



UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA



**WORK WEST.**





**GO WEST,  
AND GO WOLVES!**



## **Dear New Colleague,**

Welcome to the University of West Georgia! One of my primary goals as president is to support your success as part of our Pack. Each day, no matter your title or responsibility, you will provide valuable services that contribute to our strategic vision for the institution. And because your skills, talents, and passion are critical to helping our university grow and improve, your work here will impact the lives of students as they **become** who they are supposed to be.

This handbook, prepared by the Office of Human Resources, is intended to answer many of your questions about working at UWG. It details the university's personnel policies and procedures, explains your responsibilities as an employee, and provides a summary of staff benefits. Please keep this handbook as a reference. If you have any questions, feel free to ask your supervisor or contact Human Resources at 678-839-6403 or [hr@westga.edu](mailto:hr@westga.edu).

You are joining the university at an exciting time. We have grown to become the seventh-largest public university in the state of Georgia and an essential partner in the advancement of the economy and talent development in this region and the state at large. Out West, we have a distinct identity that reflects our long-standing commitment to making certain students are put in the best position to be successful at every turn in their education, with our ultimate goal being their completion of whatever degree or credential they seek.

As faculty and staff members, we play an essential role in helping to maintain the momentum of this institution so that we are able to increase access to education, strengthen the connectedness of our community, and enhance the local, national, and global impact of UWG. For most of us, we help others solve problems, and problems are not solved until the person who presented the problem feels like it has been solved. We personally follow challenges all the way through to the solution on behalf of those to whom we are in service.

As you begin to settle into your new roles, I encourage you to think big, be bold, and reflect on how, by building on our historic and emerging strengths, we can contribute to making the University of West Georgia the leading, most engaged university for this state in the 21st century. I look forward to working with you toward our shared goals and learning from your experience and ideas, continuing to enhance this university together.

**Thank you for becoming part of the University of West Georgia.**

**Brendan B. Kelly, Ph.D.**

*President*

*University of West Georgia*

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# INTRODUCTION

In order to position the University of West Georgia for success in the 21st century, it is important for each employee to understand their role as a member of the UWG community. The Employee Handbook is intended to inform employees of policies, regulations, pay, and benefits that apply to their employment. It is the responsibility of each employee to become familiar with the contents of the Employee Handbook.

The Employee Handbook is presented as a matter of information only and its contents should not be interpreted as an express, implied, or inferred contract of employment between UWG and any of its employees. Employment with UWG is at will. Employment is for an indefinite period of time and it is subject to termination by the employee or UWG, with or without cause, with or without notice, and at any time. Nothing in UWG policy or the Employee Handbook shall be interpreted to be in conflict with or to eliminate or modify in any way the at-will employment status of UWG employees. All information contained in the Employee Handbook is subject to change at any time at the discretion of UWG with or without notice.

## Profile of University West Georgia

Since 1906, the University of West Georgia has been home to those who are eager to embrace opportunities and define their own paths. With [more than 100 programs](#) and locations in [Carrollton](#), [Douglasville](#) and [Newnan](#), we've come a long way since then. Today, we're a regional powerhouse with diverse culture and a commitment to excellence, making a difference in the lives of our students, our neighbors and the world. The one thing that's never changed: amazing things happen when you Go West. UWG boasts 11,900 enrolled students, \$626 million in regional economic impact, 3,048 degrees conferred in 2022, has representation on campus from 32 states and 63 countries, a 43.33% six - year graduation rate, 150+ student organizations, 645+ acres on the Carrollton campus, and had 14 NCAA Division II Sports and intercollegiate athletics teams.

UWG has been recognized among the nation's top colleges and universities in 2023 by U.S. News and World Report, honored as a Best Regional College for 2023 by the Princeton Review, and recognized as one of America's best-fit universities for students by Colleges of Distinction. UWG has been named one of the Most Promising Places to Work in Student Affairs for 2023.

# UNIVERSITY OF WEST GEORGIA EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

## Equal Opportunity

UWG is committed to maintaining a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for living, working, and studying. Consistent with federal and state law, University System of Georgia policy, and University policy, the University prohibits harassment of or discrimination against any person because of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment and pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity or national origin, religion, age, genetic information, disability, or veteran status by any member of the University community on campus, in connection with a University program or activity, or in a manner that creates a hostile environment for any member of the University community.

It is the policy of the University of West Georgia to follow federal law in regards to affirmative action and equal opportunity. The University of West Georgia's affirmative action program and related policies are developed in compliance with Executive Orders 11246 and 11375, as amended; Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as it amends 38 U.S.C. 4212; the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Sections 503 & 504); the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978; the Americans with Disabilities Act

of 1990 (Title II) and their implementing regulations.

## Resources:

- For information regarding the University’s Affirmative Action Plan, please contact the Office of Human Resources at <https://www.westga.edu/hr/>.
- To submit a request for reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact the Office of Human Resources at <https://www.westga.edu/hr/>.
- For information regarding pregnant & parenting accommodations, review rights and processes for students and employees at the Pregnant and Parenting webpage, found at [https://www.westga.edu/administration/president/legal/title-nine/pregnant\\_and\\_parenting\\_rights.php](https://www.westga.edu/administration/president/legal/title-nine/pregnant_and_parenting_rights.php)
- To submit a complaint of harassment or discrimination, use the online reporting form located at [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofWestGeorgia&layout\\_id=2](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofWestGeorgia&layout_id=2).
- Review the Non-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment Procedure located at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/10288204/latest/>.
- Review the Board of Regents Sexual Misconduct Policy located at <https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section6/C2655>.

## Title IX & Equal Opportunity

The Office of Title IX & Equal Opportunity is responsible for ensuring the University of West Georgia complies with applicable laws and policies regarding discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, or any other characteristic protected by institutional policy or state, local, or federal law.

For additional information on the Office of Equal Opportunity & Title IX, to include a list of reporting options, please visit the website UWG Title IX webpage at <https://www.westga.edu/administration/president/legal/title-nine/index.php>.

## Sexual Misconduct Policy

In accordance with federal and state law including, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (“Title IX”) and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), the University System of Georgia (USG) prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in any of its education programs or activities or in employment. The USG is committed to ensuring the highest ethical conduct of the members of its community by promoting a safe learning and working environment. To that end, UWG Policy #4002, Non-Discrimination/Anti-Harassment, prohibits Sexual Misconduct, a form of sex discrimination, as defined herein.

USG institutions are committed to reducing incidents of Sexual Misconduct, providing prevention tools, conducting ongoing awareness and prevention programming, and training the campus community in accordance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (“Clery Act”) and the Violence Against Women Act (“VAWA”). Prevention programming and training will promote positive and healthy behaviors and educate the campus community on consent, sexual assault, sexual harassment, alcohol and drug use, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, bystander intervention, and reporting.

When Sexual Misconduct does occur, all members of the USG community are strongly encouraged to report it promptly through the procedures outlined in the UWG PL 4002 Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment policy. The purpose of the policy is to ensure uniformity throughout the USG in reporting and addressing sexual misconduct. The policy applies to all members of the USG community and is not intended to infringe or restrict rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution including free speech under the First Amendment, or the due process clauses of Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments.

## Reporting & Receipt of Complaints

Complaints regarding Sex Discrimination, Sexual Harassment or Sexual Misconduct can be reported to any of the following individuals:

1. Office of Equal Opportunity and Title IX Coordinator
2. Office of Human Resources - Chief Human Resources Officer and Title IX Deputy Coordinator for Faculty, Staff, and Visitors
3. Office of Legal Affairs - University General Counsel
4. Associate Vice President for Student Affairs
5. University Athletics - Associate Athletics Director and Title IX Deputy Coordinator for Gender Equity

Report using our anonymous online, found at [http://publicdocs.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofWestGeorgia&layout\\_id=2](http://publicdocs.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofWestGeorgia&layout_id=2).

Report an Incident or Concern to the UWG Cares team, found at <https://www.westga.edu/UWGCares/>.

Please refer to BOR Policy 6.7 - Sexual Misconduct Policy at <https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section6/C2655>, and UWG PL 4002 Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment policy at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/10644817/latest/>, for more information.

## Non-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment Policy Statement

UWG is committed to providing an inclusive environment where all individuals can achieve their academic and professional aspirations free from Discrimination, Harassment, and/or related Retaliation.

UWG prohibits Discrimination or Harassment in our workplace, programs, or activities on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity or national origin, disability, religion, age, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by institutional policy or state, local, or federal law.

For more information, visit UWG Policy 4002 at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/10644817/latest/>.

## Employment of Disabled Veterans & Veterans of the Vietnam Era

It is the policy of University of West Georgia not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because he or she is an individual with a disability, a disabled veteran or a veteran of the Vietnam Era. It is also the policy of the University of West Georgia to take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified disabled veterans, veterans of the Vietnam Era and individuals with disabilities. This policy applies to all employment actions including, but not limited to, advertising, recruitment, hiring, compensation, retention, training, demotion, promotion or transfer, layoff, Reduction in Force (RIF) or termination and tenure. Persons wishing to self-identify as an individual with a disability, disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam era should contact the Office of Human Resources.

In order to ensure compliance, operational responsibility for implementing and monitoring this policy and maintaining and updating the affirmative action plan for individuals with disabilities, disabled veterans and veterans of the Vietnam Era lies with the Office of Human Resources. Every member of the University community is expected to uphold this policy as a matter of mutual respect and fundamental fairness in human relations. This policy has the unequivocal support of the Office of the President. All members of the faculty, staff, and student body are expected to ensure that nondiscriminatory practices are followed at the University of West Georgia.

## Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The University of West Georgia prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities who can perform the essential functions of the job, with or without reasonable accommodation(s). An individual is disabled under the Act if he or she:

- Has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; or
- Has a record of such an impairment; or
- Is regarded as having such impairment.

The University of West Georgia has and will continue to provide reasonable accommodations to enable the institution to hire and retain qualified employees who are able to perform the essential functions of their positions. Any person wishing to self-identify as disabled or request a reasonable accommodation due to a disability should contact the Office of Human Resources.

## Tobacco & Smoke Free Campus

The University of West Georgia (UWG) is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and amicable environment for all students, employees, and visitors to the UWG campus. While tobacco use is a personal choice, the health hazards related to smoking and exposure to second and third-hand smoke are well-documented. These hazards can affect not only the smoker but also the nonsmoker who is exposed to the smoke.

For more information, please see UWG Policy 7006, Alcohol and Tobacco on Campus, and its associated Procedure, Tobacco and Smoke Free Campus, at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/13240647/latest/>.

## Alcohol Policy

Alcohol consumption is generally prohibited during the workday, including rest periods and meal periods, except at authorized University-sponsored events where alcohol is served.

When employees are operating a UWG vehicle, or conducting company-related work offsite, they are prohibited from being under the influence of alcohol or an illegal drug as defined in this procedure.

Persons violating applicable laws may be subject to arrest or citation. UWG employees and students may be referred to the appropriate UWG authority for disciplinary sanctions for policy or conduct violations. Visitors who violate the law or UWG policies may be required to leave the campus. For information regarding Alcohol Possession and Use, please refer to UWG

Policy #7006, Alcohol on Campus at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/13239855/latest/>.

## UWG Drug-Free Workplace Policy

As a recipient of Federal funds, University of West Georgia supports and complies with the provisions of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988. University of West Georgia expects employees to meet appropriate standards of performance, to observe basic rules of good conduct and to comply with Institutional Policies and Procedures. As an employer, University of West Georgia aggressively promotes and requires a drug free workplace among its employees.

Institutional Policy prohibits the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of illegal drugs by employees of the University of West Georgia. An employee convicted for felony and/or misdemeanor drug violations of a criminal drug statute will be subject to strong disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, or may be required, at the discretion of the University, to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse or rehabilitation program.



In accordance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, all University employees must as a condition of employment (i) abide by the University's policy on controlled substances, and (ii) inform the University of any conviction for violation of a criminal drug statute, which occurs in the workplace, within 5 days after such conviction.

## **Disciplinary Action Related to Drug & Alcohol Possession & Use**

The use, consumption, possession, distribution or sale of any narcotic, dangerous drug, or controlled substance by any employee of the University for which such employee does not have a legal license or valid prescription is strictly prohibited. The University supports all federal, state and local laws relating to the use of alcoholic beverages. The use, possession, consumption, distribution or sale of alcoholic beverages on any property owned or leased by the University is prohibited. Exceptions may be made only by the President or a designee (campus events, tailgating, etc.). In these instances, all laws surrounding alcohol consumption, including but not limited to the drinking age of 21, will be enforced. No University funds may be used for the purchase of alcoholic beverages. The adherence to these policies on alcohol and drugs shall be the individual and personal responsibility of each employee of the University. Any employee who violates the policy on alcohol and/or drugs shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from the University and referral to the appropriate federal, state and/or local authorities for prosecution, as appropriate.

Any employee who is convicted of unlawful manufacture, distribution, sale, use or possession of a controlled substance, an illegal or dangerous drug, or who admits guilt of any such offense in a court proceeding, shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. It is the employee's responsibility to inform the University of such convictions and/or admittance of guilt within 5 days of disposition.

Employment following a drug related offense may be conditioned on the employee's completion of a drug abuse treatment and education program approved by the President. If, prior to arrest for an offense involving a controlled substance, or a dangerous and/or illegal drug, an employee notifies his or her immediate supervisor that he or she illegally uses a controlled substance, marijuana, or a dangerous drug and is receiving treatment or agrees to receive treatment under a drug abuse and education program approved by the President, such employee shall be retained for up to one year as long as the employee follows the treatment plan and the quality of their work remains satisfactory. Retention of such employee shall be conditioned upon satisfactory completion of the program. The employee's work activities may be restructured if, in the opinion of the immediate supervisor, it is deemed advisable.

No statement made by an employee to a supervisor or other person in order to comply with this policy shall be admissible in any civil, administrative or criminal proceeding as evidence against the employee.

The rights herein granted shall be available to a University employee only once during a five-year period and shall not apply to any such employee who has refused to be tested or who has tested positive for a controlled substance, marijuana or a dangerous and/or illegal drug.

## **Possession & Carrying of Weapons on Campus**

It shall be unlawful for any person to carry, possess or have under such person's control any weapon, except as permitted by O.C.G.A. § 16-11-127.1, on UWG Property. All such weapons must be Concealed in accordance with law. The USG prohibits all weapons on property owned or leased by the USG and its institutions, except as specifically provided herein or as provided in federal or state law.

## Exceptions

Prohibited weapons do not include sporting equipment (i.e.; baseball bats, hockey sticks, or other sports equipment possessed by competitors) possessed for legitimate use in formal or informal athletic or exercise activities.

Law enforcement officers, active military personnel, and other similar personnel may possess weapons as authorized by federal or state law to do so.

Please see UWG Policy #7003 Weapons on Campus, located at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/12408404/latest/>, and its associate Procedure, Possession and Carrying of Weapons on Campus, located at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/12408512/latest/>, for more information.

## Conflicts of Commitment & Interest

Required by Board of Regents (BOR) Policy 8.2.18.2, found at [https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/C224/#p8.2.18\\_personnel\\_conduct](https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/C224/#p8.2.18_personnel_conduct), all UWG employees have a duty to report and avoid Conflicts of Commitment and Interest, whether actual or apparent. An apparent conflict exists when a reasonable person would conclude from the circumstances that the employee's ability to protect the public interest or perform public duties is compromised by a personal, financial, or business interest. Even in the absence of a legal conflict of interest, an apparent conflict can exist.

Please see UWG Policy #4001, Human Resources Administrative Practice and Services at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/12239114/latest/>, and its associated Procedure Conflicts of Commitment and Interest at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/12352724/latest/>, for more information.

