



VALDOSTA STATE
UNIVERSITY

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



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INTRODUCTION

Policy Updates, Changes, and/or Revisions to Personnel Handbook

The policies, practices, and benefits described in this handbook are broad internal guidelines. This handbook does not constitute a contract between Valdosta State University and its employees on either a collective or individual basis. Rather, the content is designed to serve as guidelines for management action.

This handbook is not exhaustive; therefore, Valdosta State University reserves the right to change, revise, or eliminate any provision, policy, or procedure listed in this handbook. The policies found in this handbook apply to both faculty and staff. Provisions applying solely to the faculty are described in the Faculty Handbook.

All information is subject to change according to updates made to the Board of Regents' rules, policies, and procedures. In instances where VSU policy or procedure herein conflicts with Board of Regents' (USG) policy; the Board policy takes precedent and will be enforced.

We welcome you into our growing organization and trust that you will have a long and rewarding career with Valdosta State University.

Policy Title: Employee Records	Reference: HRAP Employee Personnel Records (usg.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: Employees have the right to review their personnel records with Human Resources & Employee Development.	PROCEDURES: 1. Current Employees • Plan ahead: Submit your request at least three (3) days before you need access. • Complete the Personnel File Request Form (link available on the HR website). • Submit the form via email: Send it from your VSU email address to hrstaff@valdosta.edu. • Receive your file: Your personnel file will be sent in electronic format to your VSU email. • Contest inaccuracies: ○ If you believe any information is inaccurate, submit supporting documentation in writing to hrstaff@valdosta.edu. 2. Former Employees • Must submit an open records request. • Contact Legal Affairs via email at openrecords@valdosta.edu for guidance and submission.

Policy Title: Name and Personal Information Changes		Reference: VSU HR FAQs
POLICY STATEMENT: Employees are responsible for making changes to personal information using the Employee Self Service HR/Payroll system. Name changes will require submission of the required original supporting documentation (Social Security card, marriage certificate, etc.) to be presented to Human Resources.	PROCEDURES: 1. Obtain Legal Documentation - Ensure you have official legal documentation of your name change (e.g., court order, marriage certificate, or other legal proof). Name change must be completed at the Social Security Administration Office first. 2. Submit Request - Submit a name change request through the HR/Payroll System. 3. Present Documentation to HR - Provide the original legal documentation to Human Resources for verification. 4. Incomplete Requests - If you do not have the required documentation, HR cannot process the name change request. - Ensure all documentation is complete to avoid delays.	

Policy Title: Employee Service Date	Reference: Board Of Regents Policy 8.2/VSU HRAPM Policy
POLICY STATEMENT: An employee service date is the date of your initial employment with the University System of Georgia unless there has been a 30-day break in service by termination of employment. Moving from one type of position to another (full-time to part-time or temporary to regular, may impact your service dates.)	PROCEDURES: 1. Identify the Need • Determine if you believe your service date is incorrect or if you need confirmation of your service date. 2. Contact Human Resources You may choose one of two methods: • Schedule an Appointment ○ Meet with the Benefits team in Human Resources. ○ Bring a valid form of identification. • Submit a Written Request ○ Send a request via your VSU email account to vsubenefits@valdosta.edu. ○ Include relevant details to help HR locate and verify your service date. 3. Follow Up • HR will review your records and provide confirmation or corrections as needed. • Maintain documentation of any communication or confirmation for your records.

EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

Policy Title: New Hire Policy		Reference: Criteria for Employment
POLICY STATEMENT: All new employees must meet the qualifiers for the job and terms and conditions of employment. • Employees must successfully complete a background check and credit check, if applicable. • Complete and sign the Security Questionnaire and Loyalty Oath • File Federal and Georgia tax withholding forms, (unless fully remote position) • Enroll in a USG retirement program or the Georgia Defined Contribution Plan as required based on employment status.		PROCEDURES: 1. Complete Required Forms • Employees must complete the Security Questionnaire and I-9 Form within three (3) days of hire. • Work cannot begin until these forms are completed and submitted, and a confirmation email is received. 2. If You Cannot Complete Forms on Time • Contact Human Resources immediately to discuss the situation and next steps. 3. Questions About Tax Forms • If you have questions regarding tax forms (W-4, state forms, etc.) contact a tax professional for guidance. 4. Questions About Benefits • If you have questions regarding benefits contact the VSU Benefits team or visit the Benefits website for information.

Policy Title: Orientation and New Hire Compliance Training	Reference: <u>Employee Orientation</u>
POLICY STATEMENT: All new employees are responsible for reading and being familiar with policies and procedures of the Board of Regents (BOR), the University System of Georgia (USG), and the employee's institution. All new regular and temporary employees are introduced to Valdosta State University through a general orientation conducted by Human Resources and Employee and Organizational Development.	PROCEDURES: 1. Orientation Session • All employees must complete an Orientation Session. • If you do not receive notification to attend Orientation, contact training@valdosta.edu. • If you cannot attend the scheduled session, contact Human Resources immediately. HR will provide the next available date. • Inform your supervisor of the new Orientation date to ensure availability. 2. ID Card and Parking Permit • At the onboarding appointment, all new employees receive an authorization form for: ○ Parking permit ○ I.D. Card ○ Lost I.D. Card - Employees are responsible for the cost of replacement. • Contact Information: ○ Parking & Transportation (229) 293-7275 ○ 1Card Services (229) 259-2593 3. Compliance Training • All employees must complete required compliance training within 30 days of hire. • If you cannot log in to access training, contact training@valdosta.edu. • Failure to complete training may result in disciplinary action.

Policy Title: Required Training and Annual Compliance	Reference: Mandatory Trainings usg.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: The University System of Georgia (USG) is committed to upholding the highest ethical standards and conducting our operations honestly, honorably and legally. Therefore, all employees will complete the required training within 30 days of hire. The USG required training includes Right to Know, Ethics, and Cybersecurity Awareness Training.	PROCEDURES: 1. Completion of Training Upon Hire - Supervisors are responsible for ensuring all new employees must complete required training upon hire. - Employees receive log-in information and access to required training upon hire. - Required new hire compliance training includes: - Conflicts of Interest - Drug Free Workplace - Motor Vehicle Policy - Sexual Misconduct & Title IX 2. Access Issues - If you do not have access to training upon hire, contact training@valdosta.edu. 3. Failure to Complete Training - Employees who fail to complete required training will be: - Notified that they are out of compliance. - Reminded to complete the training promptly. - Subject to revoked access to email and/or institutional technology until training is completed. - At risk of termination from employment if training is not completed. 4. Additional and Ongoing Training - Cybersecurity Awareness Training is required in April and October annually. - Annual Refresher Training is conducted in October/November for all active employees. - Additional compliance certifications may be required based on job duties, such as: - Clery Act - Budget management - Defensive driving - ePro system - PCI compliance 5. Notifications and Updates - Employees will be notified of all additional compliance and training requirements. - Supervisors should monitor completion to ensure employees remain in compliance with all institutional and regulatory training mandates.

Policy Title: Provisional Period	Reference: Provisional Appointments-HRAP Manual
POLICY STATEMENT: All employees are subject to a six-month provisional period. Public Safety employees will begin their provisional period after completion of mandated training. Employees will be automatically released from provisional to regular employment at the completion of 6 months if HR is not notified of any issues.	PROCEDURES: 1. Setting Expectations • During the provisional period, supervisors should: ○ Clearly communicate job expectations to the new hire. ○ Monitor performance regularly. ○ Provide feedback and guidance to support development and success. 2. Monitoring and Documentation • Supervisors must submit written notification to HR regarding the new hire’s performance within 6 months (180 days). • Notification should include: ○ Assessment of job performance ○ Any recommendations for continued employment 3. Automatic Release • If HR does not receive written notification from the supervisor within 180 days: ○ The new hire will be automatically released from provisional status to regular employment. 4. Extension of Provisional Period • Supervisors may extend the provisional period once for up to 90 additional days if more time is needed to assess performance. • The extension must be documented and communicated to HR prior to the end of the original 180-day period. 5. General Reminders • Maintain clear communication with the new hire throughout the provisional period. • Document all feedback, performance discussions, and corrective actions. • Ensure HR is kept informed to avoid automatic transitions or compliance issues.

Policy Title: Employment of Relatives	Reference: HRAP, Employment of Relatives (usg.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: This policy ensures a fair and measured approach to employment of relatives and avoids the conflicts that can arise from nepotism. Definitions per the policy: Nepotism: The showing of favoritism toward relatives and friends, based upon that relationship, rather than on an objective evaluation of ability, meritocracy or suitability. Relative: Husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers, sisters, and any in-laws of the foregoing.	PROCEDURES: 1. Understand the Policy • Employment relationships by family or marriage shall not provide advantages or disadvantages. • No employee may hold a position that creates a subordinate-superior relationship with a relative. • Review the Board of Regents Policy Manual for full details. 2. Employment Restrictions • Employees cannot work in a department or unit where a relative is in a supervisory role over them, through any line of authority. • This restriction applies to all positions, except: ○ Temporary or part-time employment of children under age 25. ○ Employees hired before February 14, 1990, under certain conditions. 3. Seeking Exceptions • Any exception must be: ○ Recommended by the Chancellor. ○ Approved by the Board of Regents. ○ Demonstrated as being clearly in the best interest of the institution and University System. 4. Reporting and Disclosure • Employees must disclose familial relationships that could create a conflict of interest. • Supervisors and HR must ensure compliance before hiring or assigning positions. 5. Monitoring and Compliance • HR reviews department staffing to ensure no subordinate-superior relationship exists between relatives. • Any potential conflicts identified must be resolved prior to assignment.

