



Valdosta State University
Human Resources & Employee Development
Policies and Procedures

Payroll Policies and Procedures

With in excess of 3,500 checks issued monthly to faculty, staff and students and an annual payroll in excess of \$34 million, it is obvious that strict regulation of the payroll process must be accomplished if we are to process pay checks in a timely fashion with minimum errors.

This section covers basic payroll procedures, and employees should realize that certain inflexibilities are inherent if we are to meet payroll deadlines, reporting deadlines and comply with myriad Federal, State and Board of Regents policies, while maintaining accurate records which are audited on an annual basis by the State of Georgia auditors.

[The Work Week](#)
[Payroll Periods](#)
[Salary Adjustments](#)
[Salary Increases](#)
[Payroll Deductions](#)
[Salary Advances](#)
[Garnishments of Wages](#)
[Federal Tax Levy](#)

[Vacation Checks](#)
[Conformity With Federal Standards](#)
[Use of the Time Clock](#)
[Use of Time Sheets](#)
[Final Checks](#)
[Wage and Salary Administration](#)
[Withholding of Pay](#)

1. [On-Call Pay/Call Back](#)
2. [Holiday Pay](#)

SECTION 801.01

The Work Week.

The University work week begins at 12:01 A.M. Saturday and runs through 12 Midnight Friday. This is the standard work week of the University System as of January 1, 2000. Employees normally report for work at 8:00 A.M. and leave at 5:30 P.M. with one hour for lunch Monday through Thursday. On Friday employees report at 8:00 A.M., have one hour for lunch and leave at 3 P.M.

a. Individual Variations in Established Schedule.

On occasion an employee may request authority from his or her supervisor to report at periods other than the established work schedule. Such variations must be approved in writing by the supervisor and the Department of Human Resources, so necessary payroll and leave accrual adjustments can be made.

Employees who fail to contact their supervisor regarding the reason for their absence and fail to show up for work for a period of three consecutive days will be considered to have abandoned their position from the university and will be terminated.

b. Departmental Variations in Established Schedule.

Certain departments on campus cannot observe the standard work schedule due to the nature of the

service they render. Examples include the Food Service Division, Public Safety, Plant Operations, Library, etc. each of which have extended work schedules. Employees in these areas may have work schedule variations to meet the departmental demands, but in no case should such variations result in a work week in excess of 40 hours on a regular basis.

c. Break and Meal Periods.

1. **Break Periods.** Valdosta State University, in an effort to promote the safety and productivity of employees, affords a fifteen-minute break period for each four hours of scheduled work. Breaks are generally allowed during the employee's normal routines; however, certain departments may establish specified breaks to prevent loss of employee productivity. Break periods may not be accumulated or taken in conjunction with a lunch hour, vacation, holiday, etc. in that this would not serve the intended purpose of such time away from the work station.
2. **Meal Periods.** for employees working an eight hour shift in an around-the-clock operation (e.g., campus police), a meal break is not required, but the employee must be given the opportunity to eat while maintaining active on-duty status. Departmental guidelines regarding appropriate places to purchase a meal include a 500 yard perimeter around the core corridor of campus. Meals should be purchased and not eaten until the officer returns to his/her campus assignment. Any questions as to whether a business is within that corridor should be directed to management staff for clarification. Officers must also ensure that their area of responsibility is covered by other officers before leaving to pick up meals.

d. Overtime.

The need for overtime work is infrequent at the University as each department is encouraged to schedule its workload so as to accomplish its goals within the prescribed work week. **In emergency situations, and when feasible, the department head should obtain prior approval for overtime work from the Vice President for Finance and Administration.** Payment for overtime will be made in accordance with the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Overtime premium pay results only in those cases when hours actually worked exceed 40 during the established work week. When such is authorized, the departmental budget will be charged, and it shall be the department head's responsibility to assure funding is available.

Supervisors are advised that wage-hour regulations hold employers responsible for situations where an employee is permitted to attend phones and other duties during normal lunch hours. Employees should be encouraged to leave their work stations during periods when they are not officially on duty.