## Business Activities

Employees who supplement their earnings by the promotion or sale of products and services do so entirely on their own initiative and without implied approval or endorsement by UWG. All such activity, including sampling, soliciting orders, and deliveries, must be conducted entirely outside of working hours and entirely outside of UWG premises, in compliance with UWG PL#4001 Human Resources Administrative Practice and Services, Conflicts of Commitment and Interest, found at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/12352724/latest>

# EMPLOYEE CATEGORIES

The University System of Georgia (USG) has established employee categories (types of employees and types of employment) 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. USG Employee Categories policy, found at [https://www.usg.edu/hr/assets/hr/hrap\\_manual/HRAP\\_Employee\\_Categories\\_Classification%2C\\_Compensation%2C\\_and\\_Payroll.pdf](https://www.usg.edu/hr/assets/hr/hrap_manual/HRAP_Employee_Categories_Classification%2C_Compensation%2C_and_Payroll.pdf), ensures consistency among institutions of the USG as necessary for hiring, extending benefits, applying policy, and meeting applicable reporting requirements while also affording the appropriate level of flexibility needed at the institutional level.

## Faculty

The faculty shall consist of the corps of instruction and the administrative officers as defined in Board of

Regents' Policy 3.2.1 Faculty Membership, found at <https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section3/C337/>. Full-time professors, associate professors, assistant professors, instructors, lecturers, senior lecturers, principal lecturers, and teaching personnel with such other titles as may be approved by the Board, shall be the Corps of Instruction. Full-time research and extension personnel and duly certified librarians will be included in the Corps of Instruction on the basis of comparable training. Persons holding part-time and adjunct appointments or other honorary titles shall not be considered to be members of the faculty.

## Staff

Staff employees shall consist of two major employee groups 1) staff professional and administrative employees, and 2) staff non-exempt and defined as follows:

**Professional and Administrative employees:** All employees who are exempt from the Federal Wage-Hour provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) because of their professional or administrative responsibilities, and who are not identified as faculty or graduate assistants, shall be designated as Professional and Administrative Employees.

**Non-exempt employees:** All employees who are not exempt from the Federal Wage-Hour provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) shall be designated as staff. (NOTE: The University System of Georgia position classification system includes the appropriate FLSA status in the Master BOR Category (BCAT) List, with Definitions, found at <https://www.usg.edu/hr/assets/hr/documents/masterBCAT.pdf>.)

Classified Employees shall consist of the Staff Professional and Administrative, and Staff non-exempt employees as defined above.

## Student Employees

Student Employees are considered temporary and include graduate assistants and student workers.

## Employment Status

- **Regular Employment Status:** Regular employment is considered continuous and may also be defined by agreement, contract, term, or restricted funding source(s). Regular employment may be benefits eligible, partial benefits eligible, non-benefits eligible, fulltime, or part-time, exempt, or nonexempt. Regular exempt employment must meet the "salary basis" requirement under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).
- **Salary Basis:** Being paid on a "salary basis" means an employee regularly receives a predetermined amount of compensation each pay period on a weekly or less frequent basis and the predetermined amount cannot be reduced because of variations in the quality or quantity of the employee's work subject to exceptions under FLSA.
- **Temporary Employment Status:** Temporary employment is short in duration to address business needs and must meet the requirements and characteristics described below:
  - A temporary is non-benefits eligible.
  - A temporary does not have an expectation of long-term employment.
  - A temporary may be full-time or part-time.
  - A temporary employee may not exceed a total of 1,300 hours worked in a 12 consecutive month period. The 1,300 hours can be accumulated in any combination during the 12-month period.

Once a temporary employee has worked 1,300 hours or has been employed for twelve consecutive months, whichever comes first, the temporary employee must have a break in service of twenty-six consecutive weeks. Employment applies across all USG institutions.

- If a temporary employee is needed beyond the 1,300 hours, they must be moved to a regular employee status.
- A temporary who is dually or jointly employed in more than one position must have all hours worked counted towards the 1,300-hour worked limit from the date of hire into the first position; this includes Temporary Staff Arrangements.
- A temporary may be separated at any time for any reason without notice and either the employer or the employee can end the employment relationship. Such separation is not grievable or subject to appeal.
- A temporary is typically considered non-exempt under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act's overtime provisions and paid for all hours worked on an hour-for-hour basis, and they must receive overtime pay for hours worked over forty in a workweek at a rate not less than time and one-half their regular rate of pay. In some instances, temporary employees, such as graduate assistants, post docs or credentialed professionals, may be exempt.

## Employment Categories

### Faculty

Faculty consist of the corps of instruction and the administrative officers as defined in Section 3 of the Policy Manual of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. The types of faculty are described below:

**Regular Faculty:** Employed on a continuous basis and whose duration of employment may also be defined by agreement, contract, term, and/or restricted funding source(s). Regular Faculty may be full-time or part-time. Those faculty with a work commitment of half-time or greater are partial or full benefits eligible and those who work less than 20 hours per week are non-benefits eligible. Regular Faculty who are not hired through a competitive search will typically be given a “term” appointment for one academic or fiscal year and may be reappointed for one (1) additional year, not to exceed a total duration of 2 years. Regular Faculty who have a full-time (1.0 FTE) appointment may be tenured, on tenure track or hold a non-tenured position in accordance with Sections 8.3.7 and 8.3.8 of the Policy Manual of Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.

**Temporary Faculty:** Employed on a short-term basis through written appointment. They are not employed on an academic year contract. If they are employed for more than one consecutive academic semester for 30 hours or more, except when the Academic semester is combined with summer semester immediately preceding or following the Academic Semester, they shall be employed as Regular Faculty. Temporary Faculty are non-benefits eligible. Requirements of the Affordable Care Act (ACA): Under the ACA, a reasonable method of crediting hours for Part-time Regular and Temporary Faculty may be used to determine healthcare eligibility. The University System of Georgia has determined that a reasonable method for converting credit hours or contact hours to standard hours work is as follows: 1.25 Prep/Grading hours + .5 Office/Meeting hours per each Classroom/Contact hour per week.

*Graduate Assistants and Graduate Research Assistants will track hours worked.*



## Staff Employees

The types of staff employees are described below:

**Regular Staff:** Employed on a continuous basis and whose duration of employment may also be defined by term and/or restricted funding source(s). Regular Staff employees may be full-time or part-time. Those with a work commitment of half-time or greater or .5 FTE are partial or full benefits eligible and those who work less than 20 hours per week are non-benefits eligible.

**Temporary Staff:** Employed for a short duration and are non-benefits eligible. o Requirements of the Affordable Care Act (ACA): Under the ACA, all regular staff employees who work less than 30 hours per week (less than .75 FTE) and all temporary staff employees shall record and report all hours worked to determine health benefits eligibility. Requirements of the Affordable Care Act (ACA): Under the ACA, all regular staff employees who work less than 30 hours per week (less than .75 FTE) and all temporary staff employees shall record and report all hours worked to determine health benefits eligibility.

# EMPLOYMENT

## Employment of Personnel

The University of West Georgia (UWG) appoints, employs, and evaluates employees in accordance with the defined policies based on the rules and regulations approved by the governing board—the Board of Regents (BoR) of the University System of Georgia (USG). These regulations are published in the BoR Policy Manual, Section 8, Personnel, found at <https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/>, and adhere to federal and state laws, equal employment opportunity, and affirmative action provisions.

UWG strives to be one of the best places to work in the state of Georgia and is dedicated to its employees. Our faculty and staff contribute to the curation of a first-choice university in alignment with the commitment statement of UWG's Strategic Plan. This is supported in the following ways:

- Employing individuals with qualifications and experience to support the goals and mission of the institution.
- Developing and fostering career growth and advancement opportunities by offering training and organization development programs for all employees.
- Providing feedback through the annual performance review process for faculty and staff.

UWG Office of Human Resources is responsible for benefits, onboarding of all employees, and managing the employment, appointment, and evaluation processes for all personnel.

Talent acquisition and job request tools are provided and accessible on the Office of Human Resources WorkWest Talent Services website, found at <https://workwest.westga.edu/hr/talent-services-home.php>, to aid managers with step by step instructions for completing the hiring or appointment process and related requests.

## Employment and Appointment of Administrative and Academic Officers

UWG's president is appointed annually by the governing board, as set forth in BoR Policy Manual, Section 2.1, Election of Presidents by the Board of Regents.

All other appointments and reappointments of administrative and academic officers are made by the president of the University of West Georgia under authority granted by the governing board in BoR Policy Manual, Section 2.6.3, Personnel Policies, following the executive search process.

The search for executive talent and difficult to fill leadership positions are conducted by contracted Executive Search firms in partnership with UWG Office of Human Resources, ensuring alignment with institutional talent acquisition processes. The UWG executive search process includes 1) defining executive position requirements, 2) defining executive attributes, 3) advertising and publication of position announcements, 4) recruiting candidates, 5) assessing and evaluating candidates, 6) interview and selection, 7) making finalist determination, and 8) hiring proposal and offer followed by established UWG employment and onboarding activities.

## Employment of Foreign Nationals

The employment and/or payment of nonresident foreign nationals shall be in compliance with all applicable federal laws and shall comply with all relevant visa restrictions, as outlined in the BOR policy manual 8.2.4 Employment of Foreign Nationals, found at [https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/C224/#p8.2.4\\_employment\\_of\\_foreign\\_nationals](https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/C224/#p8.2.4_employment_of_foreign_nationals).

The University of West Georgia sponsors temporary H-1B work visas on behalf of certain faculty and staff, considering tenure status for faculty, and the level of specialty occupation for staff. International faculty members who are employed at the University of West Georgia pursuant to H-1B work authorization are authorized to work only for the University of West Georgia, as the H-1B does not authorize any other employment. Under USCIS rules, accepting honoraria from entities other than the University of West Georgia for other engagements, to include speaking engagements, constitutes other employment. Accordingly, the University of West Georgia recommends that international faculty members on H1B work authorization do not accept honoraria.

The University of West Georgia sponsors work-based permanent residency for certain faculty and staff employees, dependent upon performance, tenure status, and level of specialty occupation. Timing and monetary contributions for sponsorship is determined in collaboration with leadership and appropriate administrative offices. University of West Georgia utilizes the services of an Immigration Attorney to ensure compliance in hiring and the employment of Foreign Nationals.

## Employment of Relatives

Employees shall make every reasonable effort to avoid relationships with subordinates or students that might have even the appearance of a conflict of interest. This includes avoiding actual or apparent conflict of interests between subordinates and/or students with whom he/she has a professional responsibility. Similarly, all employees and candidates for employment should be evaluated on relevant job qualifications and experience, and certain relationships between employees and supervisors are discouraged or prohibited by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. No person shall be hired or promoted to any position in the “line of authority” of any employee who is considered a relative as defined by the Board of Regents. Employees who supervise, evaluate, or in any way directly affect the employment of, or academic terms or conditions of, another employee or student shall not have an amorous relationship with that individual. Nepotism is also prohibited by the University.

For more information, see the UWG PL Human Resources Administrative Practice and Services (#4001) - Employee Relations, at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/12239114/latest/>, and USG Policy on Nepotism - Employment of Relatives, at [https://www.usg.edu/hr/assets/hr/hrap\\_manual/HRAP\\_Employment\\_of\\_Relatives\\_Employment.pdf](https://www.usg.edu/hr/assets/hr/hrap_manual/HRAP_Employment_of_Relatives_Employment.pdf)

## Employment Beyond Retirement

Per USG Policy 8.2.8.3 - Employment Beyond Retirement, found at [https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/policy/8.5\\_financial\\_exigency/](https://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/policy/8.5_financial_exigency/), an individual who has retired from the USG and is receiving benefits from TRS, ERS, or ORP may be eligible for reemployment on a part-time basis by the USG. Reemployment of USG retirees

by the USG must fall under the following conditions:

- The reemployment of a UWG retiree must be approved by the hiring institution's president. Institutions must submit a copy of their hiring and approval procedures to rehire UWG retirees to the University System Office of Human Resources upon request.
- A rehired retiree must have a minimum break of at least one month between the effective date of his/ or her retirement and the effective date of his/ or her reemployment.
- The work commitment of a rehired retiree must be less than half-time, i.e., less than 49 percent.
- The salary that is paid to a rehired retiree must be no more than 49 percent of the last compensation earned at retirement, or, the average compensation used to determine a retiree's benefit at retirement (for TRS retirees), whichever is deemed higher; with consideration for the average cost of living adjustment increases that have been applied since the employee retired;
- The salary that is paid to a rehired retiree must be consistent with his/or her work commitment.

Employment with a TRS covered employer must be reported by the employer of the employee's eligibility to continue receiving a monthly benefit payment while working in an allowable position.

## Employment of Minors

The employment of all persons under the age of 18 years shall be in compliance with the regulations of the U.S. Department of Labor, found at <http://www.dol.gov/dol/topic/youthlabor/agerequirements.htm>. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) , found at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/flsa>, sets wage, hours worked, and safety requirements for minors (individuals under age 18) working in jobs covered by the statute, found at <https://webapps.dol.gov/elaws/whd/flsa/scope/screen10.asp>. The rules vary depending upon the particular age of the minor and the particular job involved. As a general rule, the FLSA sets 14 years old as the minimum age for employment, and limits the number of hours worked by minors under the age of 16.

## Hiring & Employment Separation Guidelines

### Pre-employment Screening

The pre-employment screening process consists of a background check, credit check for specified positions with access to financial resources, possible drug testing and driving record checks, and a probable skills proficiency demonstration based on the assigned position and departmental requirements.

### Background Investigation

It shall be a condition of employment with any institution of the University System of Georgia to submit to a background investigation. Per BOR guidelines, a background check may also be required for employees who are promoted or reclassified. Offers of employment shall be conditional pending the result of the background investigation which shall include, at a minimum, the following:

- A state and federal criminal history check covering a minimum of seven (7) years;
- A nationwide sex offender search;
- A social security number check; and
- For all professional, faculty and academic positions, an academic credentials check.

Offers of employment are conditional pending the result of a state and federal criminal history check covering a minimum of seven (7) years. Positions of trust are those that involve interaction with children, after-hours access to facilities, access to financial resources that have been otherwise identified by the hiring official to require a more extensive background investigation.

A background investigation shall also be performed on any existing employee being transferred, reassigned, or promoted to a position of trust. Any existing employee that is transferred, reassigned, reclassified or promoted into a position requiring a Purchase Card, when they have not been assigned a Purchasing Card previously, must submit to a credit check. Existing cardholders are subject to a background check before renewal of the card.

An institution of the University System of Georgia may elect to perform reference checks and/or background investigations on part-time, student or temporary employees.

## Pre-employment Credit Check

Satisfactory credit reports are required for positions handling cash, credit or sensitive information and prior to the issuance of a University Purchasing Card to an employee (Purchasing Manual). Credit reports are conducted by Human Resources when an employee or applicant applies for a University Purchasing Card (P-Card) or when an application for a position that handles case, credit or sensitive information is received. A credit check will be requested only for those individuals who give consent to do so. No Purchasing Card will be issued to an employee who refuses consent to a credit review. If a position requires the use of a Purchasing Card and the applicant and/or employee does not provide consent for a credit report or fails to meet the University credit guidelines, termination of the job offer and/or employment may occur. A copy of the credit report will be provided to each applicant and/or employee upon request. An applicant and/or employee may provide written information to Human Resources explaining mitigating factors regarding an applicant and/or employee credit report. Human Resources will, in its sole opinion, determine if the information presented is reliable evidence beyond the individual's control. Once Human Resources has completed its credit check, all credit report information will be retained separate from the employee's personnel file and will not be provided to the employee's department.

## Drug Testing

The University of West Georgia promotes and requires a drug-free workplace among its employees. Employees in "high-risk" positions on a regular basis shall be subject to pre-employment, reasonable suspicion, post-accident and random drug testing for evidence of use of illegal drugs. Additionally, an employee who has notified their supervisor that they have a drug related problem and is maintaining employment under Board of Regents Policy 8.2.18, Voluntary Disclosure of Drug Use, shall be subject to random drug testing.

USG Policy on Drug Testing, found at [https://www.usg.edu/hr/assets/hr/hrap\\_manual/HRAP\\_Drug\\_Testing\\_Safety\\_Security.pdf](https://www.usg.edu/hr/assets/hr/hrap_manual/HRAP_Drug_Testing_Safety_Security.pdf), seeks to prevent risks and ill effects of illegal drug use, particularly by employees in high-risk positions and to provide a safer and more productive work environment.