Policy Title: Non-Discrimination Statement	Reference: Board of Regents Policy Manual 8.2 General Policies for all Personnel (usg.edu) HRAP Manual Discrimination & Harassment
POLICY STATEMENT: Valdosta State University is committed to maintaining a fair and respectful environment for living, working and studying. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law, Board of Regents' policy, and University policy, the University prohibits any member of the faculty, staff, administration, or student body from discriminating against any other member of the University community because of that person's race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, disabled status, or status as a disabled veteran.	PROCEDURES: 1. Do not promise confidentiality 2. In situations where you have redirected an employee to speak to HR, you should follow up with HR/EOD to ensure the employee has followed through. 3. Notify VSU's HR/EOD immediately if you believe that you are a victim or have been made aware of or received a complaint of: • Discrimination • Harassment • Hostile environment • Retaliation • Sexual Harassment/Misconduct • Threats of violence

Policy Title: Americans with Disabilities Act	Reference: Americans with Disabilities Act
POLICY STATEMENT: Valdosta State University is governed by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, which specifically prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. Valdosta State University is committed to complying with the goals and objectives of the Americans with Disabilities Act.	PROCEDURES: 1. Identification or Disclosure - Identify or self-disclose a disability to Human Resources (HR). - Disclosure can be voluntary but is required to begin the accommodation process. 2. Initial HR Consultation - HR will meet with the employee to: - Explain applicable benefits and rights (e.g., FMLA, ADA, STD, LTD). - Provide guidance on ADA rights and the accommodation process. - Supply ADA request forms if the employee requests accommodations. 3. Completion of ADA Request Form - Employees complete the ADA request form, in partnership with their physician. - Submit the completed form to HR with any supporting documentation. 4. HR Review - HR reviews submitted documentation. - HR determines a preliminary plan of action or support based on recommendations from the employee's treating physician. 5. Supervisor Consultation - HR meets with the employee's immediate supervisor to ensure the proposed accommodations are reasonable and do not interfere with essential job functions. 6. Discussion with Employee - HR meets with the employee to review and finalize the accommodation plan. - Adjustments may be made as needed based on feedback and operational requirements. 7. Implementation - The agreed-upon accommodation is implemented in the workplace. - HR monitors and follows up as necessary to ensure effectiveness. 8. Additional Information - For more details, employees can visit the Human Resources website for guidance on the workplace accommodation process.

Policy Title: Tobacco and Smoke Free Campus	Reference: BOR Policy Manual 6.10 Tobacco and Smoke-Free Campuses (usg.edu) Tobacco and smoke free campus (valdosta.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: In accordance with the Georgia Smoke Free Air Act of 2005, Title 31 Chapter 12A, this policy reinforces the USG commitment to provide a safe and amicable workplace for all employees. The goal of the policy is to preserve and improve the health, comfort and environment of students, employees and any persons occupying our campus.	PROCEDURES: 1. Familiarize Yourself with the Policy • Understand that all tobacco products are prohibited on property owned, leased, rented, or used by USG or its affiliates. • Tobacco products include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, all forms of smokeless tobacco, clove cigarettes, hookahs, and electronic cigarettes or other devices that simulate tobacco use. 2. Communication Responsibilities • If you are in a position of authority, ensure that the policy is clearly communicated to all students, staff, and visitors. • Use tools such as emails, newsletters, or campus bulletins to notify the campus community of updates or reminders. 3. Support for Quitting • If you use tobacco and want to quit, utilize campus cessation programs, counseling, and resources. • Participate in available wellness initiatives to support a smoke-free lifestyle. 4. Addressing Policy Violations • Politely inform anyone using tobacco on campus about the policy. • If direct communication is uncomfortable or ineffective, notify the appropriate authority (e.g., campus security or student affairs). 5. Reporting Violations • Report observed violations to campus security or the designated authority following the policy instructions. • Use confidential reporting systems where available to ensure safety and compliance.

Policy Title: Drug Free Workplace	Reference: HRAP Drug Testing Safety & Security (usg.edu)/drug-and-alcohol-testing.pdf (valdosta.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: Valdosta State University, as a recipient of federal funds, supports and complies with the provisions of the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988. As an employer, Valdosta State University will aggressively promote and strive to maintain a drug free workplace for its faculty and staff. Reasons for Testing • Pre-employment: • Post-accident testing • Reasonable suspicion testing • Random testing	PROCEDURES: 1. General Compliance • Do not unlawfully manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess, or use illegal drugs while employed at Valdosta State University. • Understand that violations may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or termination. 2. Reporting Requirements • If convicted of a misdemeanor or felony drug-related offense during employment: ○ Report the conviction to Human Resources within 24 hours. • HR is required to notify federal funding agencies when applicable. 3. Prescription Medications • If you are legally prescribed medication that may affect your ability to perform your job safely and effectively: ○ Disclose this information confidentially to HR (or through designated channels such as Occupational Health or the Employee Relations office). ○ Provide documentation if requested. ○ Do not share prescription medication with others under any circumstances. 4. Disclosure Expectations • Employees must immediately inform HR if: ○ They are under investigation for a drug-related violation that may impact job performance. ○ They are convicted of any drug-related misdemeanor or felony while employed. ○ They are receiving or agree to receive treatment under a drug abuse and education program approved by the President of the institution (or their designee) • All disclosures will be handled confidentially and in compliance with applicable laws. NOTE: Shall not apply when an employee subject to random drug screening has been selected to report for random drug screening. 5. Maintaining a Drug Free Workplace • Participate in required drug-free workplace awareness training. • Cooperate with institutional efforts to promote health, safety, and compliance with the Drug Free Workplace Act

	of 1988. • Be aware that refusal to comply with drug-free workplace policies may lead to disciplinary action.
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Policy Title: Student Rights to Educational Records and Privacy, FERPA	Reference: VSU FERPA/USG Policy
POLICY STATEMENT: The purpose of this policy is to define Directory Information as it pertains to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and outline the rights of students regarding the disclosure of such information by institutions within the University System of Georgia (USG). The policy ensures compliance with FERPA while balancing the need for transparency and the protection of student privacy.	PROCEDURES: 1. Confirm the Need for Disclosure - Review the request for student information. - Determine if it falls under a FERPA-approved exception. 2. Allowable Disclosures Without Consent Employees may disclose records only to the following parties, when appropriate: - School officials with a legitimate educational interest. - Other schools where the student seeks or intends to enroll. - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes. - Appropriate parties related to student financial aid. - Organizations conducting studies on behalf of the institution. - Accrediting organizations. - Judicial or subpoena requests, if legally binding. - Health and safety officials in an emergency. 3. Verify Legitimacy - Confirm the identity of the requesting party. - Ensure the purpose aligns with FERPA allowances. - Seek guidance from your institution's Registrar or Legal Affairs if unsure. 4. Document the Disclosure - Record what was disclosed, to whom, the date, and the reason. - Keep documentation with the student's education record when required. 5. Protect Confidentiality - Do not share records with unauthorized individuals. - Do not discuss student information in public spaces or casual conversations. - Use secure methods (encrypted email, secure portals) for transmitting records. 6. General Reminders - When in doubt, do not release information without confirmation from the Registrar or Privacy Officer. - Always follow institutional policies and FERPA guidelines. - Always protect the privacy and integrity of student education records.

Policy Title: Employee Travel	Reference: Travel Authorizations
POLICY STATEMENT: The purpose of this Policy is to provide guidelines to state agencies for payment of travel expenses in an efficient, cost-effective manner, and to enable state travelers to successfully execute their travel requirements at the lowest reasonable costs, resulting in the best value for the State. Teleconferencing instead of travel should be considered when possible.	PROCEDURES: 1. Before Travel • Complete Request for Travel form before the trip. • Obtain approval from the appropriate personnel (your supervisor and budget manager). • Wait for confirmation before making travel arrangements. 2. During Travel • Keep all receipts for reasonable and necessary business expenses (lodging, transportation, meals, etc.). • Follow university travel guidelines for allowable expenses. • Document trip details such as dates, times, and purpose of meetings or events. 3. After Travel • Complete a Travel Expense Statement electronically in PeopleSoft. • Attach required receipts and any supporting documentation. • Verify accuracy of expense categories before submission. 4. Approval Process • Submitted expenses are routed to your budget manager for review. • After approval, the request goes to Financial Services for processing. 5. Deadlines • Submit all travel requests and expense statements within 60 days of completing travel. • Late submissions may not be reimbursed. 6. General Reminders • Double-check that all forms are signed and dated. • Keep copies of forms and receipts for your records. • Contact Financial Services if you have questions about allowable expenses. For links to forms, job aids, etc. visit VSU Travel Questions: Contact the Travel Office at travel@valdosta.edu

Policy Title: Out-Processing	Reference: Resignations
POLICY STATEMENT: Employees resigning from their position must submit a resignation letter to their supervisor. The supervisor must forward the letter to Human Resources. Employees moving to a new position in a different department within VSU or to another institution within the USG must submit a letter; however, it must indicate that you will be transferring to a new department or institution.	PROCEDURES: 1. Provide Notice • Bi-Weekly Employees: Provide at least 2 weeks' notice. • Monthly Employees: Provide at least 1 month's notice. • Faculty: Provide as much notice as possible, ideally between contracts. 2. Receive Exit Letter • Human Resources will provide an Exit Letter with instructions on required actions before separation. • Examples of required actions include: ○ Returning equipment, books, keys, and I.D. card ○ Updating or removing system access 3. Retirees • Retirees will have the option to request a new Retiree I.D. card during out-processing. • Present the VSU Exit Letter to OneCard to obtain the new I.D. card. 4. Out-Processing Appointment • Human Resources will schedule an out-processing appointment. • If you cannot attend, notify HR immediately to reschedule. 5. Return of University Property • Return all university property by the exit date. • Failure to return property may result in financial obligation to the employee.