SECTION 801.03

Payroll Periods.

The University has established two payroll periods geared to salaried and hourly-paid personnel.

a. Bi-Weekly Payroll/Student Payrolls.

The bi-weekly payroll is for hourly-paid employees who are on timecards/timesheets. The payroll period for the bi-weekly payroll begins at 12:01 A.M. Saturday and runs fourteen consecutive days. Employees on a bi-weekly payroll are paid on alternate Fridays by their immediate supervisors at the close of their normal work shift. Timesheets are due in the Payroll Office by 9:00 A.M. on the Monday following the pay period end date.

b. Monthly Payroll.

The monthly payroll includes those employees who are considered exempt by the Fair Labor Standards

Act. Monthly checks are issued on the last working day of each month, unless otherwise specified by official memorandum.

Professional and Administrative-Exempt. Employees in this category are paid monthly and are not eligible for overtime premium. The only time records required are those to indicate time off (annual leave, sick leave, etc.)

c. Calculation of Hourly Compensation (benefit purposes, budget, etc.)

1. **Non-Exempt Personnel.** Every employee of Valdosta State University has a base compensation rate which should not be confused with budgeted amounts. The final budget is a funding document which must assume each employee will work all hours each fiscal year, based on their equivalent full-time employment. The standard work year of all non-exempt full-time employees is 2080 hours, whereas the budget is based on anticipated annual hours to be worked, which ranges from 2072 to 2096 hours. Therefore, the rate of compensation must be calculated based on the following formula (budgeted amount/equivalent full-time employment/annual hours in fiscal year).
2. **Exempt Personnel.** The budgeted amount for exempt personnel, including faculty, is the annual compensation and will not vary with annual hours in the fiscal year. The hourly rate of exempt personnel is determined by the formula (budgeted amount/equivalent full-time employment/2080 hours).
3. **Benefit Base.** Benefits that are determined by annual compensation are determined on the standard work year and would be based on the calculations stated above.

d. Direct Deposit. Regular status employees may have their checks deposited directly in the bank of their choice at no cost for this service. Details are available on this benefit in the Payroll Office.

SECTION 801.04 Salary Adjustments.

Salary adjustments may occur whenever a new scale is approved by the Board of Regents. Appropriate adjustments will be made to employees' salaries in positions affected as funds are made available. This action should not be confused with a promotion or similar action where there is a change in responsibility.

a. Mid-Year Adjustments.

Mid-year salary adjustments, absent compelling reasons, e.g., promotions, demotions, transfers, etc., may be considered gratuitous and, therefore, illegal. Should such adjustments be deemed necessary, approval by the President, with a written request to the Chancellor clearly setting forth demonstrable changed circumstances relating to work assignments or other compelling reasons will be required. Approval by the Chancellor is required prior to effecting a change of salary in such cases.

SECTION 801.05 Salary Increases.

Salary increases are normally made on the basis of merit at the beginning of each fiscal year, providing funds are made available from the State appropriation. The decision to increase a person's salary is made after considering his or her record for the previous year as reflected in the performance evaluation and the prevailing salary scale within his or her particular job classification. It should be stressed that salary increases are not automatic.

1. Recommended salary increases are not subject to grievance unless there is a clearly demonstrated intent of discrimination against an employee or class of employees based on any of the protected employment classes.
2. Pay grade adjustments, cost of living increases and equity adjustments which are made to upgrade the salary schedule of the University may occur at the beginning of the fiscal year contingent upon funding availability. Such adjustments are non-grievable, and in no case will an employee receive less than the merit or other salary consideration recommended by their supervisor.