The following employees in high-risk positions on a regular basis shall be subject to random drug testing for evidence of use of illegal drugs:

- Campus Law Enforcement Officers who regularly perform high-risk work in which inattention to duty or errors in judgment while on duty will have a potential for significant risk of harm to the employee, other employees, or the general public.
- Campus Law Enforcement Officers employed by private organizations which contract with an institution to provide security services shall be subject to random drug testing procedures as prescribed by their employer and consistent with this policy.
- Persons employed in positions requiring a CDL and in other positions that have been deemed by an institution's administration to be considered hazardous.



- Persons employed in Health Services, Licensed Professional Counselors, Student Development, Athletic Trainers, Dispatchers, or related positions.

Random testing for University of West Georgia employees will be performed in accordance with the same regulations and procedures as those prescribed by the Board of Regents and approved by the Chancellor for drug testing of applicants for state employment. Such testing shall not, at any one time, be given to more than one officer on each work shift who has been previously classified as a high-risk employee.

Law enforcement officers subject to random testing as mentioned in procedures of the Board of Regents for classified personnel may be terminated from employment if they decline to submit to a random drug test or if they test positive for the use of illegal drugs.

The identity of any officer who declines a drug test, or tests positive for drug use, shall be withheld from all persons except those who have need for such information in their official capacity.

## Conditions of Employment

The following acknowledgments and/forms are required of all employees as a condition of employment via the University System of Georgia Equifax Compliance Center:

- Outstanding Wage Beneficiary
- Conflict of Interest form
- UWG Statement of Confidentiality
- General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- Benefits and Retirement
- Retiree Status
- Right to Know
- Computer Use Policy
- General Work Rules
- Policy on Alcohol and Other Drugs
- Motor Vehicle Records
- Workplace Violence Policy
- Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment (NDAH) Policy
- University System of Georgia Ethics Policy
- Family Medical Leave Act
- Affordable Care Act
- Worker's Compensation
- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Completion of I-9: This form identifies an individual's legal right to employment in the United States and must be completed within three days of employment or the employee is subject to termination.
- Benefits Enrollment: For benefits-eligible employees only: optional benefit enrollment (for example, health insurance) must be completed within 30 days of the employee's original hire date with UWG in order to participate in benefit programs.
- Security Questionnaire: The Georgia Security Questionnaire must be completed for all persons employed for 30 or more days. The Sedition and Subversive Activities Act of 1953 (Georgia Law 16-11-5 et seq.) requires each new employee to sign, prior to employment in state government, a questionnaire which is designed to establish that there are no reasonable grounds to believe that he or she is a subversive person. A subversive person is defined as one who commits, advocates, or teaches any act intended to overthrow or destroy the government of the United

States or government of the State of Georgia by force or violence, or who is a knowing member of a subversive organization.

- **Loyalty Oath:** All employees of the University System of Georgia who receive public funds for services rendered as employees are required to affirm that they will support the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of the State of Georgia. The Loyalty Oath must be completed as required by the laws of the State of Georgia. This form must be retained in the permanent files of the University of West Georgia.
- **USG Ethics Training & Compliance:** The University System of Georgia mandates a three-pronged approach to ensure ethical conduct by USG faculty, staff, administrators, vendors, contractors, and members of the Board of Regents. The training is mandatory for all University System staff and faculty. The training must be completed within 30 days from initial hire date, and annually thereafter.

## **New Employee Orientation**

Orientation is required of all benefits-eligible employees. A general orientation program is regularly scheduled for all new regular classified employees. The orientation program provides critical information concerning policies, procedures and employee benefits. All new classified employees are required to attend the orientation program. On the first day of employment, new employees will be scheduled for orientation by the Talent Acquisition Team in the Office of Human Resources. In addition to attending the general orientation program, each new employee should meet with his or her supervisor, who will explain the duties and responsibilities of the position. Any specific departmental policies, procedures, and regulations will be explained by the supervisor at that time.

## **UWG Identification Card**

A new employee shall obtain a UWG identification card as soon as their information is added to the Banner system. ID cards can be obtained in the Wolves Card Office located in the University Community Center (UCC).

The Wolves Card gives employees access to the Ingram Library, Campus Center, free or discounted prices to plays, sporting events, and concerts, and more. The card is the bearer's official UWG identification and should be carried at all times. It is to be shown upon request to any UWG employee whose assigned responsibilities authorize them to verify employee identification. The card is not transferable and is the property of UWG. It should be returned to UWG upon termination of employment. Loss of an ID card should be reported immediately to the Wolves Card Office.

More information can be found on the Wolves Card Office webpage, found at <https://www.westga.edu/campus-life/wolvescard/index.php>.

## **New Employee Personal Information**

New employees will be required to complete information forms for payroll and benefit purposes and will be responsible for the continuing accuracy of all information. If necessary, new forms may be obtained from the Office of Human Resources. As necessary, change of address, telephone number and tax withholding status should be requested online through OneUSG Employee Self-Service portal (ESS). <https://oneusgconnect.usg.edu/>.

## Provisional Period for New Hires, Transfers and Rehires

With the exception of certain University Police employees, each new classified employee is required to serve the first six (6) months of employment at the University of West Georgia in a provisional status. During this time, the new employee has the first opportunity to evaluate UWG as a place to work. The supervisor is strongly encouraged to evaluate the employee's job performance during the provisional period. If the employee's work performance is not satisfactory, the employee will be notified in writing during the six-month provisional period and the employee may be terminated at that time without the right of appeal.

In the event of an approved leave of greater than thirty (30) days, an equivalent extension of the provisional period may be granted with the approval of the Chief Human Resources Officer. An extension should be granted only in exceptional circumstances, and in no instance shall the provisional period be extended such that the total provisional period would exceed nine (9) months. University System employees transferring to another University System institution or the University System Office are subject to a new six (6) month provisional period upon beginning at the new location.

University Police employees are subject to the same provisional employment requirement as other classified employees, except that the six-month provisional period will not begin until any person employed as a police officer has completed their mandated training for certification as a police officer. This special provision only applies to those University Police employees for whom specified training is mandated by state law and such training occurs after their employment begins. Employees in the six-month provisional period are only eligible for transfer or promotion within their current department/college/division during that period and only when granted permission by the respective department head, dean, or vice president of their current department, college, and/or division.

Employees who have successfully completed a provisional period and who are transferring or being promoted into a new position within UWG will not be subject to another provisional period. Former employees who are rehired will be considered new employees and will have another provisional period.

## EMPLOYMENT SEPARATION

### Involuntary Termination

Dismissal is advised when, among other reasons, an employee has engaged in serious misconduct or an employee has not corrected performance and/or behavior. Prior to dismissing an employee, the supervisor is required to submit requests for termination through the Office of Human Resources and Office of Legal Affairs, who will review the request and related information to determine next steps via the OLA/OHR Request to Terminate process, found at <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/0d47601bc28843fc81eb3622cb7d6413>

The termination must be communicated verbally and in writing during a scheduled transition meeting with the employee, when available to which the Office of Human Resources is present. The Office of Human Resources representative will provide the applicable termination documentation, to include the reason for termination and effective date, rights to the grievance process, and off-boarding instructions.

## Reduction in Force

Should it become necessary to reduce the workforce at UWG, job eliminations or job consolidation may be required. When personnel reductions become necessary, affected employees will be given 90 days' notice when possible so that they may seek employment opportunities within or outside of the University of West Georgia. UWG Office of Human Resources offers services to assist employees with obtaining continued employment at UWG to those affected by reduction in force. Classified employees who are terminated, demoted or otherwise adversely affected by reorganization, redirection, program modification or financial exigency, as approved or determined by the University President or designee, are not governed by the procedures described in the Grievance Process.

## Rehire after Termination

UWG employees that separate voluntarily or involuntarily from employment with the USG will receive one of three rehire eligibility designations as follows, as outlined in the USG policy, Eligibility for Rehire, found at [https://www.usg.edu/hr/assets/hr/hrap\\_manual/HRAP\\_Eligibility\\_for\\_Rehire\\_Employment.pdf](https://www.usg.edu/hr/assets/hr/hrap_manual/HRAP_Eligibility_for_Rehire_Employment.pdf):

- Eligible for Rehire
- Ineligible for Rehire
- Conditional

A designation into one of the three categories will be made regardless of the separation reason (resignation, retirement, discharge, job abandonment or other). Employees must be notified in writing, at the point of separation or as soon as reasonably possible. If a former employee receives a conditional or ineligible for rehire designation, they may appeal the rehire status through established institutional procedures by contacting the Office of Human Resources. Employees designated as eligible for rehire do not require notification of eligibility designation.

## Job Abandonment

When an employee does not report to work for three consecutive, scheduled workdays and does not communicate with the department as to their whereabouts or intentions regarding the job, the department should terminate the employee for job abandonment. Prior to taking such action, department leadership is advised to make reasonable efforts to contact the employee to determine the employee's intentions regarding the job.

### Termination Procedure for Job Abandonment

After it has been determined by the hiring manager that an employee has abandoned their position (has not shown up or communicated with the department for three consecutive scheduled workdays) the supervisor should move to terminate employment. The hiring manager should work with the Office of Human Resources for consultation. Termination due to Job Abandonment requires adherence to the dismissal procedures outlined in the Performance Management and Progressive Discipline procedures.

## Resignation

Resignation is voluntary relinquishment of employment by an employee. An employee should submit written notification of resignation a minimum of two weeks prior to his or her last day worked. Before transition, the employee must return all UWG property including keys, I.D. cards, parking pass, computer equipment and other applicable items. Employees who resign are encouraged to participate in the UWG Exit Interview process.

## Retirement

No employee may be required to retire because of age. The requirements for retirement under TRS can be found in the BOR Policy Manual. Employees planning retirement are encouraged to schedule a pre-planning consultation with a benefits representative in the Office of Human Resources by contacting [hrservices@westga.edu](mailto:hrservices@westga.edu) well in advance of the planned retirement date. More information can be found on the USG policy 8.2.8, Retirement and Post Retirement, found at [http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/policy/8.2.8\\_retirement/](http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/policy/8.2.8_retirement/), <http://www.trsga.com/>, and Teachers Retirement System of Georgia webpage, found at <https://www.trsga.com/>.

# CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION GUIDELINES

The University of West Georgia Classification and Compensation program for classified staff employees is administered by the Office of Human Resources. The program consists of a Pay Plan and BCAT Classification System designed to group positions that have similar duties, levels of responsibility, skills and educational requirements into the same general levels of pay. The pay rates for each job title are determined by the knowledge, training, skills and level of responsibility and risk assigned to that position. In addition, every effort is made to ensure equitable salary ranges are in keeping with other universities in the University System of Georgia and similar positions in the local, regional and national markets.

## General Pay Plan

The Pay Plan consists of pay grades which provide a means for the University to group comparable positions together into common ranges of pay based on job scope, complexity and other factors. The salaries for similar positions should fall within a designated range, or pay grade. The ranges overlap, but each range specifies three guide points:

- A Minimum (all individuals would make at least this pay level)
- A Midpoint (a benchmark to the external market for similar positions)
- A Maximum (the most that someone would expect to make for a position at a particular pay level)

## Employment Classification

All employee job titles at the University of West Georgia are assigned a Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) status of either exempt or non-exempt.

### Exempt Position

Exempt status is assigned to positions that are not eligible for overtime pay as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Employees in executive, administrative, and professional positions are typically exempt under the FLSA and are paid a designated salary, regardless of the number of hours they might work in a week. Such positions are hence —exempt| from the FLSA. Exempt employees are not entitled to additional pay or compensatory time off for hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a given work week. Any schedule adjustments for an exempt employee must be approved by their immediate supervisor.

### Non-Exempt Position

Non-exempt employees are subject to the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and are eligible to be compensated for hours worked in excess of 40 per week. Employees that are assigned



non-exempt status must complete timesheets and be paid on an hourly basis for all hours worked over 40 in a workweek. If a non-exempt employee works more than 40 hours in the workweek, they must be paid overtime at a rate of time-and-a-half. Overtime must be approved in advance by the supervisor. Failure to have over-time approved may result in disciplinary action.

## Job Evaluation Process

The University's job evaluation process is designed to maintain consistency in the utilization of various job titles. This process ensures that employees performing similar duties have the same or similar job titles with corresponding pay levels. The job evaluation process requires a comparative analysis of a position to determine if the current classification and/or compensation levels are appropriate. The job evaluation process also includes the review of required knowledge, skills and abilities needed to perform duties assigned to a position. A review of current market data may be required during the job evaluation process as a means of obtaining UWG's goals in:

- Attracting and retaining qualified individuals by matching job skills with the assigned position
- Ensuring that internal and external equity issues are addressed
- Encouraging professional growth for employees
- Recognizing necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities required for a position
- Ensuring that the employee is appropriately compensated

## Job Analysis and Job Audit

Generally, a position only needs to be reviewed if its duties have changed significantly over time or if substantive new duties have been assumed that are beyond the scope of what generally might be expected for a position with the current title. If an employee believes his position should be reviewed for reclassification, the employee should discuss the possibility with his immediate supervisor. If the manager concurs, position review materials should be submitted for review.

Employees may be asked to describe the duties they perform so that the information fully reflects the current scope of responsibilities. The Office of Human Resources will review the information provided and notify the manager of the classification review decision.

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES ADVERTISEMENT

The Office of Human Resources maintains a current listing of classified and temporary position vacancies on its website. The position openings can be accessed online at [https://careers.hprod.onehcm.usg.edu/psc/careers/CAREERS/HRMS/c/HRS\\_HRAM\\_FL.HRS\\_CG\\_SEARCH\\_FL.GBL?FOCUS=Applicant&Siteld=54000&](https://careers.hprod.onehcm.usg.edu/psc/careers/CAREERS/HRMS/c/HRS_HRAM_FL.HRS_CG_SEARCH_FL.GBL?FOCUS=Applicant&Siteld=54000&). Employees are encouraged to use the website as a resource for potential promotion or transfer opportunities.

## EMPLOYMENT IN MULTIPLE POSITIONS

Employees of the University of West Georgia may be employed in only one full-time position or classification within the University System of Georgia at any given time. If an employee wishes to accept another position in addition to a current position at the University or within the University System of Georgia, the following rules will apply:

- The combined work time for both positions cannot exceed 100 percent of full-time status (or 40 hours per week).
- Both positions must be the same FLSA classification, either exempt or non-exempt.

- Acceptance of the second position must be approved by the employee's department head and the Chief Human Resources Officer or designee.

Questions concerning specific circumstances should be directed to the Office of Human Resources for more detailed information.

## SALARY ADMINISTRATION GUIDELINES

The University of West Georgia (UWG) and Office of Human Resources through its salary administration process will review and endorse salary structure updates and individual pay decisions that support the successful growth of the University and the attainment of the University's strategic priorities. These guidelines ensure consistency in compensation practices aligned with University System of Georgia policy, while affording the appropriate level of flexibility needed at the institutional level.

### Merit Increases

UWG employees are public servants furthering the mission of the institution. Base pay plans are designed to appropriately compensate employees for their service in a fair, equitable manner while also providing merit-based pay adjustments consistent with employee performance.

- Each year, the University System Office of Fiscal Affairs issues salary administration that provides guidelines for awarding salary increases for the fiscal year contingent upon available budget funding.
- Annual salary increases are merit-based, reflecting each employee's performance as evaluated by their supervisor.
- Merit increases will generally be distributed on a percentage basis around the average percentage increase as provided by state appropriations.

### Employment & Counter Offers

Hiring managers may extend employment offers to candidates at the new minimum of the pay grade up to the budget-approved maximum. If budget funding allows, the institutional goal is to allow employment offers up to the midpoint (median) of the pay grade for a position. Per USG policy, a salary offer for a position above the maximum of the pay grade will require further justification, review and approval by the Office of Human Resources.

In instances where internal analysis shows incumbents within the same position, in the same unit, Human Resources shall strongly recommend the hiring manager consider relevant factors such as internal pay relationships, salary equity and the individual's qualifications and experience for the position.