Policy Title: Emergency Call Back/Variant Pay (Differential Pay)	Reference: Variant Pay
POLICY STATEMENT: The University System of Georgia (USG) has established a process to provide guidance to institutions concerning variant or premium pay issues.	PROCEDURES: Applies only to non-exempt employees who are called back after leaving work. Authorized only if needed to: • Prevent service disruption • Ensure safety of employees, students, or the public • Protect property or equipment • Respond to emergencies involving students, clients, or residents 1. Emergency Call Back • Confirm authorization: Make sure your supervisor has approved the emergency call back. • Track time worked: Record the start and end time of the call back, including if it was by phone or computer. • Submit timesheet: ○ Log a minimum of 3 hours (or actual time worked if greater). ○ Do not include travel time. ○ If multiple callbacks occur in 8 hours, log actual time worked (up to 3 hours minimum). • Check exclusions: Do not enter as call back if it is within 1 hour of shift start or just an extension of your shift. 2. On-Call Pay • Verify assignment: Ensure you have been officially scheduled as “on-call.” • Report restrictions: If your personal time is restricted, note this in case it affects pay. • Log hours worked: If called in while on call, record all hours worked in the timesheet. 3. Shift Differential Pay • Check shift hours: Confirm that most of your scheduled shifts fall between 3:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. • Enter hours correctly: Only log hours actually worked (not PTO or absences) under shift differential pay. 4. Weekend Premium • Confirm eligibility: Make sure your position is designated as eligible for weekend premium. • Log eligible hours: Enter all hours worked between 11:00 p.m. Friday and 11:00 p.m. Sunday. • Combine pay types: If working a shift eligible for shift differential, make sure both are recorded. 5. General Reminders • Always review your time sheet before submitting.

	• Report any discrepancies to your supervisor or payroll office promptly. • Keep personal notes of call back times, on-call assignments, and shift hours worked.
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BENEFITS AND LEAVE POLICIES

Policy Title: Telework		Reference: telework.pdf (valdosta.edu)/ USG Teleworking/Flextime Policy
POLICY STATEMENT:	The University System of Georgia allows teleworking and flextime, on a voluntary basis, to employees who fill job classifications/positions that have been designated as eligible for telework and/or flextime. Telework is an employer option, not an employee right and is appropriate only when it results in a benefit to the institution.	
	PROCEDURES: 1. Discuss with Supervisor - Talk with your supervisor about whether teleworking is appropriate for your position and work responsibilities. 2. Complete Required Forms - Fill out the Telework Assessment. - Complete the Workspace Self-Certification Checklist. 3. Complete Required Training - Take Telework training in Percipio. - Ensure your supervisor also completes the training. 4. Submit Agreement - Work with your supervisor to complete the Telework Agreement and submit it for approval. 5. Begin Telework Once Approved - You may only start teleworking after your agreement has been approved. 6. Maintain Eligibility - Adhere to all telework requirements, including performance standards, IT policies, and workplace conduct expectations. 7. Annual Review - Expect your Telework Agreement to be reviewed annually (each calendar year or when a new agreement begins). 8. Termination of Agreement - Be aware that your telework may be terminated if you do not meet expectations, have performance or conduct issues, or otherwise become ineligible.	

Policy Title: Annual Leave	Reference: Board of Regents Policy Manual 8.2 General Policies for all Personnel/Time and Absence Job Aids
POLICY STATEMENT: All regular employees working at least one-half-time and 12-month faculty will receive paid vacation as noted below. • Years 1-5: 10 hours per month • Years 6-10: 12 hours per month • Years 10+: 14 hours per month • Director level and up: 14 hours per month At the end of each calendar year, the leave record for each employee will be adjusted to ensure that no more than 360.00 hours of accrued annual leave is carried over into the next year.	PROCEDURES: 1. Requesting Leave • Submit your leave request through the HR/Payroll system of record. • Allow sufficient time for your supervisor to review and approve. 2. Scheduling Leave • Be mindful of departmental peak periods when leave may be limited. • If multiple employees request the same time off, priority goes to the employee with longer service. 3. Emergency Leave • If leave is needed unexpectedly, immediately notify your supervisor and submit the request in the HR/Payroll system. 4. Leave Approval or Denial • Supervisors may approve or deny requests based on departmental needs. • Denied or canceled requests must be updated in the HR/Payroll system. 5. Leave Balance • Do not request more annual leave than you have accrued. Doing so will result in unpaid status. 6. Vacation Pay Out at Termination • Upon separation, you will be paid for accrued annual leave up to a maximum of 360 hours. 7. Leave Transfer Between Institutions • If transferring within USG without a break in service, you must transfer up to 160 hours of annual leave. • If you have more than 160 hours, you may either: ○ Transfer the total balance up to 360 hours, or ○ Be paid out for the portion above 160 hours (not to exceed 200 hours). Vacation or annual leave should be scheduled with supervisor's approval. Institutions may require up to five mandatory leave days when facilities are closed, and classes are not offered. Employees must request these days as leave; if they lack sufficient leave hours, the time will be unpaid.

Policy Title: Sick Leave	Reference: Board of Regents Policy Manual 8.2 General Policies for all Personnel/Time and Absence Job Aids
POLICY STATEMENT: For all regular full-time employees of the USG, sick leave shall accrue 8 hours per calendar month of service. Sick leave may be granted at the discretion of the institution and upon approval by the supervisor for an employee's absence for any of the following reasons: • Illness or injury of the employee. • Medical and dental treatment or consultation. • Quarantine due to a contagious illness in the employee's household. • Illness or injury in the employee's immediate family requiring the employee's presence; or • Bereavement, an employee may use accrued sick leave for any absence due to a death in the employee's immediate family.	PROCEDURES: 1. Submit a Sick Leave Request • Enter your request in the HR/Payroll system of record. 2. If Sick More Than 3 consecutive days • Provide a physician's statement or other appropriate documentation to continue using sick leave. • Contact HR/EOD • If your absence qualifies for FMLA, your paid sick leave will run concurrently with FMLA. 3. Transferring Sick Leave • If moving to another USG position with no break in service, your sick leave balance transfers automatically. • If transferring from a State of Georgia agency (with no more than a 30-day break), you may transfer up to 96 hours of sick leave. • Provide written verification of your leave balance from the agency you are leaving. 4. Canceling or Denying Sick Leave Requests • Any cancellation or denial of a leave request must be completed through the HR/Payroll system. 5. If You Lack Enough Sick Leave • The system will automatically check other available leave balances in a set order and apply them to cover your absence.

Policy Title: Sick Leave Without Pay	Reference: BOR Policy Manual 8.2 General Policies for all Personnel/Time and Absence Job Aids
POLICY STATEMENT: An employee unable to return to work after using up all accumulated sick leave and accrued vacation leave may be granted sick leave without pay for a period not to exceed one year upon approval by the Director/Dean and Vice President. An employee is allowed to continue his/her insurance benefits with System participation in the premium cost.	PROCEDURES: 1. Submit a Request • Write a letter to your supervisor requesting leave without pay. • Supervisor will need to send the letter up through chain of command to Dean or Vice President 2. Approval Process • The Dean or Vice President must send a letter of approval to Human Resources for final approval. 3. Insurance Coverage During Leave • If approved, you may continue your group insurance benefits. • The institution will continue paying its share of the premiums. • You are responsible for paying your share of the premiums. 4. FMLA and Job Protection • If you are eligible for FMLA and the leave qualifies, FMLA will run concurrently with unpaid sick leave. • Once FMLA is exhausted, there is no job protection for this type of leave. 5. Accrual of Leave While Unpaid • During an unpaid leave status, you will not accrue vacation or sick leave. 6. Emergency Leave • If you must take leave without advance notice, immediately notify your supervisor. 7. Continuous Sick Leave Over One Week • Provide a physician's statement or other documentation if your sick leave extends beyond one week. • If FMLA eligible, your paid or unpaid sick leave runs concurrently with FMLA. 8. Canceling or Denying a Leave Request • Any cancellations or denials must be processed through the HR/Payroll system of record. 9. If You Lack Enough Sick Leave • The system will automatically check other leave balances in this order: 1. Sick 2. Comp Time 3. Deferred Holiday 4. Annual Leave 5. Unscheduled Holiday • If you are not eligible for the next leave type, the system will continue checking until an eligible type is applied.

Policy Title: Shared Sick Leave	Reference: Shared Sick Leave Pool Membership Form Shared Sick Leave Pool Request Form Physician's Certification Form HRAP Shared Sick Leave Program Time Away from Work (usg.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: University System of Georgia (USG) institutions are authorized to establish policies through which employees may voluntarily donate unused sick leave to a pool for possible use by another institutional employee who is experiencing a serious health condition or whose immediate family member is experiencing a serious health condition and who has used all of their accumulated paid leave. The Shared Sick Leave Program provides a means for USG employees to donate paid sick leave to a shared leave pool and for fellow employees who meet the eligibility requirements to request leave from the pool.	PROCEDURES: 1. Eligibility and Limits • You may request up to 160 hours of Shared Leave at one time. • You may make up to two additional requests in the same calendar year. • The maximum is 480 hours per year within a five-year period. 2. Donating Leave • You must keep at least 40 hours of your own sick leave balance. • You may donate up to 40 hours of sick leave in 8-hour increments. • Donations may only be made during the Annual Open Enrollment period for the following calendar year. • Donations are not reversible or refundable. 3. Requesting Shared Leave • Complete the Shared Sick Leave Pool Request Form. • Obtain a Physician's Certification Form completed by your doctor. • Submit both forms to the Benefits and Retirement Manager in HR (Shared Sick Leave Coordinator). 4. Notification of Decision • You will be notified within 5 working days of approval or denial. • If approved, you may begin using Shared Sick Leave. • If you were on leave without pay, approved Shared Sick Leave may be applied retroactively. • If denied, you will be informed of the reason and may appeal in writing to the Director of Human Resources and Employee Development. 5. Ending Membership • To terminate participation in the Shared Sick Leave Pool, submit a written request to the Shared Sick Leave Coordinator.

