and emergency preparedness.

Preventative Actions

Preventative safety measures include:

- Providing safety training and guidance
- Ensuring employees working in hazardous environments follow proper procedures
- Supplying appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Employees are expected to take safety seriously by following established safety guidelines and using protective equipment when required.

Deliberate disregard of safety policies may result in disciplinary action or termination.

Emergency Management

Emergency management procedures address unexpected events such as injuries, fires, or other emergencies.

These procedures may include:

- Emergency evacuation and communication plans
- Scheduled radio or satellite device check-ins
- Communication protocols during high-risk conditions such as wildfire season
- Satellite communication and SOS procedures for remote work locations

Smoking, Drugs, and Alcohol

Smoking, vaping, and tobacco use are not permitted while working or during official duties.

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs while on duty is strictly prohibited.

Employees must report to work fit for duty and able to safely perform their responsibilities.

Employee Relationships

Supervisors may not engage in romantic relationships with employees they directly supervise.

This policy helps maintain professional boundaries and prevents conflicts of interest.

BFTA Employee Manual

Payroll

Pay Periods

Employees are paid semi-monthly via direct deposit.

Payday occurs on the the 5th (PP= 16th-end of month) & 20th (PP=1st-15th).

If payday falls on a bank holiday, payment will be issued on the last business day prior to the holiday.

Overtime

Work schedules may vary depending on project needs.

Employees are paid overtime according to California labor law:

- **1.5× pay** for hours worked beyond an average 8-hour day
- **2× pay** for hours worked beyond 12 hours in a single day

Recording Hours

Employees are responsible for accurately recording their hours worked.

- Hours should be logged at the end of each workday.
- 30 minute meal breaks must be documented on time sheets.
- Timesheets must be approved by a supervisor before payroll submission.
- Timesheets must be submitted **by the 2nd and 17th each month**. In the chance that payday falls on a weekend or holiday, timesheets may be required earlier than previously stated dates & employees will be notified before the end of the corresponding pay period.

Falsifying or inflating hours worked is considered fraud and may result in immediate termination.

BFTA Retirement Investment Plan

BFTA offers a **SIMPLE IRA retirement plan** managed through Ascensus.

SIMPLE stands for **Savings Incentive Match Plan for Employees**.

Employees who are expected to earn at least **\$5,000 in a calendar year** are eligible to participate.

Employees may contribute up to the maximum amount allowed by the IRS.

For 2026, the contribution limit is **\$17,500 for individuals under age 50**, with higher limits for individuals age 50 and older.

Contributions are made with **pre-tax dollars**, meaning federal income taxes are typically applied at the time of withdrawal.

Employees are **100% vested** in all contributions made to the SIMPLE IRA.

Please review the **Notification to Employees** for full details.

BFTA Employee Manual

Instructions for Participation

1. Use the provided enrollment link to begin the sign-up process.
2. Complete the electronic signature authorization.
3. Select from available Vanguard investment funds.
4. Complete a **Salary Reduction Agreement**.
5. Upload the signed form through the designated portal.
6. Notify the BFTA bookkeeper by emailing **Sam O'Connell** once the form has been uploaded.

Employee Health Coverage

BFTA does not currently provide employer-sponsored health insurance.

Employees are encouraged to explore coverage options through **Covered California**.

Performance Management

Our performance management system is designed to:

- Ensure employees understand their responsibilities and goals
- Provide timely and constructive feedback
- Support professional development
- Recognize and reward strong performance

Periodic performance reviews provide opportunities to discuss progress, career development, and potential wage adjustments.

Leadership Expectations for Managers

Managers are responsible for supporting and guiding their team members.

Managers are expected to:

- Set clear objectives and expectations
- Provide constructive and timely feedback
- Maintain open two-way communication
- Encourage professional development opportunities
- Document important performance-related events or discussions

These practices help ensure fair evaluation and support employee growth.

Employee Training and Development

BFTA values professional development and encourages employees to build skills that strengthen both the organization and their own career growth.

Training opportunities may include safety training, leadership development, technical skill building, and other professional learning opportunities.

BFTA Employee Manual

Workers' Compensation

BFTA strives to maintain a safe workplace, but accidents may occur.

Employees who experience work-related injuries or illnesses may be eligible for benefits under workers' compensation laws, including:

- Wage replacement
- Medical care
- Rehabilitation services

Report any workplace injury to the Executive Director as soon as possible so that appropriate forms and procedures can be initiated.

Reimbursements

BFTA may reimburse employees for approved work-related expenses, including mileage or professional purchases.

Employees must:

- Keep receipts and documentation for expenses
- Submit reimbursement requests with semi monthly timesheets.

Termination

Employment may end **with or without cause**, consistent with California employment law.

Termination for Cause

Termination for cause may occur if an employee:

- Violates organizational policies
- Engages in illegal or unethical behavior
- Harasses or harms coworkers
- Performs below acceptable standards
- Causes financial or reputational damage to the organization

Termination Without Cause

Employment may also end due to seasonal project completion, organizational restructuring, or other operational needs.

BFTA will follow all applicable legal requirements regarding notice and final pay.

BFTA Employee Manual

Employee Acknowledgement

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have read and understand the Bigfoot Trail Alliance Employee Manual and agree to follow these policies.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Print Name: _____