For counteroffers exceeding 5 percent of the approved, budgeted maximum for a position, as advertised, hiring managers shall consult with the Office of Human Resources for compensation review and acquire the appropriate budget and divisional vice president approval.

### Candidate Experience

"Commensurate with experience" describes the salary an employer offers based on a candidate's specific criteria, such as experience, skills, education and training. UWG has a salary structure in place, and hiring managers may contact UWG Human Resources for questions or consultation.

In instances where a candidate/finalist credentials exceed required qualifications, guidance may be provided by the Office of Human Resources to assist in navigating an increased offer with appropriate budget approval.

Hiring Managers shall contact Human Resources in such instances.

## Administrative Salary Adjustments

### Promotions

When an employee is promoted or reclassified to a new position classification, the employee may be awarded a promotional increase. The actual increase decision should consider relevant factors such as internal pay relationships, salary equity, compression and the incumbent's qualifications and experience for the position.

*Note: Tenure (years of service) is not a determinant in review.*

A promotion is the movement of an employee from one job title or position to another upon having an increase in job duties and responsibilities or involving more skills, and generally associated with a higher minimum rate of pay. Promotions may come in the form of reclassification, reorganization, or through competitive recruitment.

**Incumbent Promotion Threshold:** An incumbent having performed position duties for at least 6 months and meets required qualifications may be considered for promotion (i.e., interim or acting assignment or elevated position responsibilities). Hiring Manager shall consult with the Office of Human Resources regarding Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) recruiting standards. The minimum recruiting standard is to post a position internally for a minimum of 5 days.

Promotional increases at or above 10 percent, or the midpoint (median) of the new pay range will require additional justification, as well as review and written approval by the divisional Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer. All salary adjustment requests require appropriate budget review and pre-approval.

### Position Reclassification

Position reclassification may be warranted when a position evolves to a level that the work performed is no longer represented by the initial job classification and title assignment. Or, a position experiences significant changes in assigned duties, nature, scope, complexity or impact of decision-making. Situations such as these warrant a review that may result in reclassification of the position. Reclassification results in reassignment of the position to a different classification that more closely matches the duties, responsibilities, knowledge and scope associated with the new duties of the position. Performance of the incumbent or minor changes in the job do not warrant reclassification (please refer to Merit Increase guidelines).

*Note: Position reclassification should not be used to provide salary increases for existing employees when a vacancy occurs nor should position reclassification be used to avoid posting a vacant position.*

Increases will be capped at the pay range maximum and are subject to review and approval by the divisional Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer. Requests for salary increases/adjustments must be submitted via the UWG Human Resources Job Requisition Review Process.

### Direct Appointment

A direct appointment refers to the appointment of a person, where the normal advertising and competitive selection process is not applied. Direct appointments are an exception and should be

used on a limited basis where extenuating circumstances and institutional business needs support this approach. Nominations and recommendations for direct appointments of staff can be made by a Vice President (or comparable senior-level administrator) and above.

All nominations and recommendations for direct appointment must adhere to required University System of Georgia (USG) procedures and be approved by the Chief Human Resource Officer and the President. Upon approval for the direct appointment, all employment policies (including background checks) must be followed and adhered to.

## Interim or Acting Appointment

UWG recognizes that occasionally, there is a need to assign additional responsibilities of a higher-level position (Director-level and above) to an employee on a temporary basis and to make interim and acting appointments. Temporary salary adjustments may be warranted when additional responsibilities are assigned on an interim or acting basis, or when an interim or acting appointment is made. These adjustments are subject to budgetary authorization and funding limitations, as well as review and approval by the Chief Human Resource Officer to ensure a temporary increase is warranted.

See key points below:

- Reassignments as described shall be for no less than one month and no more than twelve months.
- The pay increase should be at least the minimum of the salary range for the position for which the interim or acting appointment is made.
- The former rate of pay will be re-assigned when the interim or acting assignment is completed.

## Supplemental Pay

UWG will occasionally authorize supplemental compensation when an employee is asked to perform duties outside of their normal scope of responsibility or to absorb work for a vacant position or when an employee is on an approved, extended leave of absence.

The supervisor shall consult with the Office of Human Resources **prior to** any discussion with the employee to determine if additional temporary compensation is warranted. OHR does not support retroactive supplemental pay to employees. Managers shall request and submit for review all requests for supplemental pay **prior to** an employee performing additional duties. The pay supplement does not become part of the employee's base compensation, and it ceases when the temporary assignment is over. The supplemental pay will require approval by the divisional Vice President, Chief Human Resource Officer and Chief Business Officer.

## Manager Communication

In all of the cases listed in this guideline, the manager shall not discuss any specifics of the promotion, interim placement or supplemental pay with the affected employee prior to receiving all required approvals. A manager's failure to comply with this requirement shall not create the basis for backdating any supplemental pay, interim placement or promotion.

Any questions on this guidance should be referred to the Office of Human Resources.

# PAYROLL GUIDELINES

## Payroll Deductions

Each employee's paycheck will have specific deductions as required by law, University of West Georgia regulation and/or at the employee's request as listed below:

### Required Deductions:

- Federal and State Income Taxes
- Social Security (FICA), if applicable
- Medicare (FICA), If applicable
- Teachers Retirement System Contributions or Optional Retirement Plan Contributions
- Georgia Defined Contribution (7.5% of gross pay – for Temporary Employees Only)

### Optional Deductions (This list is not all-inclusive):

- Tax-Sheltered Annuity contributions under 403(b) of Internal Revenue Code
- 457 Deferred Compensation Plan
- Insurance premiums
- Annual Fund campaign gifts
- Dependent Care Spending Account contributions
- Flexible Medical Spending Account contributions
- Health Savings Account (HSA) Contributions

All temporary employees are exempt from Teacher Retirement System contributions and Optional Retirement Plan contributions and are not eligible for insurance benefits, but do participate in the Georgia Defined Contribution Plan. Regular employees working less than half time are not eligible for insurance or retirement benefits.

## Garnishments, Withholding and Debt Repayment

The University considers the acceptance and settlement of just and honest debt to be a mark of personal responsibility. The University is required by law to accept and process garnishments served by officials of the court. Failure to meet financial obligations causes discredit to the University.

Repeated instances of default in the payment of debt, after appropriate counseling, are sufficient grounds to terminate employment for cause. UWG is authorized to hold paychecks and/or deduct from regular paychecks or vacation pay amounts owed by its employees for any fine, fee, penalty or other financial obligation to the institution.

## Timesheets

Provisions of the Fair Labor and Standards Act require that non-exempt employees record and submit record of the hours worked per workweek and per pay period. Timesheets must reflect hours worked for each work week of the pay period and include all absences taken in the pay period.

Falsification of or failure to complete timesheets may result in failure to get paid and/or disciplinary action including termination. Misrepresenting working hours, falsifying signatures or timesheet information, recording time from a non-authorized USG device or location, and tampering with a USG time clock/kiosk or another employee's timesheet are extremely serious offenses. Employees found to have engaged in any of these prohibited activities are subject to disciplinary action. All time-worked records must be approved by both an



authorized reviewing authority and the employee. Employees should report absences and time worked in the OneUSG Employee Self-Service portal.

## Paychecks

Non-exempt, bi-weekly staff and temporary employees are compensated for all hours worked on every other Friday. Exempt employees (monthly employees) are compensated on the last business day of each month. Paychecks are received via direct deposit into the specified account designated in OneUSG Employee Self Service. More information may be found on the UWG Payroll webpage, found at <https://www.westga.edu/administration/business-and-finance/controller/payroll/index.php>

## Overtime Pay

Overtime pay is calculated at one and a half times an employee's regular hourly rate of pay. Overtime pay is applicable for physical hours worked in excess of 40 in a work week. This applies only to non-exempt staff.

## Direct Deposit

All employees of UWG are required to use the automatic payroll deposit service which provides for the direct deposit of pay to a participating bank. Employees may update their direct deposit information in OneUSG Employee Self Service. Visit "How Do I Update My Direct Deposit" job aid, found at [https://www.westga.edu/hr/oneusg/assets/docs/ES409.02\\_How\\_Do\\_I\\_Update\\_My\\_Direct\\_Deposit.pdf](https://www.westga.edu/hr/oneusg/assets/docs/ES409.02_How_Do_I_Update_My_Direct_Deposit.pdf), for more information.

# EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

The University of West Georgia offers benefits-eligible employees the opportunity to participate in various benefit plans provided by the Board of Regents and/or University of West Georgia, which include but are not limited to health insurance, dental insurance, basic life insurance, supplemental life insurance, disability income insurance, dependent life insurance, flexible spending accounts, health savings accounts, and retirement plans. The University contributes toward the premiums for health and life insurance and matches retirement contributions based upon terms set by the Georgia Legislature. The Office of Human Resources along with the Board of Regents provides each eligible employee with complete descriptions and comparisons of the available benefit plans, along with the respective monthly premiums. For specific information on the available benefit plans, please refer to either the Human Resources webpage at <https://www.westga.edu/hr/benefits-summary.php>, or the University System of Georgia's website, located at [www.usg.edu/hr/benefits](http://www.usg.edu/hr/benefits).

## Benefits Eligibility

Regular employees working 30 hours or more per week are eligible to enroll in the USG healthcare or voluntary benefits plans. Employees working 20 hours or more per week must enroll in a mandatory retirement plan. Even if employees don't work 30 hours or more, USG offers a number of benefits and programs employees and their eligible dependents can participate in (see USG Benefits Eligibility Chart, found at <https://benefits.usg.edu/benefits-resources/new-to-usg>). Benefits-eligible faculty and staff may cover their spouses and eligible dependent children.

## Eligible Dependents

Eligible dependents for health insurance purposes include the spouse and dependent children up to age 26. When adding dependents, it will be required that employees present a marriage license for spouses, birth

certificate for children, or other document establishing a dependent relationship as a condition of their coverage.

## Health Coverage

New employees who are benefits-eligible have 30 days from their date of hire to select a medical plan. On an annual basis, the University offers an Open Enrollment period. During Open Enrollment, employees may change their healthcare plan elections and/or levels of coverage. The University pays a share of the cost of healthcare coverage. The employee must pay the remaining portion of the premium through payroll deduction. Premiums for medical insurance are withheld from the payroll check on a pretax basis.

## Dental Coverage

The University provides a voluntary dental program for all eligible employees, which must be selected within the first 30 days of employment with the University. The employee pays 100% of the monthly premium and the premium is withheld from the payroll check on a pre-tax basis.

## Basic Life Insurance

The University provides \$25,000 of basic life insurance for all benefits-eligible employees at no cost to the employee. The basic life insurance plan is also a double-indemnity plan, meaning that the \$25,000 payment will be doubled in the event of accidental death. Coverage is guaranteed and no evidence of insurability (EOI) is required.

## Supplemental Life Insurance

Eligible employees may purchase supplemental life insurance through the same program in increments of 1 up to 8 times their annual salary. The premiums are based on the age of the insured and the amount of coverage selected. This is optional coverage is paid by the employee. Visit the USG Life Insurance webpage for more information, found at <https://benefits.usg.edu/money-and-financial-protection/life-insurance>.

## Dependent Life Insurance

Child Life is available in increments of \$5,000, up to \$15,000. Children are eligible for Child Life from birth to 26 years of age. A child may be covered by only one USG parent. It is not necessary for you to elect Employee Supplemental Life to elect Child Life. The premiums for the dependent life insurance plan are paid by the employee via payroll deduction.

Spouse Life is available in \$10,000 increments up to a maximum of \$500,000. It is not necessary for employees to elect Employee Supplemental Life to elect Spouse Life. Spouses are not eligible if they are also eligible for employee coverage.

## Acceptance and Continuation of Life Insurance Policy

New employees or newly benefits-eligible employees can enroll in life insurance within their first 30 days through the OneUSG Connect - Benefits portal, found at <https://oneusgconnect.usg.edu/>. Employees may elect coverage up to the guaranteed issue amount without Evidence of Insurability (EOI) during their initial enrollment window.

## Disability Insurance

Eligible employees may participate in short-term and/or long-term disability income insurance. These voluntary

plans allow employees to receive a monthly benefit if they become disabled (physician certification required). Employees pay the full premium for disability insurance through payroll deduction.

## Vision Coverage

Eligible employees may choose to participate in a vision insurance plan which provides coverage for primary vision care benefits including eye examinations, prescription eyewear, and contact lenses through a broad-based provider network. Visit the USG webpage for more information, found at [https://benefits.usg.edu/assets/documents/benefits-resources/USG 2023 EyeMed University System of Georgia Vision Plan Document 1-1-23.pdf](https://benefits.usg.edu/assets/documents/benefits-resources/USG_2023_EyeMed_University_System_of_Georgia_Vision_Plan_Document_1-1-23.pdf).

## Section 125 Plan

University of West Georgia participates in a Section 125 Plan as authorized by the Internal Revenue Code. Employee health, dental, and flexible spending account premiums and Health Savings Account contributions are deducted on a pre-tax basis and are not subject to federal tax, state tax or FICA. The choices made by a new employee or during the annual open enrollment period must remain in effect for the entire plan year (January 1 – December 31), unless the employee has a mid-year qualifying event.

## Healthcare Savings Account

The Healthcare Savings Account (HSA) may be used to cover the cost of medical, dental, and related expenses that are not otherwise paid by insurance (i.e., healthcare and dental plan deductibles and qualifying out-of-pocket medical & dental expenses that fall outside the employee's plan coverage). Employees must enroll in the high deductible health plan to be eligible for an HSA. Annual contribution limits are set by the Internal Revenue Service. Any unspent funds left in the account after the end of the plan year will roll over into the next year.

## Flexible Spending Accounts

Medical Spending Accounts allow an employee to set aside funds on a pre-tax basis to cover the cost of medical, dental and related expenses that are not otherwise paid by insurance (i.e., health care and dental plan deductibles and qualifying out of pocket medical and dental expenses that fall outside the employee's plan coverage). Any unspent funds left in the account after the end of the plan year will be forfeited.

## Dependent Care Spending Account

The Dependent Care FSA is used for eligible expenses for children under age 13 or elderly parents. These include daycare, elder care and summer camps. For 2023, employees may contribute up to \$5,000 annually, or up to \$2,500 annually if married and file separate tax returns.

For a list of eligible expenses, refer to IRS Publication 503, found at <https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p503.pdf>.

## Georgia Higher Education Savings Plan

Employees may participate in the Georgia Path2College by payroll deduction. The program, known as a 529 Plan, is administered by TIAA-CREF. It allows employees to set aside money for higher education expenses - for their children, grandchildren, or other beneficiaries of their choice (including themselves). Under current law, any earnings grow tax-free in the account and are tax-free when withdrawn and used for education purposes. Employees who participate in the program may also be eligible for a state tax credit for such contributions.

Participation in the Path2College plan does not mean that the beneficiary must attend college in Georgia. The

fund may be used for qualified higher education expenses at accredited postsecondary institutions across the country. For more information, visit <https://www.path2college529.com/>.

## Benefits Enrollment

The annual open enrollment period normally occurs during the month of October or November with coverage dates effective January 1 of the following calendar year. A Benefits Fair is held during the open enrollment period to give employees the opportunity to gather benefits information and talk with the various providers before the open enrollment period ends.

## Qualifying Events for Mid-Year Coverage Change

After initial benefit elections, employees can only change their benefit elections during each Open Enrollment period, unless they experience a qualifying life event, as defined by IRS Section 125 guidelines. The most common life events are listed below:

- Birth and adoption of a child (including stepchildren and legally placed foster children)
- Death of a covered dependent
- Marriage or divorce
- Change in employment status that impacts benefits eligibility (for covered employees and eligible dependents)
- Changes to existing coverage must be consistent with the qualifying life event. If employees experience a qualifying life event (e.g., marriage, birth of a child, divorce), any eligible benefit updates must be completed within 30 days of the life event. Employees must also provide documentation within 30 days to support the proof of the status change and/or applicable dependent status.

In most cases, coverage will begin the first calendar day of the month following the qualifying life event, unless the qualifying event occurs on the first calendar day of the month or if the event is birth/adoption. In these two instances, coverage will be effective the date of the event, except for spending accounts and critical illness.