The salary increase policy is administered in the following ways:

a. Merit and Cost of Living- Merit is a percent range based on performance. Cost of living is a set figure on all classifications. When authorized these are administered at and under the direction of the System Office of the Board of Regents for the University System of Georgia and become effective at the authorized adjustment date.

b. Promotions- The opportunity for a promotion becomes available when:

1. an existing position with a higher pay grade becomes open allowing an employee to apply;
2. duties with greater responsibility are added to a department and a reclassification request for the existing position is approved with an associated higher pay grade;
3. a new position with a higher pay grade is added to a department and an employee within the department is hired into the position.

c. Acting Assignment- A temporary pay increase may be given to an employee who is asked to take on the responsibilities of a higher level position for a limited time period until the position can be filled on a permanent basis. Justification for an acting assignment should be submitted in writing to Human Resources and Employee Development for approval. A commitment may not be made to the current employee until the approval is received. The former rate of pay will be re-assigned when the acting assignment is completed.

d. Additional Pay Adjustments- When there are other factors that warrant additional compensation, the Vice President, Cabinet Officer or the Human Resources and Employee Development Department may request an additional pay adjustment by submitting supporting documentation along with the Additional Pay Adjustment Request Form and a Budget Amendment Form to Human Resources and Employee Development. No commitment may be made to an employee until the approval is received.

Some of the situations that can be considered for this increase are:

1. Additional responsibilities are assigned to a position but not significant enough to justify a reclassification. This request requires a revised position description along with a letter of justification.
2. Market conditions discovered by either a verified external offer to an employee or by a wage and salary market survey performed by Human Resources and Employee Development. Wage and salary market information must be included in the supporting documentation.
3. Completion of specialized education or training or experience adds productivity or capability to the completion of duties and was not considered in the initial rate of pay or the merit increase process. Verification of completion must be included along with letter of justification explaining how this enhances the duties of the position.
4. Human Resources and Employee Development has determined that salary compression (where the salaries of employees are too close together) or inversion (when newly hired employees are paid more than the senior employee) has caused a pay disparity. Salary data must be attached with explanation.
5. An increase can be requested for superior performance, including both quality and/or quantity of work performed, that was not considered in the merit increase process. Letter of justification, with explanation must be attached.
6. For additional information see [Compensation Policy: Classified Personnel](#)

SECTION 801.06

Payroll Deductions.

Deductions for Federal and State taxes and Social Security will be withheld from payroll checks as required by law. In addition, required deductions for the group insurance program, Teachers Retirement System and annuity programs will be withheld, where applicable.

Employees are urged to review these deductions each month to make certain they are accurate. Any discrepancies or questions regarding payroll deductions should be addressed to the Payroll Department.

a. Miscellaneous Deductions.

Other miscellaneous deductions include Valdosta State University Foundation, pre-tax spending accounts, Credit Union, United States Savings Bonds, athletic tickets, and the United Way. Miscellaneous deductions of this nature, prior to being placed in the payroll procedures, must have the approval of the Board of Regents of the University System, the legal approval by the State Attorney General's Office, and ultimately, the approval of the President of the University.

b. Pre-tax contributions (deductions). The University's group health, dental, spending account programs, tax sheltered annuities and retirement are pre-taxed contributions with no option to the employee.

c. The employee supplemental life insurance program premiums may be paid with pre-tax or after-tax dollars dependent upon the employee's option.

d. Other deductions are taken on an after-tax basis.

SECTION 801.07

Salary Advances.

Employees are urged to handle their financial affairs responsibly so that obligations will not become an administrative burden. It is the policy of the University to disallow salary advances for any reason.

SECTION 801.08

Garnishment of Wages.

Acceptance and settlement of just and honest debts are considered as marks of personal financial responsibility, and employees are expected to handle such affairs in a manner that will not create adverse reflections upon the reputation of the University.

Should a garnishment subpoena be received by the University, the employee will be contacted and every effort made to have him or her satisfy the creditor and have the garnishment withdrawn. In the event a release of garnishment cannot be obtained, the Department of Human Resources has no other choice but to proceed with garnishment withholdings as required by law.

Multiple garnishments shall be considered just grounds for termination.