Policy Title: Family Medical Leave (FMLA)	Reference: Board of Regents Family Medical Leave Policy/FMLA Forms
POLICY STATEMENT: The FMLA entitles eligible employees to take unpaid, job-protected leave each rolling 12-month period for specified family and medical reasons. To be eligible, the employee must be employed for at least one year and have worked at least 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months. Eligible employees may take FMLA leave for the birth or placement of a child, to care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition, for their own serious health condition, for certain military-related exigencies, or to care for a covered servicemember with a serious injury or illness.	PROCEDURES: 1. Submit Required Forms • Complete the FMLA Request Form. • Provide the FMLA Medical Certification Form completed by your healthcare provider. • Submit both forms to VSU HR/EOD. 2. Using Sick and Annual Leave • Use sick leave when the FMLA leave is for your own serious illness or to care for an eligible family member. • Once sick leave is exhausted, the system will automatically use annual leave (vacation). • If your FMLA leave is a result of an on-the-job injury, you may choose to freeze annual leave at any time by documenting this request on the FMLA Request Form. • If all paid leave is exhausted (or if vacation is frozen), the remainder of the FMLA leave will be unpaid. 3. If FMLA is Denied • If denied, you will receive written notice from your supervisor in a timely manner. • The notice will explain the reason for denial. 4. Benefits During Leave • You may continue your insurance benefits during FMLA by paying your share of the premiums. • If you remain on paid leave, your premiums will be deducted from your paycheck. • If you are on unpaid leave beginning the first of the month, a third-party vendor will bill you directly for that month's premiums. 5. Returning to Work • Before returning, you must provide Human Resources with a completed Return to Work Form from your physician. • You are responsible for ensuring HR receives this form in person, by email, or by fax.

Policy Title: Personal Leave & Education Leave (Leave of Absence)	Reference: HRAP Personal Leave Time Away from Work (usg.edu) HRAP Policy on Education Leave without Pay Time Away from Work (usg.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: At the discretion of the President of an institution, personal leave of absence without pay for periods not to exceed one year may be approved. Personal Leave allows Presidents to approve up to one year of leave when it serves the institution's best interest. Educational Leave may be granted for up to one year with or without pay by the President, with longer periods or extensions requiring Chancellor approval. Paid educational leave is intended to support scholarly work and professional development.	PROCEDURES: 1. Personal Leave • Use Accrued Leave First ○ Exhaust all earned vacation and sick leave before personal leave may be approved. • Insurance Coverage ○ If approved, you may choose to continue your group insurance benefits. • Submit Documentation ○ Provide Human Resources with an official memorandum signed by the President that outlines the reason for the approved personal leave. 2. Employee Steps for Educational Leave of Absence • Prepare Request ○ Submit your request for educational leave in writing to your supervisor. • Supervisor Review ○ If your supervisor supports the request, it will move through the chain of command to the President's Office for final approval. • Sign Agreement ○ If approved, sign an agreement acknowledging the required return-to-work period: ▪ Leave with pay for less than one year = return for at least one year. ▪ Leave with pay for one year = return for at least two years. • Reimbursement Obligation ○ If you do not return for the required period, you must reimburse the institution for: ▪ All compensation received during the leave. ▪ All expenses paid by the University System of Georgia on your behalf, including benefit costs.

Policy Title: Educational Support Leave	Reference: How to Submit an Absence/Leave Request in OneUSG/HRAP Education Support Leave Time Away from Work (usg.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: Education Support Leave provides eligible full-time, regular USG employees up to eight hours of paid leave per year to engage in activities that directly support student achievement and academic programs in Georgia. This leave does not affect other leave balances, does not accumulate or carry over, is not paid out upon employment changes, and can be taken in increments according to the institution's standard minimum leave period. Eligibility requirements must be met before use.	PROCEDURES: 1. Confirm Eligibility • Educational Support Leave may only be used to support your child or a dependent in their education. It cannot be used for yourself or your spouse. • You cannot receive pay for services performed while on Educational Support Leave. 2. Obtain Approval • Request leave approval from your supervisor before providing the service. • Be prepared to provide written verification from a school administrator, teacher, or other official if requested by your institution. 3. Understand Institutional Discretion • Your USG institution or office has the authority to approve or deny requests based on operational needs or for reasons such as conduct, attendance, or performance. • Denials will be applied consistently to all employees in similar situations. 4. Follow Restrictions • You may not use Educational Support Leave for political purposes or activities. • The leave cannot be accumulated, carried over to another year, or transferred in value. 5. Track Your Hours • You may use up to 8 paid hours per calendar year, regardless of whether you transfer to another USG institution. • Each institution is responsible for verifying that you have not already used your annual allotment. 6. At Termination • Any unused Educational Support Leave has no cash value and will not be paid out upon separation from employment.

Policy Title: Military Leave	Reference: BOR Policy Military Leave
POLICY STATEMENT: Military Leave allows USG employees with active duty orders up to 18 paid workdays per federal fiscal year. After this, employees may use accrued annual leave, with any additional absence considered unpaid. Employees must provide active-duty orders. National Guard members on state active duty during a gubernatorial emergency receive up to 30 days of paid leave per federal fiscal year.	PROCEDURES: 1. Notify Your Employer • As soon as you receive your military activation orders, notify your supervisor or HR. • When possible, provide advance notice before your activation date. • Submit a copy of your military duty documentation prior to activation, if available. 2. Provide Documentation Upon Return • When you return to work, give the institution a copy of your military assignment orders showing the dates and duration of your service. 3. Compensation While on Military Leave • You will be paid for up to 18 days of military leave in any federal fiscal year. • If your active-duty service spans two fiscal years, you are eligible for 18 paid days in each fiscal year. • Once paid military leave is exhausted, you may use your accumulated annual leave for continued compensation, if available.

Policy Title: Specialty Leaves	Reference: HRAP Organ and Marrow Donation Time Away from Work (usg.edu)/How to Submit an Absence/Leave Request in OneUSG/HRAP Voting Leave and Other Miscellaneous Leave Time Away from Work (usg.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: Employees of the University System of Georgia are authorized the use of specialty leave if applicable. Organ and Marrow Donation Leave provides employees with 30 paid days for organ donation and 7 paid days for bone marrow donation, without affecting accrued annual or sick leave. Voting Leave ensures employees have time to vote if polls do not accommodate their work schedule. Jury Duty and Witness Leave grants regular employees paid time off to serve on a jury or as a witness, with normal pay for hours missed.	PROCEDURES: 1. Organ and Marrow Donation Leave - Obtain a statement from a licensed medical practitioner or hospital administrator confirming your organ or marrow donation. - Notify your supervisor in advance of your planned leave so that coverage for your duties can be arranged. - Contact Human Resources to complete the required FMLA documentation for participation in this leave program. 2. Court / Jury Duty Leave - Submit a leave request through the system of record, selecting Jury Absence Type. - Notify your supervisor as soon as possible to arrange coverage while you are away. - Provide your supervisor with a copy of the court notification you received. 3. Voting Leave - Submit a leave request through the system of record, selecting Voting Absence Type. - Notify your supervisor in advance to coordinate with departmental scheduling. - Take up to two hours during your normal schedule to vote, unless you already have sufficient time outside of work hours.

Policy Title: Holidays	Reference: HR, Holiday Schedule 2024-2026 (valdosta.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: Employees are granted 12 holidays. The <u>BOR rule 8.2.7</u> states: Each USG institution shall establish official paid holidays each calendar year for employees at the institution. The number of paid holidays shall equal the number of paid holidays allowed for State of Georgia employees under state law. These holidays shall be awarded in addition to the vacation time earned and shall be observed in accordance with the rules and regulations set forth by the Board of Regents, the USG, and the institution. A terminating employee shall not be paid for any official holidays occurring after the last working day of employment.	<u>HOLIDAY SCHEDULE</u> • New Year’s Day – Holiday • Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – Holiday • Memorial Day – Holiday • Juneteenth – Holiday • Independence Day – Holiday • Labor Day – Holiday • Thanksgiving (Day 1) – Holiday • Thanksgiving (Day 2) – Holiday • Christmas (Day 1) – Mandatory Leave Day • Christmas (Day 2) – Holiday 1. Using Leave Around Holidays • Requesting Additional Leave ○ With supervisor approval, you may request annual or sick leave in connection with holidays. • Eligibility for Holiday Pay ○ You will be paid for a holiday only if you work (or are on approved paid leave) the scheduled workday before and after the holiday. • Enter your leave for any mandatory leave prior to the break.

Policy Title: Attendance Guidelines & Expectations (Job Abandonment, etc.)	Reference: 8.2.18 USG Policy Manual, Personal Conduct(usg.edu), HRAP Annual Leave
POLICY STATEMENT: Employee attendance directly impacts VSU’s operations and is considered in hiring, promotions, transfers, and merit awards. Misuse of leave, excessive absences, unexcused absences, or failure to remain at work may result in disciplinary action. Tardiness is arriving late and may lead to corrective action if repeated. No call/no show occurs when an employee misses a shift without notifying a supervisor within 30 minutes. Unjustified absences are those not accepted as reasonable by a supervisor, with medical-related absences requiring HR consultation. Leaving work without permission or exceeding breaks is considered failure to remain on duty. Excessive absence negatively affecting work completion may also lead to action, with HR consulted for medical-related cases. Official work hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.	PROCEDURES: 1. Know the Rules - Understand what constitutes full-time and part-time attendance, as well as your department or college’s standards for tardiness and absenteeism. - Be aware of acceptable reasons for absences and the required reporting procedures. 2. Follow Your Schedule - Adhere to your assigned work schedule, including start times, breaks, and end times. - Allow sufficient time for commuting and preparation so you arrive on time. 3. Reporting Absences and Tardiness - Notify your supervisor as soon as possible if you anticipate being late or absent. Provide the reason and, if applicable, an estimated arrival time. - Enter all leave taken into OneUSG immediately upon your return. 4. Requesting Leave - Submit leave requests in advance and ensure they are approved by your supervisor. - Exceptions apply only in emergencies. 5. Health-Related Absences - If you need to be absent or late due to illness or a health condition, contact HR/EOD for guidance. 6. Attendance During the Provisional Period - During the initial six-month provisional period, any pattern of absences, lateness, failure to report, or other violations of work rules may result in a departmental recommendation for termination of employment. 7. Presumed Resignation / Job Abandonment - An employee who is absent for three consecutive working days without authorization and cannot provide a satisfactory explanation will be considered to have abandoned their job or resigned. - Supervisors (or designees) are expected to make reasonable attempts to contact the employee during this period. However, contact alone does not excuse the absence.