## Appealing Denied Benefit Claims

Denied benefit claims must be contested using ACCOLADE USG's provider. For additional information please contact the Office of Human Resources at [hrrservices@westga.edu](mailto:hrrservices@westga.edu).

Visit the OneUSG Connect Benefits webpage, found at <https://benefits.usg.edu/benefits-resources/new-to-usg>, for more information.

## Transfer of Benefits to Another Unit Within the University System of Georgia

To transfer benefits to another unit of the University System of Georgia, there must not be a break in service over 30 days and the effective date may not be a holiday. All benefit plans offered by the Board of Regents carry over to an employee's new employment. Plans which are unique to the University of West Georgia may not be transferred to an employee's new employment.

For employees with accrued vacation of 20 (160 hours) or fewer days, the employee must transfer to the new unit all accrued vacation up to 20 days (160 hours). For employees with accrued vacation of greater than 20 days (160 hours), an employee may elect one of the following options:

- Transfer of the total accrued vacation balance, not to exceed 45 days (360 hours); or
- Receive payment from the former institution of accrued vacation leave in excess of 20 days (160 hours). The total accrued vacation leave balance for which the employee may be paid shall not exceed 25 days (200

hours). An employee must transfer accumulated sick leave if there is not a break in service of over 30 days.

## **Continuing Benefit Plans at Termination (COBRA)**

Terminating employees will retain insurance benefits through the end of the month that employment is terminated, provided the full premiums have been paid. Under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), employees may elect to continue medical or dental coverage for up to 18 months. In special instances, the 18-month period may be extended. COBRA election must be made within 60 days from the date COBRA notification is received. Terminating employees will receive notification and COBRA information in the mail.

## **Disabled Status**

If a qualified beneficiary is determined to be disabled under Title II or XVI of the Social Security Act at the time employment ended and the plan administrator is notified within 60 days, the qualified beneficiary may elect continuation for up to 29 months following the termination of employment.

## **Dependents**

A spouse of an employee whose coverage ends due to divorce or a child who reaches the maximum age for coverage as a dependent may continue coverage for thirty-six (36) months. COBRA Election must be made within sixty (60) days from the date the COBRA notification is received. The cost for COBRA dependents is 100 percent of the total premium, plus a 2% administrative fee. It is the participant's responsibility to ensure that premiums are paid in a timely manner. This premium must be paid on time each month, or COBRA coverage will be discontinued. Cobra is administered through OneUSG.

## **Tuition Assistance Program (TAP)**

The Tuition Assistance Program (TAP) is available to full-time, benefits-eligible employees of the University System of Georgia who have successfully completed at least six (6) months of employment in a benefits-eligible position as of the date of the TAP application deadline for the desired academic semester.

Employees are required to go through the regular student admissions process prior to applying for TAP. Employees must complete a TAP application and return it to the Human Resources office by the deadline for each semester in attendance. Employees may seek approval to enroll in up to nine (9) academic semester credit hours for each of the three designated semester periods: Fall Semester, Spring Semester, and Summer Semester.

For complete policy reference and TAP forms, visit the Tuition Assistance Program webpage, found at <https://www.westga.edu/hr/tuition-assistance.php>.

## **Professional Liability Insurance**

The University of West Georgia, as a unit of the University System of Georgia, provides limited liability insurance protection to its employees while in the conduct of the business of the University. This insurance covers employees' legal liability to others for personal or bodily injury and property damage resulting from actions or inactions of an employee of the University of West Georgia acting within the scope of his or her employment. The Office of the Attorney General will defend the employee from such claims under most circumstances. Additional information may be obtained from the University of West Georgia Compliance and Risk Management office.



## Employee Retirement and Eligibility

Eligibility for retirement is governed by the Teachers' Retirement System of Georgia and the Board of Regents. The Board of Regents policy reference can be found at <http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section8/policy/8.2.8/retirement/>.

## Social Security

Social Security and Medicare tax withholdings are based on the employee's classification and at the rates established by the Social Security Administration. The employee's classification is established by the institution in accordance with Social Security Administration guidelines ([www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)) and IRS Publication 15.

Employees that participate in TRS, ERS, or ORP are subject to Social Security and Medicare taxes.

Employees that participate in the Georgia Defined Contribution Plan (GDGP) are exempt from Social Security taxes but are subject to Medicare taxes. Reference BPM 5.1.6 Retirement Plan Participation for additional information.

Student workers that are enrolled and regularly attending classes are usually exempt from Social Security and Medicare taxes. Consult the SSC for clarification regarding student exemptions.

## Employees Covered by Social Security

All employees eligible for the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia and Optional Retirement Plan will make contributions to Social Security.

## Employees Subject to the Medicare Portion of Social Security Only

The following employees are subject to the Medicare portion of Social Security only:

- Temporary, seasonal or intermittent employees who are employed at an hourly rate of pay, including part-time instructors who participate in GA Defined Contribution.
- Employees working less than half-time

## Employees Not Covered by Social Security

Non-resident aliens may be exempt in accordance with their visas. Student employees are also exempt from Social Security Tax.

## Retirement Plans

Exempt (salaried) employees who work 20 hours or more per week must enroll in one of USG's mandatory retirement plans: Teachers Retirement System of Georgia (TRS) Plan or the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP), within 60 days of their date of hire or date of eligibility. Nonexempt (hourly) employees will automatically be enrolled into the TRS plan.

Employees may enroll in a 403(b) or 457(b) voluntary savings plan at any time during the year. The date mandatory retirement coverage becomes effective depends on the plan employees elect. If enrolled in TRS, coverage is effective on date of hire. If enrolled in ORP, coverage will be effective the first of the month following the election. Once employee's make their selection, the decision is irrevocable.

Please view the USG retirement section for comprehensive details and enrollment instructions, found at <https://benefits.usg.edu/retirement-and-savings-plan/retirement-plans-overview>.

## Georgia Defined Contribution Plan

Temporary employees contribute 7.5% of their wages to the Georgia Defined Contribution Plan (GDGP), which is the State equivalent of Social Security. For complete policy reference, please visit the Employee's Retirement System of Georgia webpage, found at <https://www.ers.ga.gov/georgia-defined-contribution-plan>.

When employment ends with the University of West Georgia, temporary employees can request a refund of employee contributions made to the Georgia Defined Contribution Plan, via the Request a Refund process, available online at <https://www.ers.ga.gov/pod/request-refund-online>. Employees terminating employment with UWG must complete a refund form in order to have their contributions refunded from this plan.

## Teachers Retirement System of Georgia

The Teachers Retirement System of Georgia (TRS) Plan is a defined benefit pension plan. An employee TRS retirement benefit is based upon on a predetermined formula, using length of service and average monthly salary based on the highest 24 months of earnings. To learn more, review the Teachers Retirement System (TRS) Plan information, found at <https://benefits.usg.edu/retirement-and-savings-plan/teachers-retirement-system-trs-plan>.

**Plan Contribution** The employee and USG contribute to an employee's TRS account. Employees pay 6% of their pre-tax compensation (mandatory), and the USG pays 19.98% of the pre-tax compensation (fiscal year 2023). Effective July 1, 2023, employers will pay 19.98% (fiscal year 2024). Changes in USG's contributions do not impact benefits at retirement because it's determined by a fixed formula.

**Vesting** Employees become vested (retain ownership of every dollar contributed to TRS account, even the employee leaves the USG) after 10 years of service. Vesting is calculated using length of service and average monthly salary (based on the highest 24 months). Sick leave credit can be added to years of service upon retirement. Certain restrictions apply. If the employee leaves USG before they're vested, they will only receive their contributions plus interest at the stated rate.

## Early Disability Retirement

Permanent disability retirement is available at any age if the employee becomes permanently disabled and have completed at least 10 years of creditable service.

## Optional Retirement Plan

The Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) is a 401(a) defined contribution plan. Your account balance is based upon contributions from you and USG, plus accumulated earnings. You select your investment elections and can manage those elections within your selected vendor's platform. To learn more, visit the USG Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) webpage, found at <https://benefits.usg.edu/retirement-and-savings-plan/optional-retirement-plan-orp>.

**Plan Contribution** The employee and USG both contribute to the ORP. The account balance grows through contributions, plus earning son the balances. Employees can choose how to invest their ORP account balances. Employees pay 6% of their pre-tax compensation (mandatory), and the USG pays 9.24% of the pre-tax compensation for calendar year 2023.

**Vesting** Employees who elect ORP are immediately 100% vested in both their contributions and USG's contributions (employee's retain immediate ownership interest).

## Voluntary Supplemental Retirement Accounts

USG also offers additional ways to save more for employee retirement. Employees can contribute to the 403(b) Plan, the 457(b) Plan or both. For more information, visit the USG Ways to Save More webpage, found at <https://benefits.usg.edu/retirement-and-savings-plan/403b-and-457b-plans>, and the 2023 USG 403(b) and 457(b) Enrollment Guide, found at [https://benefits.usg.edu/assets/documents/retirement-and-savings-plans/2023\\_403%28b%29\\_457%28b%29\\_Enrollment\\_Guide.pdf](https://benefits.usg.edu/assets/documents/retirement-and-savings-plans/2023_403%28b%29_457%28b%29_Enrollment_Guide.pdf).

## Tax-Sheltered Annuity Plans

The 403(b) Plan and 457(b) Plan are supplemental retirement plans that allow employees to save up to the IRS limits for additional savings. The balance employees will have at retirement is determined by their contributions, plus accumulated earnings on those amounts. The plans generally work the same; the major difference is in how the plans consider and penalize withdrawals.

# EMPLOYEE LEAVE

Authority for Procedure granted by UWG Policy #4001, Human Resources Administrative Practice and Services, found at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/12239114/latest>.

Paid Time Off is compensated time away from work provided to eligible employees of the University of West Georgia (UWG). UWG has designed a comprehensive paid time off benefits program measured in hours and classified for different types of absences such as illness, vacation, bereavement, and personal time.

## Paid Holidays

UWG observes 13 official paid holidays each year. The university administration publishes an exact schedule of these holidays each year. The Holiday Schedule is posted on the UWG Office of Human Resources website, found at <https://www.westga.edu/hr/holiday-schedules.php>. These holidays are observed in accordance with the rules and regulations set forth by the University System of Georgia (USG).

Student assistants, graduate assistants, part-time instructors, and temporary non-students are not eligible to receive holiday pay. An employee must be in pay status the day before and the day after the holiday to receive payment for that holiday. A terminating employee will not be paid for any official holiday occurring after the last working day of employment.

## Annual Leave (Vacation)

### Eligibility and Accruals

Regular, full-time, and part-time benefits-eligible employees are eligible to accrue vacation hours. Temporary employees, including student assistants, graduate assistants, part-time instructors, and regular employees who work less than one-half time do not earn or accrue annual leave. Faculty on a 10-month contract do not accrue vacation/annual leave. Administrative faculty on a 12-month contract accrue 14 hours vacation/annual leave per month.

An employee must be in pay status on or before the 15th of the month to accrue leave for that month. Leave is accrued on the last working day of the month. An employee must have sufficient

accrued leave balance when requesting vacation/annual leave. Otherwise, the employee will be on leave without pay status. Annual Leave time may be taken at times mutually acceptable to an employee and immediate supervisor.

Effective December 31st of each year, vacation/annual leave balances roll over to the following year. Any vacation/annual leave balances in excess of 360 hours will be forfeited.

## Vacation Payout upon Separation

All unused, accrued vacation/annual leave, not to exceed 45 days (360 hours), shall be paid to an employee upon their separation from employment. If an employee's compensation is funded by a grant or other source, the terms set forth by the grant or funding partner will determine if the payout of vacation hours is permitted. An employee who terminates on or after the 15th of a month shall accrue vacation/annual leave for that month.

A faculty member, who changes from a fiscal year contract to an academic year contract shall be paid their unused, accrued vacation/annual leave subject to the 45-day (360-hour) maximum payment restriction upon termination of the fiscal year contract.

## Sick Leave

### Eligibility and Accruals

Regular, full-time, and part-time benefits-eligible employees accrue sick leave hours. Sick leave for employees shall be cumulative. Regular employees working at least one-half time but less than full-time earn and accrue sick leave hours in an equivalent ratio to their work commitment. Full-time employees accrue 8 hours of sick leave per month (includes 10-month and 12-month faculty). Temporary employees, including student assistants, graduate assistants, part-time instructors, and regular employees who work less than one-half time do not earn sick leave.

Sick leave is granted at the discretion of the institution and upon approval by the supervisor for an employee's absence for any of the following reasons:

1. Illness or injury of the employee;
2. Medical and dental treatment or consultation;
3. Quarantine due to a contagious illness in the employee's household; or
4. Illness, injury, or death in the employee's immediate family requiring the employee's presence.
5. Bereavement for immediate family members (i.e., parents, parents-in-law, siblings, children grandparents).

An employee must be in pay status on or before the 15th of the month to accrue leave for that month. Leave is accrued on the last working day of the month. An employee must have a sufficient leave balance from prior months to cover the hours taken through the last day of the absence. Otherwise, the employee will be on leave without pay status. Employees are not to perform University business or work-related activities while on an approved sick leave absence.

### Reporting Absences Due to Illness

Employees are expected to report all absences due to illness or injury directly to their supervisors or department heads as soon as possible and indicate the probable length of absence so that schedule adjustments may be made. Employees absent for prolonged periods should communicate with their supervisors weekly unless on an approved leave of absence.

## Physician Return to Work Certification

If an employee is out of work due to illness or care of an ill relative for five consecutive days, a physician's statement is required to return to work. Under some circumstances, supervisors may request an employee to provide a physician's statement for sick leave absences for less than five days. Supervisors should consult with the UWG Office of Human Resources in these instances.

## Donated Sick Leave Pool

The purpose of the Donated Leave Program is to provide a means for University employees to donate paid sick leave to a leave pool. The pool of donated leave is available to be used by fellow University employees who are eligible for and require leave while experiencing a life-threatening or emergency medical condition (FMLA guidelines apply). Use of leave from the pool keeps eligible employees from taking leave without pay during a crisis. Employees may donate to the Sick Leave Pool during the annual employee benefits open enrollment period. See Shared Sick Leave Program Enrollment Form, found at [https://www.westga.edu/hr/assets-hrpay/docs/sharedsickleaveenrollmentform\\_2019uwg\\_edited.pdf](https://www.westga.edu/hr/assets-hrpay/docs/sharedsickleaveenrollmentform_2019uwg_edited.pdf)

For questions, employees may contact the UWG Office of Human Resources (OHR) at [hrservices@westga.edu](mailto:hrservices@westga.edu). For more information on the USG Shared Sick Leave Program, visit the USG Human Resources Administrative Practices Manual (HRAP), found at [https://www.usg.edu/hr/assets/hr/hrap\\_manual/HRAP\\_Shared\\_Sick\\_Leave\\_Program\\_Time\\_Away\\_from\\_Work.pdf](https://www.usg.edu/hr/assets/hr/hrap_manual/HRAP_Shared_Sick_Leave_Program_Time_Away_from_Work.pdf)

## Sick Leave without Pay

After exhausting all accumulated sick leave and accrued vacation leave, employees unable to return to work may request sick leave without pay for a period not to exceed one year. This additional sick leave may be granted at the discretion of the department and will be without pay. If additional sick leave is approved by the department, the employee will have the option to continue their group insurance benefits while on sick leave. The institution will continue to pay its share of the cost for such a period, but the employee must continue to pay their portion of premiums. Upon return from approved, unpaid sick leave, the employee may be restored to their original position, or to an equivalent job with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions. UWG cannot guarantee that an employee will be returned to their original position. Should an employee be unable to return to work after being granted sick leave without pay for one year, the employee will be terminated. During an unpaid leave status, vacation and sick leave benefits will not continue to accrue.

The OneUSG Connect system will use cascading leave rules (see BOR Policy 5.1.2.2, Leave Usage, found at [https://www.usg.edu/business\\_procedures\\_manual/section5/C1223/](https://www.usg.edu/business_procedures_manual/section5/C1223/), which allow leave requests to access multiple leave balances prior to the leave becoming uncompensated.