1. **Wage assignments** An employee might avoid a formal garnishment of salary by agreeing to assign a portion of his or her salary to the appropriate court until the judgment has been paid in full. Such arrangements must be initiated by the employee with the court, and the University must receive the appropriate legal documents prior to commencing withholding.
2. **Court Ordered Assignments** Valdosta State University will recognize other court ordered wage assignments as defined by Georgia law and make the necessary remittals to the appropriate agency, etc. An example of this would be child support recovery payments.

SECTION 801.09

Federal Tax Levy.

If an employee neglects or refuses to pay his federal tax liability within ten days after notice and demand, the District Director can collect this amount plus expenses and penalties by serving a levy on any accrued salary or wage held by the University.

Upon receipt of a Notice of Levy, the Department of Human Resources will contact the employee and make every effort to assist in settlement of the obligation. If the employee has not made proper arrangements by "payday," the required remittal will be forwarded to the Internal Revenue Service. Should accrued salary or wage be insufficient to cover the tax obligation, the employee should realize that said levy will continue until obligations are completely settled.

SECTION 801.10

Vacation Checks.

The policy regarding distribution of "payroll" checks will also prevail where vacation pay is involved. Employees will be paid on their regular payroll dates. Should the employees desire, these checks may be mailed to them or deposited in their personal bank accounts. Exceptions to this policy might occasionally be justified, but must have the prior approval of the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

SECTION 801.11

Conformity With Federal Standards.

Policies regarding wage and salary programs are in compliance with applicable State and Federal regulations. Employees who feel their compensation is not in accordance with such regulations should contact the Department of Human Resources immediately. A complete investigation of the payroll problem will be conducted and adjustments, if required, will be made promptly.

SECTION 801.12

Use of the Time Clock.

The following regulations have been established to conform with the legal requirements set forth by the Wage and Hour Administration. These should be incorporated with any existing regulations established by various departments.

a. Reporting to Work.

No employee may clock in prior to 7 minutes before their work shift begins. Employees clocking in over 7 minutes late will be docked 1/4 hour, as explained below in computation of total hours worked.

Supervisors must approve all cards where this rule is violated. If the employee is justified, place your initials by the punched time so the Payroll Department will consider this for payroll purposes. If justified, the employee should be warned. If this practice is continued with repeated warnings producing no results, the supervisor should contact the Director of Human Resources to determine the course of action.

1. **Lunch Periods.** The employee may not be required to clock out and in at lunch. In such cases, the lunch time will be taken from total hours calculated, as the supervisor directs on the face of the time card.
2. **"Punching Out."** No employee will clock out before the end of the work shift, as this time will be taken from the total hours worked. In addition, all employees must clock out within 7 minutes after their work shift has ended. Any exceptions must be approved and initialed by the supervisor if the employee is to be compensated.
3. **Computing time Worked.** Total hours worked will be computed weekly and rounded to the nearest 1/10 hour, six minutes. For example, an employee having 22 minutes work time would receive .4 hours credit.

For employees whose shifts vary on a daily basis, the supervisor is requested to put the beginning hour of the shift by the appropriate time punch to facilitate computations by the Payroll Department.

SECTION 801.13

Use of Time Sheets.

Staff employees who do not use the time clock must complete a bi-weekly time sheet reporting actual hours worked, leave time, holiday pay, and other similar occurrences.

a. Accuracy of Time Sheets.

Time worked, leave time, etc. should be recorded on a daily basis and properly reflected on the time sheet. The employee should carefully review all entries made before submitting it to the supervisor for approval. The supervisor should carefully review all entries, ascertaining that they represent an actual statement of hours worked prior to affixing his or her signature.

b. Collection of Time Sheets.

Following approval of the time sheet by the supervisor, the employee should then route this record to the Payroll Department where overtime and other required processing will be accomplished. Timesheets are due in Payroll by 9:00 A.M. the Monday of the week of payday.

c. Falsification of Time Records.

Employees who intentionally falsify official time records may be subject to disciplinary action to include suspension or termination. Employees who "punch" other co-workers in or out are considered to have

willfully falsified such records unless they have been instructed to take such action by their immediate supervisor or an individual having the authority to so effect an individual's time.