Policy Title: Inclement Weather or Other Emergencies	Reference: USG HRAP, Inclement Weather or Other Emergencies(usg.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: The University System of Georgia allows leave under specific guidelines. This policy establishes uniform procedures during the official closure, or delayed opening, or reduced operations of USG Institutions and the treatment of employee absences from work during periods of inclement weather or other emergencies.	PROCEDURES: 1. Assess Your Ability to Commute • If the University is open, make every effort to safely get to work. • If driving or commuting is difficult, use your judgment to determine if you can safely travel. 2. Notify Your Supervisor • Contact your supervisor and report your specific situation. • Confirm and understand how inclement weather procedures apply to your work circumstances. 3. University and State Announcements • The Governor decides on conditions affecting statewide agency closures. • The President may declare leave with or without pay during inclement weather or emergencies. • If conditions develop during the workday, agencies will be notified by phone or fax regarding changes to work hours. • If conditions occur overnight, official announcements of delayed openings or closures will be made through local media outlets. 4. Stay Informed • Sign up for VSU’s Campus Alert System to receive alerts on your personal phone or email. • Check the University webpage for updates. • Rely only on official announcements; information from other stations may be inaccurate. 5. Report to Work If No Official Notification • If no announcement of delayed opening or closure is made, report to work as scheduled. • If unable to attend, contact your supervisor or appropriate agency personnel as directed.

Policy Title: Healthcare and Voluntary Benefits	Reference: USG Benefits Enrolling in Benefits HRAP Guidance
POLICY STATEMENT: Full-time employees have 30 days from their hire or eligibility date to enroll in healthcare and voluntary benefits. Coverage generally begins the first of the month after eligibility, or immediately if eligibility starts on the first. Eligible employees must work 30 hours or more per week and can enroll themselves and their dependents, including a legal spouse, children up to age 26, and disabled children over 26 with proof. Documentation such as a marriage certificate, birth certificate, tax return, or joint utility bill is required to add dependents.	PROCEDURES: 1. Enrolling in Benefits • Make all elections through the OneUSG Connect Manage My Benefits Portal. 2. Understanding Surcharges Tobacco Surcharge • Indicate whether you or any covered family members aged 18 or older use tobacco. • A \$150 per month surcharge applies for each tobacco user, including yourself, your spouse, and children aged 18+. • If you do not complete the tobacco certification during enrollment, the surcharge is applied by default. • Re-certify your tobacco-use status each year during Open Enrollment. 3. Spouse Surcharge • If enrolling your spouse, indicate whether your spouse has other employer-based coverage. • A \$150 per month working spouse surcharge applies if your spouse has other coverage available. 4. Making Changes to Your Benefits • After your initial elections, changes can only be made during Open Enrollment or following a qualifying life event. • Common qualifying life events include: ○ Birth or adoption of a child (including stepchildren and legally placed foster children) ○ Death of a covered dependent ○ Marriage or divorce ○ Change in employment status that affects benefits eligibility (for you or your eligible dependents)

Policy Title: Retirement Plans	Reference: USG Retirement Plans Overview (usg.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: Employees who work twenty (20) hours or more per week, you must be enrolled in one of USG’s mandatory retirement plans: the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia (TRS) or the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP). Your eligibility for these plans depends on your employment status (exempt or nonexempt) and your past employment history.	PROCEDURES: 1. Make Your Election • All employees eligible for TRS or ORP must make a retirement plan election within 60 days of employment. • If no election is made within 60 days, you will be automatically enrolled in TRS. • Important: Retirement plan elections are irrevocable. 2. ORP (Optional Retirement Plan) Overview • ORP is a 401(a) defined contribution plan. • Your account balance grows from employee and employer contributions plus investment earnings. • You select and manage your investments using the chosen vendor’s platform. • ORP representatives: ○ Fidelity Investments: netbenefits.com/usg 800-343-0860 ○ TIAA: TIAA.org/usg 800-842-2252 ○ Corbridge Financial: 866-279-1444 3. TRS (Teachers Retirement System) Overview • TRS is a defined benefit plan. • Retirement benefits are calculated using a formula based on length of service and average monthly salary over your highest 24 months of earned compensation. • TRS contact: www.trsga.com 800-352-0650 4. Additional Resources • More information about retirement plan options is available on the Human Resources website.

Policy Title: COBRA	Reference: BPM Benefits Section 5.1. (usg.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: Under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 (COBRA), employees or dependents enrolled in a health or dental plan who experience a qualifying event, which subsequently results in loss of coverage, will become COBRA qualified beneficiaries. The employees or dependents have the option of continuing coverage under the University System of GA plan(s).	PROCEDURES: 1. Qualifying Events for Employees You may continue your health coverage for up to 18 months if either of the following occurs: • Separation from employment for reasons other than gross misconduct • Reduction of work hours resulting in loss of benefits eligibility 2. Qualifying Events for Spouses and Dependents Your spouse and dependent(s) may continue coverage for up to 36 months if any of the following occur: • Death of the employee • Divorce or legal separation • Loss of dependent child status (for example, reaching age 26) 3. When COBRA Coverage Ends • The maximum coverage period expires • Premium payments are more than 30 days delinquent • The participant becomes covered by another group health plan • The participant becomes entitled to Medicare • Other COBRA regulations require termination 4. Employee Responsibilities • Report the Qualifying Event ○ Notify the OneUSG Connect Benefits Call Center or update your status in the OneUSG Connect Benefits website within 60 days of the qualifying event. ○ Failure to report within 60 days will result in loss of the right to continue medical coverage under COBRA. 5. Premium Payments • Once COBRA is elected, you will receive monthly bills from the OneUSG benefits administration vendor. • Your first payment must be made within 45 days of electing coverage. • Ongoing payments must be made monthly to maintain coverage.

	• You are responsible for paying the full premium amount plus a 2% administrative fee.
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Policy Title: Worker's Compensation	Reference: HRAP Worker's Compensation and Return To Work (usg.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: All employees of the University are covered under the provisions of the Worker's Compensation Act. This Act provides protection for the employee in the event of injury or death while performing services for the University.	PROCEDURES: 1. Employee Responsibilities • Report the Incident Immediately ○ Notify your immediate supervisor within 24 hours of any work-related accident, injury, exposure, or illness—no matter how minor. • Seek Medical Attention if Needed ○ For emergencies or situations requiring medical care, report the incident to the Worker's Compensation carrier, Amerisys. • Complete the Required Form ○ If only first aid is needed (no medical treatment required), complete the Incident Notice Form available on the Human Resources website and submit it within your department. 2. Supervisor Responsibilities • Ensure an Incident Report Is Completed ○ Complete an Incident Report for every accident, injury, exposure, or illness, regardless of severity. • Report to Amerisys When Medical Attention Is Needed ○ For any injury requiring medical care, contact Amerisys at 877-656-RISK (7475). ○ Reporting is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. • Provide the Following Information When Reporting: ○ Name, address, Social Security number, age, and gender of the injured employee ○ Institution name, address, and telephone number ○ Date, time, and description of the incident ○ Part of body injured and type of injury ○ Employee's hourly, weekly, or monthly wage ○ Name and address of the treating physician or hospital ○ Whether the employee has returned to work

Policy Title: Garnishment of Pay		Reference: HRAP Garnishment of Pay Policy (usg.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: Valdosta State University considers the acceptance and settlement of just and honest debts to be a mark of personal responsibility. Failure to secure a release of garnishment will result in payroll withholdings as set forth in state law. Repeated instances are subject to reprimand. Multiple garnishments will be considered grounds for dismissal.	PROCEDURES: • If you receive notice of a garnishment, contact Budgets and Payroll to discuss. • Cooperate fully as it pertains to any garnishment.	

PAYROLL & COMPENSATION

Policy Title: Employee Categories	Reference: HRAP, Employee Categories (usg.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: Employee categories (types of employees and types of employment) have been established to identify persons who are employed by the USG. The types of employees and types of employment are used to determine benefits eligibility and applicability of Board of Regents (BOR) policy, as well as ensure accuracy in reporting based on employee and employment type.	PROCEDURES: 1. Faculty Employees Faculty positions include both instructional and administrative roles as defined by the University System of Georgia. Determine your faculty classification. • Regular Faculty: You are considered regular faculty if you are employed on a continuous basis, typically by agreement, contract term, or through a restricted funding source. ○ If you work 20 hours or more per week (half-time or greater): You are eligible for partial or full benefits. ○ If you work less than 20 hours per week: You are not eligible for benefits. • Temporary Faculty: You are considered temporary faculty if your appointment is short-term and made through a written agreement. Temporary faculty are not employed on an academic year contract and are not benefits eligible. Review your appointment letter or contract to confirm your employment status, duration, and funding source. • If you are unclear about your classification or eligibility for benefits, contact the Office of Human Resources for confirmation. Regular Faculty must also ensure that all required onboarding, credential verification, and annual evaluations are completed per institutional policy. 2. Staff Employees Staff employees are divided into two main categories based on their job duties and Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) status. Determine your staff classification. • Professional and Administrative Staff (Exempt): ○ You are exempt from overtime pay under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). ○ Your role involves professional, administrative, or managerial duties. ○ This category does not include faculty or graduate assistants. • Non-Exempt Staff: ○ You are covered by the federal wage and hour provisions of FLSA. ○ You are eligible for overtime pay for hours worked beyond 40 in a workweek.