## Sick Leave upon Separation

An employee shall not be paid for any outstanding sick leave balances upon separation. However, employees retiring may use accumulated sick leave to earn additional service time with the Teacher's Retirement System of Georgia (TRS). Before initiating retirement, employees should inquire with TRS directly for sick leave balance credit. For more information, visit <https://www.trsga.com/>



## Leave Balance Records

Absence balances may be viewed in the OneUSG Employee Self-Service portal (ESS), found at <https://oneusgconnect.usg.edu/>. Employees are responsible for checking balances periodically. For more information see, OneUSG Resources, found at <https://www.westga.edu/hr/oneusg/oneusg-resources.php>.

## Workers Compensation

All employees of UWG are covered under the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act. This act provides protection in the event of injury, illness, or death that arises out of the course and scope of employment for the University. When an on-the-job injury or illness occurs, the employee should fill out a Workers Compensation (WC) First Report of Injury form, found at <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/fe8f2d7a02a488a9dad0de2446dbf0a>, and/or notify their supervisor immediately. The supervisor or employee should notify Risk Management via the completed WC injury form. If medical attention is required, treatment must be coordinated through the University's WC insurer. However, in the case of an emergency, immediate treatment should be obtained from the nearest hospital emergency room. If emergency services are required, first contact the University Police at (678) 839-6000.

When an employee returns to work, it is the supervisor's responsibility to inform the Offices of Legal Affairs and Compliance and Risk Management immediately. Late notification of return to work status may result in incorrect payroll reporting for the employee. For Information on accident and reporting instructions, see the Compliance and Risk Management webpage, found at [https://www.westga.edu/administration/president/legal/compliance\\_risk\\_mngt/index.php](https://www.westga.edu/administration/president/legal/compliance_risk_mngt/index.php).

## Administrative Leave

Administrative leave is a leave of absence initiated by the University to deal with special circumstances in which it is desirable to continue an employee's association with the University for the period of the leave. Administrative leave may be with or without pay and carries no promise of future reemployment.

## Family and Medical Leave Act

The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) entitles eligible employees to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave each rolling 12-month period. A rolling 12-month period is defined as 12 months from the date of first absence. 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.

Employees may request Family Medical Leave for the following events:

- Birth of a child
- Adoption or Foster Care placement of a child
- Serious health condition of employee's child, spouse, or parent
- Serious health condition of employee – a serious health condition means an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves: any period of incapacity or treatment connected with inpatient hospital care (such as an overnight stay), hospice, or residential medical care facility; any period of incapacity requiring sporadic absences from work, school, or other regular daily activities that also involves continuing treatment by (or under the supervision of) a health care provider; or continuing treatment by (or under the supervision of) a health care provider for a chronic or long term health condition that is incurable or so serious, that if not treated, would likely result in a period of incapacity.

Spouses employed by the University are jointly entitled to a combined total of 12 workweeks of family leave for

the birth or placement of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for a child or parent (not parent-in-law) who has a serious health condition. Leave for birth, adoption, or foster care placement must conclude within 12 months of birth or placement.

Under some circumstances, employees may take FMLA leave intermittently which means taking leave in blocks of time or reducing the normal weekly or daily work schedule. When FMLA leave is for birth or placement for adoption or foster care, use of intermittent leave is subject to approval by the UWG Office of Human Resources.

FMLA leave may be taken intermittently whenever medically necessary to care for a seriously ill immediate family member or because the employee is seriously ill and unable to work. Any paid sick leave used during FMLA must be medically necessary as defined by the treating physician.

## Notice and Certification

Employees seeking to use FMLA leave are required to:

1. Provide 30-days advance notice to UWG Office of Human Resources of the need to take FMLA leave when possible. UWG OHR will notify the supervisor of necessary action.

Complete and submit an FMLA Request using the applicable form listed below, found on the Leave Administration webpage, found at <https://workwest.westga.edu/hr/leave-administration.php>. Additional required forms will be provided during the interactive process by the designated UWG Office of Human Resources representative:

1. Employee Leave Request Form
  2. FMLA Certification for Military Family Leave Form
  3. FMLA Certification for Military Caregiver Leave Form
  4. FMLA Certification of Healthcare Provider for Employee Form
  5. FMLA Certification of Healthcare Provider for Family Member Form
2. Meet with the designated UWG Office of Human Resources representative.
  3. Provide periodic reports to UWG OHR during approved FMLA leave regarding the employee's status and intent to return to work.
  4. The employee may be required to obtain additional medical certification as a part of the UWG OHR interactive process.

## Paid Versus Unpaid Leave

When taking FMLA leave, employees may choose to use either accumulated sick and/or annual leave based on the following criteria:

- Sick leave MUST first be used when FMLA leave is due to the employee's serious illness or to care for a designated family member.
- Once all sick leave has been exhausted, the employee may elect to use accrued annual leave or freeze the annual leave at any given point. The request to freeze annual leave must be documented with a signed memo from the employee to the UWG OHR.
- Once the annual leave has been exhausted or if accrued annual leave has been frozen, the remainder of the FMLA leave will be in an unpaid leave status.

## Benefits Coverage During Leave

During the period of FMLA leave, an employee may retain health, dental, and life benefits under the same conditions prior to the initiation of the approved leave of absence period. If the employee

contribution of insurance premiums cannot be deducted from their pay, the employee will be required to pay the employee portion of insurance premiums each month while on leave. Failure to pay the employee contribution of the insurance premiums may result in loss of coverage.

## Job Restoration

Upon return from FMLA leave, the employee will be restored to their original position or to an equivalent job with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions. UWG cannot guarantee that an employee will be returned to their original position. The employee's use of FMLA will not result in the loss of any employment benefit that the employee earned or was entitled to before using FMLA leave. In an unpaid leave status, however, the employee will not continue to accrue vacation or sick leave benefits.

## Return from Leave

Employees must notify UWG OHR of their return to work date at least five business days in advance of the return to work date. A statement from the employee's physician certifying that the employee is physically able to return to work is required on or before the employee's first day back to work if the employee has been on leave due to their own serious health condition. The employee is responsible for ensuring that the documentation is delivered timely to UWG OHR. Documentation may be provided in person, via e-mail to [hrservices@westga.edu](mailto:hrservices@westga.edu) or facsimile to (678) 839-6425.

Upon receipt of the medical statement, the employee will be returned to payroll active status if they were on approved Leave Without Pay. In some cases, the employee may be required to provide a fitness for duty certificate prior to being restored to active status. If an employee wishes to return to work prior to the expiration of FMLA leave, notification must be given to UWG OHR at least five business days prior to the employee's planned return. The employee must provide medical certification confirming return to work earlier than expected.

## Worksite Lactation

As a family-friendly employer, UWG provides a supportive environment that enables breastfeeding employees to express their milk during business hours. Please contact Campus Relations at [hrservices@westga.edu](mailto:hrservices@westga.edu), or call 678-839-6403 with any questions regarding Worksite Lactation rooms. Employees may also visit the Pregnant and Parenting webpage for additional information, found at [https://www.westga.edu/administration/president/legal/title-nine/pregnant\\_and\\_parenting\\_rights.php](https://www.westga.edu/administration/president/legal/title-nine/pregnant_and_parenting_rights.php).

## Lactation Spaces

UWG has designated private and sanitary locations throughout campus, so that lactating mothers may express their milk during business hours. The designated lactation rooms provide an electrical outlet, comfortable chair, and nearby access to hot running water and soap. Breastfeeding mothers are responsible for keeping the general lactation room clean for the next user. If employees prefer and it is available, they may also express their milk in their own private offices, or in other comfortable locations agreed upon in consultation with the employee's supervisor.

## Reasonable Break Times

Lactating mothers shall be granted flexible and reasonable breaks, using their normal break periods and meal times, to accommodate milk expression. Nursing mothers who wish to express

milk during the work period should keep supervisors informed of their needs so that appropriate accommodations can be made to satisfy the needs of both the employee and the department. Nursing mothers who feel they have been denied appropriate accommodations are encouraged to contact Campus Relations at er@westga.edu.

## Employee Rights

Employers are required to provide a reasonable amount of break time to express milk as frequently as needed by the nursing mother. The frequency of breaks needed to express milk as well as the duration of each break will likely vary.

Supervisors should keep in mind that expressing breast milk may be a physical necessity for some mothers. Thus, supervisors should make every reasonable accommodation to support the needs of nursing mothers. Such accommodations should include permitting nursing mothers who need to express breast milk to visit lactation room(s) during break times or meal times. Supervisors should be flexible in allowing nursing mothers to select appropriate times to utilize a lactation room on campus or a private office. See DOL Fact Sheet #73: Break Time for Nursing Mothers under the FLSA, found at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/73-flsa-break-time-nursing-mothers>, for more information.

## Extension of Leave

An employee requesting an extension of leave due to the continuation, recurrence, or onset of their own serious health condition or that of the employee's spouse, child, or parent must submit a request for an extension in writing to UWG OHR. The maximum amount of FMLA leave that an employee may take during a rolling 12-month period is 12 weeks. The employee is required to notify UWG OHR as soon as it is determined that they will not be able to return from leave as originally planned.

## Recertification

An employee may be asked to recertify a serious health condition every 30 days (if the employee is absent during that period) for leave taken because of an employee's own serious health condition or the serious health condition of a family member. A recertification may be required in less than 30 days if: (1) the employee asks for an extension of leave; (2) circumstances have changed; or (3) the University receives information that supports further review of the continuing validity of the certification.

Any recertification requested by the employer shall be at the employee's expense unless the employer provides otherwise. No second or third opinion on recertification may be required.

## Parental Leave

In accordance with the Georgia Paid Parental Leave legislation for state employees under O.C.G.A § 45-20-17, found at <https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/2006/45/45-20-17.html>, UWG provides up to a maximum of 120 hours of paid parental leave (during any rolling 12-month period) to eligible employees for qualifying life events. The purpose of paid parental leave is to enable the eligible employee to care for and bond with a newborn or a newly adopted or newly placed foster child of the eligible employee.

Provided that the use of paid parental leave does not unduly disrupt the institution's operations,

UWG shall not interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of or the attempt to exercise the provisions of this policy by any eligible employee. No institution shall discharge or in any other manner discriminate or retaliate against any eligible employee for lawfully exercising these provisions.

UWG may exercise disciplinary action, including termination, as deemed appropriate against an employee who submits a false or fraudulent document or otherwise provides false or fraudulent information in an attempt to obtain paid parental leave.

## Eligibility

An eligible employee is defined as:

1. A full-time regular, part-time regular, or temporary employee who has been employed with UWG for at least 6 months of continuous service and has worked a minimum of 700 hours over the six months immediately preceding the parental leave qualifying event.
2. Employees that meet the parental leave criteria are eligible for parental leave regardless of whether the employee is eligible for paid or unpaid leave under other UWG policies and/or federal law (such as FMLA).
3. Rehired retirees are not eligible for paid parental leave while receiving retirement annuity payments

## Qualifying Life Events

1. The following are eligible qualifying life events:
2. The birth of a child of an eligible employee.
3. The placement of a minor child for adoption with an eligible employee; or
4. The placement of a minor child for foster care with an eligible employee.

Parental leave is paid leave which is provided to eligible employees who experience a qualifying life event.

An eligible employee may take a maximum of 120 hours of paid parental leave in a rolling 12-month period. The rolling period will be measured backward from the first date of leave taken. The amount of leave in a rolling 12-month period cannot exceed 120 hours, regardless of the number of qualifying events that occur during that period and regardless of transfers between USG institutions.

Parental leave may be taken continuously or intermittently in increments as small as one hour.

Unused parental leave that remains 12 months after the qualifying life event will not carry over for future use.

Unused paid parental leave shall have no cash value at the time an eligible employee separates from the employing institution.

## Requests for Paid Parental Leave

UWG employees who meet the established eligibility and qualifying life event criteria as defined within this procedure may request the use of parental leave.

The employee must provide their supervisor and UWG OHR with notice of the parental leave request at least 30 days prior to the proposed leave start date (or if the leave was not foreseeable, as soon as possible).



The employee must follow institutional leave request procedures and provide all documentation as required by UWG OHR to substantiate the request and existence of a qualifying life event. Documentation of the qualifying need for leave may include certification from a healthcare provider for leave requests related to the birth and care of a newborn child, or appropriate supporting court documents for leave requests related to the adoption or foster care placement of a minor child.

If both parents are UWG employees who meet the eligibility criteria, each parent is eligible to receive up to the maximum 120 hours paid parental leave benefit, provided that the use of such leave does not unduly disrupt the institution's operations.

## Coordination with Other Leave and Benefits

Employees may not concurrently use vacation, sick leave, holidays, or another Paid Time Off while receiving paid parental leave.

Paid parental leave taken under this policy will run concurrently with unpaid leave under FMLA. Thus, any leave taken under this policy that also qualifies for FMLA leave due to the birth or placement of a child or due to adoption or foster care, will count towards any available FMLA leave. In no case will the total amount of leave, whether paid or unpaid, granted to the employee under the FMLA exceed 12 weeks during the 12-month FMLA period. After the paid parental leave is exhausted, the balance of FMLA leave may be compensated through, accrued sick, vacation, or other eligible accrued leave, if approved by the employing institution.

In the event that an employee has given birth, they must coordinate between the short-term disability leave benefit and any requested paid parental leave. An employee may not receive paid parental leave or any other type of paid leave while receiving short-term disability benefits.

## Benefits during Paid Parental Leave

UWG will maintain all benefits for employees during the paid parental leave period just as if they were taking any other paid leave such as vacation leave or sick leave.

## Holidays

If a holiday or emergency closure occurs while the employee is on paid parental leave, such day will be charged to holiday pay or unscheduled closing instead of parental leave.

## Usage and Overtime

Paid parental leave hours for nonexempt employees are not added to hours worked in calculating overtime.

## Military Leave

Military duty, for the purpose of these regulations, includes any ordered military duty in the service of the State of Georgia or the United States. This includes schools conducted by the armed forces of the United States.

## Duration of Military Leave

Regular, benefit-eligible employees are entitled to 18 days of leave with pay while engaged in the performance of military duty (including going to and from such duty during normal working hours).

The maximum length of military leave with pay is 18 workdays (144 hours) in any one federal fiscal year or continuous period. The maximum leave time without pay cannot exceed five years. In order to receive the annual military leave with pay, the employee must provide a copy of their original orders to the UWG OHR.

## Benefits during Military Leave

At the expiration of maximum paid military leave time, continued absence by the employee shall be considered as military leave without pay. The employee may elect to exhaust accrued vacation leave hours prior to going on unpaid leave status. During the period of military leave without pay, an employee may retain health, dental, and life benefits under the same conditions that applied before the leave began. If an employee's contribution of insurance premiums cannot be deducted from the employee's pay, the employee will be required to pay their portion of insurance premiums each month while on leave. Failure to pay the employee share of the insurance premiums may result in loss of coverage.

Any regular employee required to take a Selective Service or military physical examination is eligible for paid military leave if the exam is scheduled during normal working hours. The employee must submit the documentation of the exam request to their supervisor. For further information, contact the Office of Human Resources at [hrrservices@westga.edu](mailto:hrrservices@westga.edu).

## Return from Military Leave

Employees returning from military leave must provide advance notification to their department head and UWG OHR of the return-to-work date. Upon receipt of the statement, the individual will be reactivated on payroll if the individual was on leave without pay. Employees may be required to provide fitness-for-duty certification prior to being restored to active status. Failure to return from leave for reasons other than a continued serious health condition may require the individual to repay the employer's contributions to healthcare premiums during the period the individual should have returned. For further information, contact the Office of Human Resources, at [hrrservices@westga.edu](mailto:hrrservices@westga.edu).