SECTION 801.14

Final Checks.

Employees terminating their employment with the institution will receive their final check on their regular pay day. Employees using the time clock and time sheets will be paid for all hours worked and unused vacation leave on the subsequent bi-weekly payroll.

Should a monthly-paid employee have inadequate leave accrual to afford a full month's salary, an hourly rate will be paid for time worked, and vacation leave reflected during the last month. Should vacation leave accruals remain following the last month's charges, this will be paid on an hourly rate, combined with the regular monthly salary or paid during the next month.

Normal withholdings will be made from the final check and, where applicable and/or possible, any obligation to the University, parking citations, key deposits, etc. will be cleared.

SECTION 801.15

Wage and Salary Administration.

As with any other business concern, Valdosta State University recognizes the value of a sound wage and salary administration program. Such a program must allow for advancement, be consistent throughout, consider the merits of the individual, and be responsive to the prevailing wage scales in the surrounding area if we are to recruit and retain qualified personnel.

If we are to comply with myriad federal regulations, provide internal consistency and work within budget restraints, we must assure strict adherence to the plan which has been approved by the President and his administrative staff members.

SECTION 801.16

Withholding of Pay.

Valdosta State University is authorized to withhold pay checks or deduct from pay checks amounts owed by employees of the institution for any fine, fee, penalty or other financial obligation(s).

SECTION 801.17

On-Call Pay/Call Back In Pay

a. On-Call Pay

If a non-exempt employee must carry a beeper and/ pager and restrict their after work activities in order to respond to emergency situations, then a minimum payment may be required.

Unexpected emergencies and crises are an everyday reality for many university operations, which means some staff members must be available during off-duty hours to ensure a quick response.

During off-duty hours, a non exempt employee who is required to carry a beeper/pager to respond to emergency signals or calls is considered on-call. These employees may be compensated accordingly. On-call pay for the period an employee is required to be on-call during their regular work week is \$2 per hour (up to a maximum of 8 hours per day, 16 hours for weekend/holiday days).

The department director will decide which employee(s) will be assigned to on-call status. These decisions shall be made fairly and equitably using work and skill related factors.

An employee who is on-call must meet the following criteria in order to receive compensation:

1. Thoroughly check the working status of the beeper/pager before on-call status begins and maintain it in

operational mode at all times

2. Stay within the beeper's area of coverage
3. When notified by beeper, must call the number within five minutes
4. Arrive in the work unit within 30 minutes or less after receiving the call
5. Arrive in "fit condition"

Failure to meet these criteria will result in disciplinary action.

Department directors should provide a letter of explanation with the designated employee's name and title to Human Resources & Employee Development.

Exempt employees are not eligible for on-call pay.

b. Call Back In Pay

Policy: When an employee is "called back in" to perform work beyond the employee's scheduled hours of work for that day, a minimum payment may be required.

Procedure: Non-exempt employees who are called back into work will be credited with a minimum of two hours or the actual time worked.

Once called back into work, the on-call pay ceases. Call back in pay applies regardless of whether the employee has been placed on-call but has been notified by some other method to return to work.

Exempt employees and academic personnel, are not eligible for call back in pay but supervisors are encouraged to adjust exempt employees' workweek to compensate for the call back hours should the total hours worked in a workweek in conjunction with a call back exceed 40.

SECTION 801.18

Holiday Pay

If a non-exempt employee is required to work on an officially designated University holiday as a result of the operating demands of their department or a holiday falls on the employee's scheduled day off, the employee's supervisor may choose one of the following holiday payback options:

1. Grant the employee another work day off with pay by designating that day as the employee's paid holiday.
2. Pay the employee his/her holiday pay, plus pay the employee at his/her regular rate of pay for the additional time actually worked on the holiday (or a minimum of two hours as per the On Call Policy Section 801.17). Under this option, the employee does not receive another day off with pay for having worked an official holiday.
3. Add the holiday time to the employee's annual leave balance.

Note: When determining eligibility for overtime pay, holiday hours are not counted as hours worked.