	Confirm your FLSA status in your job offer letter or position description. • This information is also available in the University System of Georgia's "Master List with Definitions and Guidelines." Track your work hours accurately and report time as required if you are a non-exempt employee. • Review your benefits eligibility with Human Resources, as most regular staff with appointments of 20 hours or more per week qualify for benefits. 3. Student Employees Student employees are considered temporary employees of the university. Identify your student employment type. • Graduate Assistants: Typically serve in instructional, research, or administrative support roles as part of a graduate program. • Student Workers: Undergraduate or graduate students employed in campus departments, typically part-time and limited to a maximum number of hours per week as defined by institutional policy. Understand that student employment is temporary and not benefits eligible. Verify your enrollment status each semester, as continued employment depends on being an active student. Follow all departmental onboarding and timekeeping procedures, and ensure your supervisor approves your work schedule in accordance with university policy. 4. If You Are Unsure of Your Classification • Review your offer letter or employment agreement. • Contact the Office of Human Resources for clarification or assistance. • Keep a record of your classification, benefits eligibility, and contract terms for your reference.
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Policy Title: Time Reporting & Pay Periods	Reference: HRAP, Time and Leave Reporting
POLICY STATEMENT: I In compliance with University System of Georgia (USG) policies, the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and the Affordable Care Act (ACA), institutions are responsible for maintaining accurate daily work time records for all non-exempt employees and all part time employees. Institutions must also maintain records of all absences (whether paid or unpaid) on both nonexempt and exempt employees (including faculty).	PROCEDURES: 1. Bi-Weekly Employees (Non-Exempt) - Record all actual hours worked in OneUSG for each pay period. - Follow the official workweek of Sunday through Saturday. - If you work more than 40 hours in a week, you will either: - Accrue compensatory time, or - Receive overtime pay, depending on departmental policy. - If you work fewer than 40 hours in a week: - Submit an absence request in OneUSG. - If you have no available leave, the time will be unpaid. - Expect payment every other Friday. - Be aware that twice a year, when there are three paychecks in a month, insurance premiums will not be deducted from the third paycheck. 2. Monthly Employees (Exempt) - You will be paid on the last business day of each month. - You do not record hours worked in the same way as non-exempt employees. - Note that you are not eligible for overtime or compensatory time. 3. Applies to All Employees - Your pay is subject to all required state and federal taxes and deductions such as insurance and retirement. - Direct Deposit is required for all employees. - Make all benefit enrollments and employment changes through OneUSG. - Always access OneUSG securely: - From a hardwired campus computer, or - Through the Virtual Labs platform (available through IT). - For assistance with Virtual Labs, contact the IT Helpdesk at 229-245-4357.

Policy Title: Compensatory Time & Overtime	Reference: HRAP, Workweek and Overtime (usg.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: The federal Fair Labor Standards Act, as amended, establishes minimum wage rates, maximum work hours, overtime pay requirements, equal pay standards and child labor restrictions for employees subject to its provisions. This document establishes USG policy in areas not covered by the FLSA or in which the FLSA allows for alternative methods of compliance.	PROCEDURES: 1. Non-Exempt (Biweekly) Employees • Track all hours worked each week in OneUSG. • Identify if overtime applies: ○ Overtime begins after 40 hours worked in a week. ○ Holidays or absences do not count toward the 40-hour threshold. • Receive payment for overtime hours at one and one-half times your regular hourly rate. • Understand that your department may provide compensatory time (comp time) instead of overtime pay. • Comp time accrues at time and a half for hours worked beyond 40. • If your workweek includes a holiday or absence: ○ Hours worked up to 40 are paid at straight time. ○ Hours beyond 40 accrue at time and a half. • Use comp time before other types of leave (such as sick, vacation, or deferred holiday leave). • Monitor your comp time balance: ○ The maximum accrual is 240 hours. ○ Any hours that exceed this limit must be paid out by the institution. 2. Exempt (Monthly) Employees • Note that you are not covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) overtime provisions. • Do not accrue overtime pay or compensatory time. • Track time only as required for leave reporting, not for overtime purposes.

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

Policy Title: Performance Evaluation	Reference: HRAP Performance Evaluation (usg.edu) /Tools and Resources
POLICY STATEMENT: An annual Performance Evaluation should be prepared on each employee by the immediate supervisor for the purpose of advising the employee of his/her strengths and weaknesses of job performance as well as providing a basis for the determination of pay increases, promotion, demotion, retention, or transfer. It also provides an opportunity for a discussion of job description changes, of plans for employee development, and of goals for the year. An employee in their provisional period should be evaluated at least once before the provisional period's completion. Valdosta State University's performance management system of record is ePerformance for staff positions. This annual performance evaluation process must include a personal interview with the immediate supervisor. The process should also include a mid-year review with the supervisor. The employee has the right to include a written response to the assessment to be included or attached thereto and made a part of the personnel file.	PROCEDURES: 1. Missing Evaluation Document • If you do not see an evaluation document for a direct report in Team Performance, contact Human Resources for assistance. • Confirm that the employee's supervisor relationship is correctly listed in OneUSG, as evaluation documents are created based on the "reports to" function. ○ If there is an error in reporting structure, complete a PAR (Personnel Action Request) form to update the supervisor information. 2. Supervisor and Employee Evaluation Process • The supervisor begins the evaluation cycle by defining performance goals (criteria) for each direct report in Team Performance. • Supervisors and employees should meet to review and discuss goals during the first quarter (January–March) of the evaluation period. • Employees may choose to complete a self-evaluation in January to reflect on their performance. • Supervisors complete employee evaluations for the previous year between January and March. • Once the evaluation is complete, employees must acknowledge both the evaluation and the discussion with their supervisor in the system of record to finalize the process. 3. Faculty Evaluations For details on the Faculty Evaluation process, please refer to the information provided on the Faculty Evaluation webpage here.

Policy Title: Professional Development	Reference: Professional Certificate Programs Training Request Form/Percipio Job Aid
POLICY STATEMENT: Human Resources and Employee & Organizational Development Department offers professional development and training to the VSU campus. Training requests are accepted by departments, leadership, and/or individual employees. In addition to individualized training, HR/EOD offers general training sessions to the campus to support professional development to include but not limited to:	PROCEDURES: 1. Professional Certificate Programs - Review available programs: - Professional Certificate for Administrative Assistants - Professional Certificate in Leadership and Management - Professional Certificate in Service Excellence - Eligible employees may apply at no cost through Human Resources or the designated registration process. - Complete all required courses and activities to earn the certificate. 2. Percipio (Learning Management System) - All active employees are automatically enrolled in Percipio upon hire. - Access to Percipio is deactivated upon resignation, retirement, or termination. - Employees must complete annual compliance training in Percipio as assigned. - HR/EOD may create custom learning journeys for employees upon request to support individual development plans. 3. Troubleshooting Access - If an active employee cannot access Percipio, they should email training@valdosta.edu. - Include your name, department, and VSU ID in the message for faster resolution. 3. Requesting Custom Training - Employees or supervisors seeking customized training within Percipio should contact HR/EOD at training@valdosta.edu. - Provide a description of the desired training topics and any specific goals or audiences. - HR/EOD will coordinate setup and notify the employee once the training is available.

Policy Title: Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)	Reference: HRAP Employee Continuing Education TAP (usg.edu)/VSU/Graduate Tax Waiver Form
POLICY STATEMENT: The Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) is an employee supplemental educational assistance program which results in the waiver of tuition and fees when an eligible employee attends any University System of Georgia (USG) institution. See policy for eligibility requirements.	Procedures: 1. Application and Eligibility • Complete and submit a TAP application each semester you plan to enroll. • Ensure that the course or program has available space before registering. • You may request up to nine (9) credit hours per semester under TAP. • Submit your application by the University System of Georgia deadlines: ○ Fall Semester – July 15 ○ Spring Semester – November 15 ○ Summer Semester – April 15 2. Graduate Education Tax Exemption • Graduate tuition assistance is tax-free up to \$5,250 per year. • If your benefit exceeds this amount, you may complete the Graduate Student Tax Waiver Application each semester TAP is used. Submit the completed waiver with supervisor signatures to Human Resources for review and approval. 3. Missed Deadlines • If you fail to submit your TAP application by the deadline, you will not be eligible for TAP benefits for that semester. 4. Academic Performance • If you earn a grade below “C” or withdraw from a course, you will be ineligible to participate in TAP for the next academic semester. 5. Registration Timing • Do not register for courses before the designated TAP registration period. If you register too early, you will be notified to drop the course(s) and re-register during the approved period. 6. Employment Status Changes • If you leave employment after the start of a term, your TAP benefit remains valid for that term. ○ Coordination between your home institution and the teaching institution may be required to confirm coverage. 7. Appeals Appeals for a TAP-related decision, can be submitted via email to the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) for review.