## Court Duty

Court duty leave with pay is granted to regular employees for the purpose of serving jury duty or as a witness. Such leave is granted upon presentation of official documentation from the appropriate court. A subpoena from the appropriate court qualifies as documentation as serving as a witness. A receipt from the appropriate court stating the number of days served qualifies as documentation for serving a jury summons. Employees may retain juror or witness fees paid by the court. An employee appearing in court related to a personal matter will not be granted leave with pay but may take vacation time, if available. Absences are to be requested in OneUSG Connect. For more information, reference the OneUSG Knowledge Base, found at <https://usg.service-now.com/usgsp>.

## Bereavement

Regular employees working one-half time (sick leave balance eligible) or more who have a death in the immediate family may, upon approval of their immediate supervisor, be allowed necessary time off with pay, chargeable to sick leave. The amount of time allowed shall be coordinated between the employee and the immediate supervisor, based on individual circumstances.

For purposes of leave granted in the event of a death, immediate family is defined to include spouse, partner, children, parent, sibling, the in-laws of the aforementioned, and certain other relatives when, in the judgment of

the employee's immediate supervisor, the employee's presence is justified.

Employees who work less than half time may be granted time off due to a death in the family. However, since such employees do not accrue sick or vacation leave, the time off will be unpaid.

## Educational Leave

The President or a designee may grant educational leave without pay to full-time employees who have at least one year of service at the time of requesting leave. Educational leave may not exceed one year at a time and is to be used for obtaining a degree or professional certification. Such approved leave allows the employee the right to elect to continue their group insurance benefits at the same employee rate the individual paid through payroll deduction. The employee will be required to pay the employee contribution of insurance premiums while on leave each month. Failure to pay the employee contribution of the insurance premiums may result in loss of coverage.

## Educational Support Leave

To supplement work-life balance options for UWG employees, each full-time, regular employee of UWG shall be eligible for up to 8 hours of paid leave per calendar year for the purpose of promoting education in the State of Georgia, as authorized by O.C.G.A. § 45-20-32, found at <https://law.justia.com/codes/georgia/2015/title-45/chapter-20/article-2/section-45-20-32>, *Limited paid leave for the purpose of promoting education*.

Only activities directly related to student achievement and academic support will qualify for education support leave. Education support leave is not charged against any other leave. Education support leave does not accumulate or roll over and is not paid-out upon change of employment status.

## Organ and Marrow Donation Leave

Each employee who serves as organ donor for the purpose of transplantation shall receive a leave of absence, with pay, of 30 days. Each employee who serves as a bone marrow donor for the purpose of transplantation shall receive a leave of absence, with pay of seven days.

Leave taken under this provision shall not be charged against or deducted from an employee's accrued vacation or sick leave. Such leave shall be included as service in computing any retirement or pension benefits. This provision shall apply only to an employee who actually donates an organ or marrow and who presents to the appropriate supervisor a statement from a licensed agency or hospital administrator that the employee is making an organ or marrow donation.

## Voting

Employees are encouraged to exercise their constitutional right to vote in all federal, state, and local elections. If election polls are not open at least two hours before or after an employee's normally scheduled work shift, sufficient leave time, consisting of a two-hour block, will be granted to permit the employee to vote. Time off for voting should be coordinated with the employee's immediate supervisor.

## Violation of Leave Policy

As a reminder, falsification of or failure to complete timesheets may result in failure to get paid and/or disciplinary action including termination. All Time and Attendance records must be approved by both an authorized reviewing authority and the employee.

# WORKPLACE PRACTICES

## Personal Appearance

Because of the varying degrees of performed duties on campus it is difficult for UWG to have one uniform dress code. However, UWG is a professional organization with a high level of visibility in the community. Our premises are visited by state/elected officials, students, clients and guests on a daily basis. Therefore, it is expected that all employees will maintain a professional appearance that aligns with their performed duties.

Discretion in style of dress and behavior is essential to and enhances the perception of the University. Employees are, therefore, required to dress in appropriate attire and to behave in a professional manner. Employees are encouraged to use good judgment in their choice of work attire, and to conduct themselves at all times in a way that best represents the University.

## Attendance

Each employee, exempt and non-exempt, is expected to adhere to their scheduled hours. The supervisor sets the work schedule. If the employee is unable to report to work as scheduled for any reason, the employee should promptly notify their supervisor. It is not sufficient to leave a message with a co-worker nor should the notification be made by a friend or family member except under emergency situations. Such notification should be made as far in advance as possible. Failure to give the appropriate notification may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## Work Schedules

The normal work week for a full time regular classified employee consists of 40 hours per week. Employees may, on occasion, have to work more or less than forty hours per week. In these instances, advance notice will be provided when permissible and the employee will be compensated for the hours worked in excess of 40 hours per week in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act.

The supervisor determines work hours for the employee according to the needs of the University. There may be instances when the needs of the University dictate a change in schedule. This change will be communicated to the employee by the supervisor with at least two weeks' notice when possible. Breaks, including lunch or coffee breaks, will be communicated by the immediate supervisor. When awarded, breaks may not be skipped in order to leave early or come in late. The University reserves the right to change work schedules as necessary to meet changing departmental needs.

# FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING

Flextime allows for flexible scheduling arrangements that permit variations in starting and departure times, but does not alter the total number of hours worked in a workweek or workday and does not allow for working away from the office location. Flextime can be used to improve coverage and extend service hours. Flextime is a privilege and may be discontinued, temporarily suspended or altered, with or without notice, at the sole discretion of the appropriate supervisor, applicable vice president, or dean when the work needs change or if service is impaired. Each request for a flextime schedule will be decided on an individual basis by the supervisor of the employee. All decisions should be consistent with department practices.

# EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

The University of West Georgia supports a consistent, continuous and communicated performance management process. A formal annual review is conducted on a fiscal year basis, with the review period of July 1 through June 30 of the following year. Merit-based compensation should be based upon performance as measured by the performance evaluation instrument.

## Performance Management

The University of West Georgia (UWG) is committed to enhancing the relationship between managers and employees, focusing on both individual and collective relationships in the workplace. An effective performance management process helps supervisors and employees achieve organizational success, and increases effectiveness and overall organizational performance.

## Performance Planning

Performance Management builds a communication system between manager and an employee that occurs throughout the year, in support of accomplishing the strategic objectives of the university. At the beginning of the performance management cycle, it is important to review with employees their performance expectations, including both the behaviors employees are expected to exhibit and the results they are expected to achieve during the upcoming review cycle.

There are various components to successful performance management. First degree performance management should seek to develop employees through regularly scheduled 1:1 meetings and a Performance Development Program (PDP). A PDP serves as a mechanism for employees and managers alike to take a proactive approach to performance management by encouraging ongoing employee development, career progression, and succession planning. Performance development planning should be administered as a complement to the annual performance review process. Gaps in employee performance and certain behaviors should be addressed timely, through the UWG Progressive Discipline process. Supervisors should not administer formal progressive discipline during an employee's annual performance evaluation. Consultation with the Office of Human Resources is the first step in pursuing Progressive Discipline and Performance Improvement.

## Annual Evaluation Policies and Procedures of UWG's Administrative Officers

The President reviews the performance of direct reports, including vice presidents and administrative officers annually. The following characteristics of that process are common to all units. Vice presidents and administrative officers are evaluated via an annual Performance Review Letter which focuses on the following core leadership competencies:

- Leading People
- Leading Change
- Leading Strategy
- Execution and Results
- Building Connections



## Evaluation Procedures

1. Interval of Annual Review: before the conclusion of each fiscal year.
2. Purpose and Objectives: the purpose of annual reviews of Vice Presidents and Administrative Officers is to improve the effectiveness of the unit administered, including its contribution to the effectiveness of other units and the institution as a whole. The overall objectives are:
  - a. To review goals and accomplishments of the Vice President or Administrative Officer unit supervised, especially as these relate to the continuing mission and strategic goals of the institution.
  - b. To review the Vice President's and Administrative Officer's job description and responsibilities, as well as the organization of the unit.
  - c. To review the level of resources and other support provided to the Vice President or Administrative Officer and unit.
  - d. To discuss concerns and opportunities and to plan for changes that may be warranted or desirable.

## Components of the Annual Review

1. Feedback. The president shall direct the annual review process. Staff and Faculty members, whenever possible, may be asked to provide input.
2. Periodic Self Report. Each Vice President and Administrative Officer under review shall provide the president quarterly outcomes:
  - a. Listing initiatives and professional activities undertaken during the review period.
  - b. Listing achievements, areas in need of improvement, and efforts related to those areas, as well as future plans and goals for the unit.
  - c. Including a contextualization of the operation of the unit within the larger framework of the university.
3. Conference with the president. The conference will be an occasion to discuss the feedback received, the Vice President's and the president's views, and future plans and goals for the unit.
4. President's Annual Review Letter. The Annual Review Letter shall be shared with the Vice President and placed in their personnel file. The Vice President OR Administrative Officer may issue a written response to this document, which shall also be retained in the file.

## Faculty Performance Review Process

The performance of each faculty member shall be evaluated annually, covering the faculty member's work in the areas of teaching, service, professional development, and student success activities, with the latter category folded into the other three areas for both reporting and evaluation purposes. The evaluation process shall utilize the Student Evaluations of Instruction among other sources of evidence as specified by the faculty member's academic unit. In cases in which a faculty member's primary responsibilities do not include teaching, the evaluation should focus on performance of their professional duties.

Faculty at UWG are evaluated pursuant to the Faculty Handbook, 102.02 Non-Tenured Faculty 102.0201 The Probationary Period, 103 Procedures and Criteria for Promotion and Tenure, and 104.02 Post-Tenure Review. Please refer to the Faculty Handbook FY2022-2023 for more information, located at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/13070078/latest#autoid-vkwev>.

# PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE

Progressive discipline is a method of discipline that uses graduated steps for dealing with problems related to an employee's conduct or performance that do not meet clearly defined standards and policies. The ultimate objective of progressive discipline is to help employees correct conduct problems and resolve performance issues in the earliest stages. Using a progressive discipline system:

- Provides a consistent, objective and fair process for disciplining.
- Promotes open communication between a supervisor and their employee.
- Is delivered with the intent to improve employee productivity.
- Potentially increases employee retention by resolving issues.
- Provides important documentation should a termination become necessary.

Various stages of the progressive discipline process are outlined below. Managers should consult with the Office of Human Resources at all levels of disciplinary action, as well as for appropriate approval depending upon the severity of the incident.

## Counseling

For a first offense where the infraction is minor, a verbal discussion characterized as “counseling” is usually appropriate. The employee's supervisor should inform the employee of the infraction and clearly advise the employee both of the conduct expected and that future infractions may result in more severe discipline. Counseling sessions are different from verbal warnings because counseling sessions are used as a pre-emptive measure before the problem becomes too serious. Supervisors may choose to summarize the session in an email for future reference. Counseling sessions are not included in the employee file.

## Verbal Warning

The verbal warning informs the employee how their performance or behavior is not meeting expectations. The verbal warning should follow counseling. When issuing an oral warning, the supervisor should clearly advise the employee as to what is needed to remedy the employee's infraction and advise the employee that more severe disciplinary consequences will follow if the infraction is repeated.

Although verbal warnings are a nonpunitive first step, the supervisor should maintain a written record of the verbal warning in order to document the progressive discipline process in the event that the problem continues. A written record should include the day, time, and content of the meeting.

## Written Warning

The next step in a progressive discipline system is the written warning. A written warning usually follows an unsuccessful verbal warning, or new problems that have arisen. This document should clearly state the infraction and the consequences for a repeat offense. The written warning should be addressed to the employee and a copy placed in the employee's personnel file.

## Second Written Warning

A supervisor may wish to include a second written warning as part of its progressive discipline program, or may move directly from the first written warning to the next step (demotion, suspension, etc.). The determination of how many steps should be included in the progressive discipline process will be informed in large part by the nature of the infraction.

## Possible Next Course(s) of Action

Depending on the nature or repetition of the offense, one or more of the following actions may be appropriate. All decisions pertaining to further progressive discipline must be made in consultation with the Office of Human Resources:

- Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)
- Transfer - a supervisor may consider a transfer in lieu of termination or other severe discipline
- Demotion - it may be appropriate to demote an employee to a level where the employee may better perform.
- Termination - the decision to terminate an employee should be one made as the result of consultation by the employee's supervisor with one or more upper-level managers, as well as the Offices of Human Resources and Legal Affairs. The decision should never be made by a single person. Consistency is important. An employer opens itself to various legal claims if one employee is discharged for an infraction while another employee is merely suspended for a few days for the same infraction.

Prior to dismissing an employee, the supervisor is required to submit requests for termination through the Office of Human Resources and Office of Legal Affairs, who will review the request and related information to determine next steps. Supervisors may submit the request for termination review found at <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/0d47601bc28843fc81eb3622cb7d6413>.

## Performance Improvement Process

The Performance Improvement Process is designed to be constructive and to promote employee success. It may be used to address failures to meet specific job goals or to mitigate behavior-related concerns. The process gives employees the information necessary to understand what aspect of work performance needs improvement. The process also identifies the improvements that are expected and provides the opportunity for employees to demonstrate the expected improvements. The goal is to assist employees in improving and taking ownership of their performance. It is the responsibility of the employee to adhere to the expectations outlined by the supervisor and to adhere to the standards of conduct.

### Performance Improvement Plan

The Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is a useful tool that discusses an employee's current behavior or performance problems and sets benchmarks for improvement. The UWG Sample Performance Improvement Plan should be used to define specific steps and benchmarks for improving employee performance that does not meet established standards and expectations in one or more significant position requirements. The plan may be implemented for a minimum of 60-90 days for skilled and professional staff, and managerial positions, and up to six months for director level positions and above. Please use the UWG Sample Performance Improvement Plan, found at [https://www.westga.edu/hr/assets-hrpay/docs/sample\\_performance\\_impr\\_plan.pdf](https://www.westga.edu/hr/assets-hrpay/docs/sample_performance_impr_plan.pdf), when developing the plan, in consultation with the Office of Human Resources.

### Periodic Review Session

The supervisor must establish a timetable outlining the dates by which improvement will be required. The supervisor must monitor progress and meet with the employee at specified intervals to discuss the employee's performance as well as strategies for making additional improvements.

### Performance Improvement Plan Evaluation

The supervisor must meet with the employee for each review date and on the designated end date of the plan to discuss whether or not the employee has sufficiently improved in the areas identified in the plan.

If improvement was achieved in the areas outlined in the Plan, the supervisor meets with the employee to complete the plan. A final copy should then be sent to the Office of Human Resources Employee Relations to maintain in the employee file.

If improvement was not achieved, the supervisor must meet with the Office of Human Resources to determine the next steps.

## Disciplinary Action

### Suspension

Suspension with or without pay is determined on a case-by-case basis. The length of the suspension may vary from a day or two to a week, depending on the seriousness of the infraction. The length and type of suspension should depend upon the facts of each case, (e.g., type and severity of the behavior, previous work record of the employee, and previous disciplinary actions). The suspension should be clearly explained in a written disciplinary form to the employee and should indicate any possible consequences of further performance, attendance, or behavior issues. Prior to suspending an employee, the supervisor is required to review the situation and related information with the Office of Human Resources and provide appropriate documentation.

### Dismissal

Dismissal is advised when, among other reasons, an employee has engaged in serious misconduct or an employee has not corrected performance and/or behavior. Prior to dismissing an employee, the supervisor is required to submit requests for termination through the Office of Human Resources and Office of Legal Affairs, who will review the request and related information to determine next steps.

The dismissal must be communicated verbally and in writing in a transition meeting, to which the Office of Human Resources will be present. The Office of Human Resources representative will supply the written letter of termination, to include the reason for termination and effective date, rights to the grievance process, and off-boarding instructions.

## STAFF GRIEVANCE AND APPEALS POLICY

The Staff Grievance Procedure is available to any classified employee working at least the equivalency of full-time who has completed the provisional employment period. The Grievance Procedure is not available to temporary employees, faculty, students or non-university employees (consultants, contractors, etc.). The Staff Grievance Procedure may be used by an eligible employee to bring a grievance about a suspension, demotion, or other disciplinary action(s); or an involuntary termination (involuntary terminations do not include resignation or retirement).