Policy Title: Employee Recognition	Reference: https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/finance-admin/human-resources/red.php
POLICY STATEMENT: The University Employee Recognition program, RED (Recognizing the Excellent and Distinguished) is designed to celebrate the remarkable contributions of our faculty and staff members. Nominations can be submitted for Student Assistants, Graduate Assistants, Staff, Faculty, or Teams.	PROCEDURES: 1. Nomination Process • Submit nominations through the RED webpage. • Nominations are reviewed and announced in a monthly campus-wide email. • Supervisors are encouraged to use the Supervisor’s Toolkit to foster a culture of appreciation and recognition within their teams. 2. Award Tiers Tier 1 – Spark • Recognizes employees nominated for outstanding service. • All VSU employees are eligible for Spark recognition. Tier 2 – Fire • Honors employees who consistently demonstrate VSU’s core values and deliver exceptional service excellence. • All VSU employees are eligible for Fire recognition. Tier 3 – Blaze • Celebrates the “Best of the Best.” • Recognizes employees from the Fire Tier who exemplify Civility, Integrity, and Citizenship at the highest level. • Full-time staff members only are eligible for Blaze recognition. • Blaze recipients are automatically nominated to COSA for the Employee of the Semester Award. 3. Team Award Purpose: Recognizes a team’s outstanding collaboration and contribution to VSU. Eligibility: • Teams that work together to achieve a shared goal that significantly benefits VSU or the community. • Members may come from the same or different departments. • Departments with the highest percentage of RED nominations during a semester also qualify for the Team Award. 4. Questions and Support For assistance or questions about the RED Program, contact red@valdosta.edu.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Policy Title: Amorous Relationships	Reference: HRAP Amorous Relationships (usg.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: Employees may not engage in amorous relationships with employees who hold positions of unequal power. The same is true for faculty members, to include, graduate teaching assistants, who have amorous relationships with students they teach or evaluate or whose terms of education or employment they could directly affect. Such relationships create inherent conflicts of interest and lead to complaints of favoritism, decreased employee morale, mistrust by colleagues, complaints of undue access and, claims of sexual harassment, and other negative implications for the work environment.	PROCEDURES: 1. Employee Disclosure • All VSU employees, including graduate students, must promptly report if they are asked to evaluate, supervise, or make decisions regarding a USG employee or student with whom they: ○ Are currently involved in an amorous relationship, or ○ Have previously been involved in such a relationship. • Disclosures should be made immediately upon awareness of the potential conflict. 2. Reporting Violations • Employees or students who believe in good faith that a violation of this policy has occurred should promptly report it through the institution’s established reporting process. • Reports may be made to the Office of Human Resources, the Title IX Office, or the Office of Ethics and Compliance, depending on the situation. 3. Investigation • Reported violations will be promptly and thoroughly investigated by the institution in accordance with USG and VSU procedures. • All investigations will be handled with attention to confidentiality, fairness, and due process. 4. Violations • Employees found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. 5. Department Leadership and Supervisor Consultation • Supervisors or department leaders should consult Human Resources in the following situations: ○ When learning of or becoming involved in a workplace relationship with power dynamics. ○ When considering a promotion, demotion, reassignment, or role change involving someone in a relationship with a supervisor or other leadership position. ○ To discuss restructuring, policy compliance, or risk mitigation strategies. ○ When an employee raises concerns about favoritism or retaliation related to such a relationship.

Policy Title: Performance Management and Counseling	Reference: Performance Evaluation **See Performance Evaluation policy on pg.47 for details on ePerformance process
POLICY STATEMENT: Performance management ensures employees are able to perform at the highest possible standards. The University subscribes to the concept of performance management. Therefore, an annual Performance Evaluation should be prepared for each employee by the immediate supervisor for purposes of advising the employee of his/her strengths and weaknesses of job performance as well as providing a basis for the determination of pay increases, promotion, demotion, retention, or transfer.	Supervisors managing performance will: • Provide an opportunity for a discussion of job description changes, of plans for employee development, and of goals for the year. • Hold a one-on-one session with the employee. The process may also include a mid-year review at the discretion of the supervisor. • With the assistance of Human Resources & Employee Development, choose the best available method to address unacceptable performance or conduct considering overall circumstances. Therefore, it is incumbent upon all supervisors to address unacceptable performance or conduct by their employees. Such action may include: ○ Coaching ○ Review expectations ○ Verbal warning ○ Training ○ Written warning ○ Performance improvement plan ○ Discharge. Employees will: • Listen to all feedback shared by supervisor. • Ask for specific examples of performance, behavior, or conduct issues. • Use strategies provided to help improve deficit areas. • Remain professional. • Check in with supervisor to determine progress. The employee has the right to include a written response to the performance management assessment to be included or attached thereto and made a part of the personnel file.

Policy Title: Standards of Personal Conduct/Working Environment	Reference: 8.2.18 USG Policy Manual, Personal Conduct(usg.edu)
POLICY STATEMENT: Valdosta State University is a learning environment based on trust and mutual respect in which open dialogue, vigorous debate, and the free exchange of ideas are welcome. The University is equally dedicated to the core values of community, including a commitment to practice <i>civility, integrity, and citizenship.</i>	PROCEDURES: Employees at VSU are expected to act in accordance with professional standards, University policies, and the core values of the institution. Corrective actions are classified by severity to ensure consistency, fairness, and accountability. Supervisors and managers must consult with the Office of Human Resources/EOD before issuing Written Reprimand or Last Formal Reprimand. Provisional employees may be subject to disciplinary action without the right to appeal, except for grievances based on discrimination or harassment. Step-by-Step Corrective Action Procedures by Severity Group I – Major Misconduct Minimum Action: Last Formal Reprimand or Immediate Termination depending on severity or frequency. Examples include: 1. Interfering with coworkers’ performance or disrupting University activities. 2. Threats, intimidation, harassment, or coercion. 3. Grossly offensive, obscene, or immoral conduct. 4. Drug offenses or alcohol/substance use at work or on University property. 5. Possession of weapons in violation of law. 6. Fighting in the workplace. 7. Sexual harassment. 8. Receiving unauthorized compensation for work performed. 9. Criminal convictions (must report to HR within 24 hours). 10. Unauthorized access to records or confidential information. 11. Willful damage or theft of University or personal property. 12. Falsification of University documents or employment applications. 13. Violation of procurement card or purchasing policies. 14. Theft, misappropriation of funds, or misuse of State property. 15. Unavailability for work. 16. Other major misconduct, insubordination, gross negligence, or violation of anti-discrimination/harassment protections.

	Action Steps for Supervisors: 1. Document the incident immediately. 2. Consult with HR/EOD to determine appropriate disciplinary action. 3. Issue Last Formal Reprimand or recommend termination based on circumstances. 4. Provide employee with notice and opportunity to respond. Group II – Moderate Misconduct Minimum Action: Written Reprimand; progressive discipline may escalate if repeated within one year to include a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). Examples include: 1. Failure to perform job duties or follow department/unit rules. 2. Failure to maintain work quality or productivity. 3. Violations of IT policies. 4. Unauthorized absence from work for a full shift/day. (3 days without notice = job abandonment) 5. Insubordination or willful disobedience. 6. Dishonesty. 7. Smoking/vaping or disregarding safety regulations. 8. Refusal to cooperate with University administrative actions. 9. Failure to return to work after authorized leave without notifying supervisor. 10. Leaving work early without approval. 11. Private use of state property for personal gain. 12. Violation of University policies or procedures. 13. Other actions deemed misconduct, insubordination, or neglect of duties. Action Steps for Supervisors: 1. Document the incident. 2. Issue a Written Reprimand and inform employee of potential escalation. 3. Place reprimand in employee personnel file. 4. Monitor for recurrence and escalate disciplinary action if necessary. 5. Develop Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) with HR assistance. Group III – Minor Misconduct Progressive Discipline Steps: 1. Oral Reprimand 2. Written Reprimand 3. Performance Improvement Plan if appropriate 4. Last Formal Reprimand (may lead to demotion, suspension, or discharge) Examples include: 1. Failure to follow safety procedures. 2. Rude or discourteous behavior, use of profanity.
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	3. Tardiness, temporary unauthorized absences, leaving work early. 4. Absenteeism or misuse of sick leave. 5. Poor housekeeping or unsanitary conditions. 6. Presence in unauthorized areas. 7. Wasting time, loitering, or sleeping on duty. 8. Damage to property through improper use or neglect. 9. Poor attitude or counterproductive behavior. 10. Consistently poor performance or performance deficits. 11. Failure to report criminal charges or arrests within 72 hours. 12. Other actions deemed minor misconduct. Action Steps for Supervisors: 1. Address issue immediately with an Oral Reprimand. 2. Document and escalate to Written Reprimand if repeated. 3. Develop Performance Improvement Plan with HR if needed. 4. Issue Last Formal Reprimand for continued infractions. 5. Consult HR/EOD at each step for guidance and documentation.
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Policy Title: Outside Employment Activities	Reference: HRAP, Conflicts of Interest, Conflicts of Commitment and Outside Activities
POLICY STATEMENT: The purpose of policy is to provide additional guidance to USG employees regarding BOR 8.2.18.2 to include the approval process for compensated outside activities and the disclosure of conflicts of interest, conflicts of commitment, and outside activities. An employee shall make every reasonable effort to avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest. An appearance of conflict exists when a reasonable person will conclude from the circumstances that an employee's ability to protect the public interest, or perform public duties, is compromised by personal interest. An appearance of conflict can exist even in the absence of a legal conflict of interest.	PROCEDURES: Employees seeking approval to engage in outside employment or professional practice must: • Complete the Online Form ○ Access the Outside Employment/Consulting Request Form online. ○ Complete all required sections accurately. • Print and Submit ○ Print the completed form. ○ Submit the form to your direct supervisor at least 30 days before the planned activity start date. • Obtain Department and Administrative Approval ○ Your Department Head and Dean or Director must review and approve the request. ○ The request is then forwarded to the appropriate Vice President or Provost for approval. ○ Forward signed form to Outside Activities Committee at outsideactivity@valdosta.edu ○ A Review Committee will also evaluate the request as necessary. • Maintain Record Keeping ○ Copies of all approved requests are maintained in: ○ The employee's department file ○ The employee's personnel file in the Office of Human Resources • Understand Exceptions – Do Not Use This Form for: ○ Non-consulting jobs performed outside normal work hours where primary University skills are not required (e.g., second job at night or weekends). ○ Requests to teach through eCore. ○ Requests to work for another USG institution (use the USG Dual Appointment Agreement instead).

Policy Title: Appearance		Reference: 8.2.18 <u>USG Policy Manual, Personal Conduct(usg.edu)</u>
POLICY STATEMENT: Professionalism as an educational institution is reflected in the appearance and manner of our faculty, staff, and employees. Consequently, it is necessary to maintain and enhance the University’s image. Since Valdosta State University and the University System of Georgia do not have a dress code policy in the place, individual divisions or academic departments are responsible for setting guidelines on dress attire in the workplace. Supervisors have the responsibility to share their expectations for appearance to all their employees. Supervisors have the right to identify incidents where employees are inappropriately dressed and take appropriate disciplinary actions.	PROCEDURES: 1. Understand Expectations • Contact your supervisor to clarify any department or role-specific dress attire requirements. 2. Communicate Concerns • If you have any issues or impediments related to dress requirements, notify your supervisor promptly. 3. Collaborate on Solutions • Work with your supervisor to resolve concerns or find reasonable accommodations. 4. Escalate if Needed • Contact HR/EOD for guidance or assistance if the issue cannot be resolved with your supervisor.	

Policy Title: Workplace Conflicts & Dispute Resolution	Reference: USG Dispute Resolution Policy
POLICY STATEMENT: In the day-to-day operation of any office or department, problems and misunderstandings sometime occur. If left unresolved, serious personnel problems might result. While consideration, cooperation, and common sense can resolve most of these situations, a few require special attention. It is the policy of the University to resolve disputes fairly, and at the lowest possible level.	PROCEDURES FOR EMPLOYEES: 1. Employee-to-Employee Conflict • Attempt to resolve the issue directly with the other employee. • If resolution is not possible, contact your supervisor for support and guidance. 2. Employee-to-Student Conflict • Contact the Student Conduct Office to report and address the issue. 3. Employee-to-Supervisor Conflict • Attempt to resolve conflicts through discussion with your supervisor. • Follow your supervisor’s directives unless they are clearly illegal, unethical, or unsafe. • If concerns remain, escalate the matter immediately to the next higher authority or HR/EOD for guidance.

Policy Title: Disruptive Behavior	Reference: USG Disruptive Behavior Policy
POLICY STATEMENT: All segments of the academic community are under a strong obligation and have a mutual responsibility to protect the campus community from disorderly, disruptive, or obstructive actions which interfere with academic pursuits of teaching, learning, and other campus activities. Valdosta State University encourages open and informal discussion of complaints and problems between supervisors and their employees. Supervisors should encourage employees to discuss their complaints and problems with them. When a conflict between supervisors and employees cannot be resolved through normal channels, one or both parties may seek resolution and advice from HR.	PROCEDURES: 1. Emphasize Correct Work Habits • Use orientation, training, performance reviews, and consistent feedback to develop productive work habits and positive employee-management relations. • Disciplinary actions should aim to correct behavior, not punish. 2. Initial Steps for Addressing Performance Issues • Identify the Problem: Discuss the issue with the employee promptly. A single incident may not require action, but patterns of unacceptable performance should be addressed early. • Be Specific: Clearly explain what needs improvement, the expected standards, and consequences if performance does not improve. • Focus on Job-Related Issues: Keep discussions professional and centered on work performance. • Develop Corrective Strategies: When giving a reprimand, discuss strategies to address the problem. Hold follow-up discussions to monitor progress. • Handle Recurrences Individually: Consider the employee's progress, attitude, and previous corrective actions when addressing repeated issues. • Contact HR/EOD: Refer to Standards of Personal Conduct policy for further guidance on progressive discipline. Before considering termination, consult HR/EOD immediately.

Policy Title: Grievance Policy	Reference: USG Grievance Policy
POLICY STATEMENT: The University System of Georgia is committed to providing a good working environment for its faculty and staff. It is the policy of the University System of Georgia to resolve these disputes fairly, and at the lowest possible level. When conflicts or disagreements occur, employees should first attempt to resolve them through discussion with their supervisor. Attempted resolution may be addressed through the Grievance/Disciplinary Review Process, if applicable. A grievance or disciplinary review will be available to handle claims that a person has been harmed by any action that violates the policies of either the institution or the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia (“the Board of Regents”) or for requested disciplinary review pursuant to the University System policy, entitled Dismissal, Demotion or Suspension.	PROCEDURES: 1. Determine Eligibility to File a Grievance You may file a grievance if you have been: • Suspended • Discharged • Demoted • Had your salary reduced You may not file a grievance, even in the above situations, if: • Your discharge occurred during your six-month provisional period • You were affected by a reorganization, program modification, or financial exigency (you may instead apply to the Board of Regents for review) • The issue involves a discrimination complaint based on race, sex, age, disability, or religion (these should be directed to the Affirmative Action/EEO Officer) • The issue has already been reviewed by an another at the institution. 2. Filing a Grievance • Complete the official Grievance Form (available from Human Resources). • Submit the completed form to the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO). • File your grievance within ten (10) working days of receiving notice of suspension, discharge, demotion, or salary reduction. If you miss the filing deadline: • Include a written explanation for the delay. • The CHRO will review and decide whether there is good cause to accept the late grievance. 3. Review and Hearing Process • If the grievance is accepted, you are entitled to a hearing before a Board of Review. • The Board of Review hearing may occur before or after the effective date of the personnel action in question.

Policy Title: Investigations	Reference: HRAP_Cooperation_in_Internal_Investigations_Employee_Relations.pdf
POLICY STATEMENT: Employees of the University System of Georgia must fully cooperate with any internal investigation authorized by the institution's President and conducted by designated investigators. Internal investigations will be conducted only by those authorized by the President or designated leadership. The investigator must ensure that the process protects due process rights and is conducted in the best interest of the institution. Information related to the investigation will be shared only with appropriate administrators or individuals with a legitimate need to know.	PROCEDURES: 1. Cooperate Fully • Participate fully if directed by an authorized investigator. • Refusal to cooperate may result in disciplinary action up to termination. 2. Maintain Confidentiality • Do not discuss the investigation with colleagues or others not directly involved to protect the integrity of the process. • Only share information with those who have a legitimate need to know. 3. Respond to Notification • You will be notified by the investigator about any allegations against you. • Notification timing may vary to protect all parties or preserve evidence. 4. Present Your Position • You have the right to explain your side of the story. • Provide all relevant facts, documents, or evidence. • Multiple meetings may occur if necessary. 5. Be Honest and Accurate • Answer questions truthfully and provide complete information. • Misrepresentation or withholding information may result in adverse action. 6. Follow Investigator Instructions • Comply with any requests for documentation, interviews, or meetings. • Ask for clarification if you are unsure about a request, without violating confidentiality. 7. Witnesses or Third Parties • If you are a witness, cooperate fully and provide factual, objective information. • Do not discuss the matter with other employees or the person involved. • If you have relevant evidence or documents, provide them to the investigator. • You may be asked to attend multiple interviews if additional information is needed. 8. Await Outcome • The investigator will gather all facts and evidence to reach a conclusion.

	• Findings will be communicated to the appropriate administrators, who determine any follow-up or corrective action that may be required. 9. Ask for Support if Needed • Contact HR/EOD for guidance on your rights or clarification of the process.
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Policy Title: Nepotism	Reference: HRAP_Employment_of_Relatives_Employment.pdf
POLICY STATEMENT: No employee shall be employed in a department or unit that results in a subordinate-superior relationship between such employee and any relative through any line of authority. This includes situations where: • A relative directly or indirectly supervises, evaluates, or influences employment decisions for the employee. • An employee performs work across units or departments where their relative serves as the head or has administrative oversight, or where the relative would be responsible for addressing or resolving complaints made by or against the employee within that area. These restrictions are in place to preserve	PROCEDURES: At Application, Hire, Promotion, or Transfer 1. Disclose Relationships • When applying for employment, promotion, or transfer, you must disclose if a relative currently works within the same or a related unit where a reporting or evaluative relationship could exist. 2. Review Reporting Structure • HR and the hiring department will review proposed reporting lines to ensure no direct or indirect supervisory authority exists between relatives. 3. Exception Requests (if applicable) • In limited circumstances, a formal exception may be recommended to the Chancellor and approved by the Board of Regents. Documentation must demonstrate that the employment arrangement will not compromise fairness or institutional integrity. After Hire / During Employment 1. Monitor Organizational Changes • If a reorganization or reassignment causes a relative to become part of your chain of command, or gives your relative administrative responsibility over your unit, notify HR immediately. • The institution will act to eliminate the conflict (e.g., by reassignment, modifying reporting lines, or transferring oversight duties). 2. Work across Units or Departments • Employees may not perform duties, projects, or special assignments within or across units or departments where a relative serves as the head, has supervisory oversight, or may be called upon to handle performance matters, grievances, or complaints made by or involving the employee. • Supervisory, evaluative, or disciplinary interactions between relatives are not permitted. 3. Avoid Favoritism Risks • Do not use your influence to benefit or penalize a relative (e.g. in evaluations, raises, promotions, workload assignments). • Decisions must be objective and based on qualifications and performance, not family ties. 4. Conflict Resolution / Reporting

fairness, objectivity, and confidence in employment-related decisions.	• Report any potential or perceived conflicts to HR immediately. • HR will assess the situation and implement appropriate safeguards to ensure compliance with policy. 5. Exceptions Must Be Approved and Documented • Only approved exceptions are allowed, and they must be documented and retained in HR files. • Any such approval should include rationale and oversight measures to mitigate risks. Termination, Transfers, or Departures • When a relative transfers, separates, or assumes a new position that changes the reporting structure, HR will review the situation to ensure continued compliance. • Employees must continue to disclose any change in relationship status (e.g., marriage) that creates a potential reporting or evaluative conflict.
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Policy Title: Ongoing Email Access		Reference: Information Technology FAQs
POLICY STATEMENT: For business continuity, the University may need to maintain access to VSU mailboxes of former employees or transfers to capture email requests that have been sent and to redirect VSU matters to the appropriate people. As such, former employees or transfers who are also alumni and who worked in sensitive or highly confidential areas, involuntarily separated with the university, or resigned in lieu of termination will be given new email accounts in which to utilize.	PROCEDURES: 1. Alumni Email Access • For alumni graduating Fall 2025 and beyond, VSU will maintain access to their Microsoft 365 email account for 1-year post-graduation. • After the one-year period, the alumni email account will be disabled. • For alumni who graduated in Spring 2025 or earlier, their current VSU email access will continue until June 2026. • Access can only be restored if the alum: ○ Re-enrolls as an active VSU student, or ○ Becomes a VSU employee • This policy does not affect current retirees—their access remains under existing terms. 2. Former Employee (Non-Alumni/Non-Retiree) Access • When a VSU employee separates (unless they qualify as a retiree or active student), they will lose access to all email and related services within 30–45 days after separation (or as otherwise determined by IT/Policy). • When possible, they will be given 14 calendar days to capture and save any personal folders or items from their mailbox before deactivation. • Backup or migration of personal data should be their responsibility during that window.	