For more information regarding the Staff Grievance and Appeals Policy, please see UWG Policy #4001, Human Resources Administrative Practice and Services at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/12239114/latest/>, and its associated Procedure Staff Grievance and Appeals at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/12352861/latest/>.

# WORKPLACE CONDUCT GUIDELINES

Each employee must be responsible for his own behavior. Common sense, good judgment, cooperation, and appropriate personal behavior are part of the essential responsibilities of every employee at UWG.

## Examples of Inappropriate Conduct

Across the University of West Georgia, there are common themes for performance. Though jobs may vary across the University, there are some common conducts that are unacceptable. The following are examples of inappropriate behavior:

- Falsification of employment or other records, including timesheets
- Working under the influence of alcohol or an illegal substance
- Inappropriate handling or disclosure of confidential information or records
- Submission of falsified claims under the University's medical or other insurance plans
- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness
- Sleeping on the job
- Failure to maintain professional standards of conduct with clients and co-workers
- Neglect of duty or failure or refusal to perform job-related duties and assignments
- Illegal manufacture, possession, use, sale or distribution of drugs, or use of alcoholic beverages on University premises
- Refusal to cooperate with an audit or investigation authorized by UWG President or an authorized agency with oversight of UWG
- Larceny, misappropriation, or unauthorized possession or use of property belonging to the University of West Georgia or any employee or visitor
- Creating unsafe conditions or contributing to such conditions by act of omission or neglect
- Misappropriation of departmental or organizational funds
- Unauthorized possession, copying or release of University records to unauthorized persons
- Threatening, intimidating, harassing or coercing of another individual
- Gambling on University premises or while engaged in University business
- Violation of the University nondiscrimination or sexual harassment policy

The conduct listed above is not an exhaustive list of inappropriate conduct. Employees participating in such conduct will be subject to disciplinary action including termination.

## SERIOUS MISCONDUCT

If dismissal is for serious misconduct, the employee may be dismissed immediately and no notice or payment in lieu of notice is required. Payment of wages to the employee is only required up to the moment of dismissal. This is a non-exhaustive definition of serious misconduct which includes:

- Willful or deliberate behavior by an employee that is inconsistent with the continuation of employment;
- Conduct that causes imminent and serious risk to:
  - health or safety of a person; or
  - the reputation, viability or profitability of the UWG operations;
- The employee, in the course of employment, engaging in:
  - theft; fraud; or assault;



- the employee being intoxicated at work (defined as where the employee’s faculties are, through intoxicating liquor or unprescribed drugs, so impaired that he or she is unfit to be entrusted with any duty he or she may be required perform);
- an employee refusing to carry out a lawful and reasonable instruction

If serious misconduct is the cause of the dismissal, the employee will be given the reason for the dismissal and be given a chance to explain his conduct prior to the supervisor making the decision to dismiss them. Dismissal actions must be approved by the Office of Human Resources.

## EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIPS

Employees shall make every reasonable effort to avoid relationships with subordinates or students that might have even the appearance of a conflict of interest. This includes avoiding actual or apparent conflict of interests between subordinates and/or students with whom he/she has a professional responsibility. Similarly, all employees and candidates for employment should be evaluated on relevant job qualifications and experience, and certain relationships between employees and supervisors are discouraged or prohibited by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.

No person shall be hired or promoted to any position in the “line of authority” of any employee who is considered a relative as defined by the Board of Regents. Employees who supervise, evaluate, or in any way directly affect the employment of, or academic terms or conditions of, another employee or student shall not have an amorous relationship with that individual. Nepotism is also prohibited by the University.

More information can be found on the PL #4001, Human Resources Administrative Practice and Services, Employee Relationships, found at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/11276595/latest/>.

## EMPLOYEE RECORDS

The Georgia Open Records Act is a state statute that applies to all departments and individuals within the University of West Georgia. The Act requires that public records be open and available for inspection by a requesting party within a reasonable amount of time after the receipt of the request unless exempted by law from disclosure (e.g., student educational records).

The University of West Georgia has designated an Open Records Officer for the University, to whom all Open Records Act requests should be made. The Open Records Officer is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Georgia Open Records Act and coordinating the University’s search, retrieval, and disclosure of records pursuant to open records requests, subpoenas, and requests for production of documents for non-party.

The University requires all written record requests to be made upon the duly appointed Open Records Officer. The 3-day response period begins when the Officer receives the written request.

### Access to Employee Records

UWG recommends using the online submission form, found at <https://www.westga.edu/administration/president/legal/orr/index.php>, or by emailing [openrecords@westga.edu](mailto:openrecords@westga.edu) to submit your request. Although the use of the form is not required, it is designed to help requestors provide enough detail to clearly identify the records desired. Please be advised that some documents may not be released due to privacy laws or statutes that prohibit their release. All written requests containing personally identifiable information (PII) such as social security numbers, date of birth, etc., shall be sent by mail or fax.

## Disclosure of Employee Information

As a service to employees, the Office of Human Resources will furnish, upon written request of third parties outside the University, an employee's dates of employment at UWG and their title or position. In instances when payroll information is requested (e.g., salary information for the purpose of obtaining a mortgage), the requesting party will be advised that this information will only be made available with the written consent of the employee.

## Employee Personal Information

In order to respond to possible emergencies and to provide employees with important notices relating to salaries, benefits, and other matters, it is important that the University have current and accurate records. Accordingly, it is the employee's responsibility to maintain current personal information (address, telephone number, marital status, number of dependents, etc.). Employees may update personal information by logging into OneUSG Employee Self-Service portal.

# EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND SAFETY

The prevention of accidents and the promotion of safety are the responsibility of everyone in the University community. Everyone is encouraged to be alert to and report any unsafe practices and conditions that may present an imminent danger to individuals or property. Employees should report these types of conditions to their immediate supervisor or to the Risk Management Office. Risk Management provides support to the University in all areas of environmental and chemical safety, including chemical and other hazardous waste removal and radiation safety. If there are any concerns with fire safety, worker's compensation, accident prevention and property and liability insurance, employees are encouraged to contact the Department of Risk Management and Environmental Health and Safety for these services.

## Emergency Treatment

In the event of a serious or life-threatening emergency, call 911 for immediate assistance. If the situation is not an emergency, University Police may be contacted at (678) 839-6000.

## Employee Right to Know

The Georgia Public Employee Hazardous Chemical Protection and Right to Know Act (RTK) of 1988 protects public employees from exposure to hazardous materials. In compliance with this law, the University of West Georgia established procedures outlining hazardous materials labeling, reporting, safety data sheet management, and training. These practices are outlined in the Right to Know Plan.

All new hires are trained on the major elements of the Right to Know Plan. The intent of the training is to provide employees with the chemical health and safety information they need to help protect themselves and to work safely with hazardous chemicals.

Deans, vice presidents, department chairs, managers and supervisors are responsible for assuring that their employees are trained if they are covered by this regulation, that containers are labeled, and an updated list of chemicals used in their work areas is maintained.

Employees must follow established Right to Know practices, attend a Right to Know training session, read chemical labels and Safety Data Sheets, and follow their instructions and warnings. For additional information on the RTK Plan, contact the Safety, Environmental Services Department.

## Campus Safety

Most of the University of West Georgia's buildings have fire evacuation plans posted in common areas. All employees are encouraged to become familiar with the escape routes for all buildings and floors, and the locations of fire extinguishers and pull stations. In the event of a fire or evacuation, every employee should follow the fire safety evacuation route, vacate the premises and move to a safe area until the officials in charge declare the premises safe to enter. Exits and areas around fire extinguishers must be kept clear at all times.

Employees are strongly encouraged to become familiar with the emergency action procedures associated with their work areas and how the University of West Georgia prepares for, responds to and recovers from a major emergency. A copy of the University Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP) can be found on the UWG website at <https://workwest.westga.edu/police/assets-police/docs/uwg-cemp-2022.pdf>.

For questions about fire safety or emergency preparedness, contact University Police at (678) 839-6000. In the event of a medical emergency, call 911 for an ambulance, then (678) 839- 6000 to report to University Police.

## University Police

University Police provide a variety of services to the University community including assistance to stranded motorists, safety escorts, and crime prevention programs. The UWG Campus Community is encouraged to use the LiveSafe Mobile app for enhanced campus security. More information can be found on the University Police website, found at <https://www.westga.edu/police/index.php>.

## DUTY TO REPORT CRIMINAL CHARGES/DETERMINATIONS CRIMINAL CHARGES

An employee of the University of West Georgia who is charged with a crime (other than a minor traffic offense and/or local ordinance violation) shall report having been charged to his or her supervisor within 3 days of becoming aware of such charge. The employee shall report the crime(s) he or she has been charged with, and provide documentation of the charges upon request. Within 3 days of receiving notice from the employee, the supervisor will contact Human Resources so a determination can be made as to what action, if any, is immediately warranted.

### Criminal Determinations

Within 3 days of the employee receiving a disposition of the criminal charges, he or she will notify their supervisor and provide documentation of the disposition. Within 3 days of receiving notice from the employee, the supervisor will contact the Office of Human Resources so a determination can be made as to what action, if any, is warranted. Failure to report under this policy may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

## VISITORS AND CHILDREN ON CAMPUS

It is expected that employees will not receive personal visitors during working hours or in staff working areas. While UWG seeks to provide an environment open to work and family balance, the University cannot allow the reoccurring presence of children in the workplace for the following reasons:

- The potential for interruption of work;

- Health and safety concerns; and
- Liability to the University.

Children are welcome on campus when the purpose of their visit is to attend classes or to participate in activities specifically scheduled and designed for their benefit (See UWG PL 7004 Associated Procedures, Minors in Non-University Sponsored Programs and Minors in University Sponsored Programs). Any Minor visiting campus, that is not participating in an event or program, is expected to be under the supervision of their parent or guardian at all times while on UWG Campuses.

Additionally, children may be brought to the workplace by parent employees for other exceptional times when common sense would dictate that it is more efficient for the employee to bring the child into the workplace (e.g., following or before a physician’s appointment if child is not contagious). The parent employee must supervise the child on such visits and ensure that they are not disruptive to other employees in the workplace. During these visits, children must not be left unattended or with other employees. It is not appropriate for children to be in the workplace on a regular basis, including after school or during school holidays. Any child with an illness that prevents the child from going to a childcare facility or from attending school should not be brought to the workplace. No child with an infectious disease should be brought to the workplace under any circumstances. If employees must attend to their children, and childcare cannot be arranged, employees should take sick or annual leave, as appropriate per University policy, to accommodate their children during working hours.

Children are not allowed in high-risk areas under any circumstances such as: laboratories, shops, studios, mechanical rooms, power plants, garages, food preparation areas, or any areas containing power tools or machinery with exposed moving parts.

Employees who bring children to the workplace are responsible for all aspects of the child’s behavior. The employee is responsible for the child’s safety and is financially responsible for any damages caused by the child. The University does not accept liability for injuries to children or visitors to University Facilities in violation of this policy. The department’s supervisor may direct the employee to remove the child (or visitors) from the workplace at any time if the supervisor determines that this policy has been violated or that a child’s presence negatively impacts University interests. Questions regarding bringing children in the workplace must be directed to your department head and/or a Human Resources Representative.

For more information, please see UWG Policy 7004, Protection of Minors on Campus, found at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/10234753/latest/>, and its associated Procedure, Children of Students, Employees, and Visitors on Campus, found at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/10234988/latest/>.

## PETS

Pets for ordinary use and companionship are allowed on University property under the following conditions:

1. the Pet is leashed, harnessed, or tethered and under the control of the Owner at all times,
2. the Pet is only taken to common outdoor areas not being used at the time of an event (unless Pets are specifically authorized during the event) and is not sports fields, and
3. the Owner cleans up after the Pet and returns the space to its original condition; carry cleanup materials and disposal bags at all times and dispose of used cleanup materials by tying them securely in a plastic bag and depositing them in an outdoor waste container.
4. Pets are prohibited from entering all University buildings, Controlled or Restricted Spaces.

Employees seeking approval of a Service Animal must contact the Office of Human Resources for proposed accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

For more information, please see UWG Policy 7010, Animals on Campus, found at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/12408563/latest/>, and its associated Procedure, Service, Emotional Support, Pets, and Other Animals on Campus, found at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/13527898/latest/>.

## UNIVERSITY CLOSING (INCLEMENT WEATHER OR EMERGENCY)

In the event of inclement weather or any emergency that jeopardizes the safety of employees, the President or designee of the University may declare leave with or without pay. In the case of inclement weather, the following details the procedures for advising faculty, staff, students and the metro community when weather conditions require closure or delays the opening of the University. These procedures will apply to both weekday and weekend activities. The communications protocols for closures or delayed openings of the University during periods of inclement weather are described below:

- If snow or ice falls during the night, the decision to close or delay opening will be communicated through the University of West Georgia web page and other media.
- If snow or ice conditions develop during regular daytime working hours and a decision is made to cancel classes and close offices, the University community will be notified via broadcast announcements, and also through television, radio, the public safety voice mail, and University website.

Listed below is more specific information about the media that will be used to communicate University closures and delayed openings.

### Television Stations and Radio Station Information

WXIA-TV (NBC), WSB-TV (ABC), WGCL-TV (CBS), WAGA-TV (FOX), 92.1 FM, 102.7 FM, 1440 AM

### Web Site Notification

University closings will also be posted on our web site at [www.westga.edu](http://www.westga.edu) . We will do our best to inform employees as early as possible about the University's operating status during periods of inclement weather. Information on closing can also be obtained by calling University Police, (678) 839-6000.

## USE OF UNIVERSITY SERVICES AND PROPERTY

The University strives to maintain the highest standards of personal and business ethics and professional conduct. Activities on behalf of the University should always be carried out in an ethical and legal manner and conflicts of interest should be avoided. For further information please refer to the BOR policy manual at the following link:

[http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section9/policy/9.10\\_use\\_of\\_board\\_of\\_regents\\_property/#p9.10.6](http://www.usg.edu/policymanual/section9/policy/9.10_use_of_board_of_regents_property/#p9.10.6)

### UWG ID Cards

The Wolves Card is the employee's official UWG identification and should be carried at all times. It is to be shown upon request to any UWG employee whose assigned responsibilities authorize them to verify employee identification. The card is not transferable and is the property of UWG. It should be returned to UWG upon termination of employment. If the card is lost or stolen, employees must immediately contact the Wolves Card Office during office hours Monday through Friday. After hours, lost or stolen cards should be reported to the University Police. The recipient of the card is responsible for all costs incurred by misuse of the card prior to



proper notification to the Wolves Card Office or to University Police. After the card has been reported to either of these locations, a new card can be issued on the following business day. There is a replacement fee for lost, stolen or damaged cards. The fee will increase for each subsequent replacement.

## Use of Telephones

The use of all State of Georgia telephone services should be limited to official UWG business only. Telephone calls should be handled in a prompt and courteous manner, and UWG telephone lines must be kept clear for business calls. Using office phones for personal long- distance calls is a violation of UWG policy, which is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Employees may not make personal long- distance calls with the intention of repaying UWG at a later date. Personal cell phone usage should be used with discretion.

## University Equipment

Electronic mail, voice mail, fax machines and copiers should be used for official UWG business only. Employees should understand that electronic mail and voice mail messages are not secure and therefore should not be assumed to be private.

## Computer Usage

All UWG employee system users are expected to follow the guidelines outlined in the UWG Policy PL#5001, Technology Use Acceptable Use for Computers and Network, found at <https://uwg.policystat.com/policy/10240643/latest>. UWG equipment, including computer hardware and software are valuable assets and should be used for official UWG business only. Although every effort is made to secure the privacy of each authorized user, messages or files stored on the computer or system network should not be considered to be entirely private or secure. Under the Georgia Open Records law, information stored on a computer system, including electronic mail, might be available for inspection by any member of the public.

UWG reserves the right to have access to any information stored on a University owned computer or network. Under no circumstances may software be copied or installed on a UWG computer if such copying or installation would violate any copyright or licensing agreement or risk the security of UWG's network (i.e. file sharing). Any employee in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, as well as possible legal action.

## Mail and Packages

The University is not responsible for loss or damage to personal packages or mail addressed to any of its employees at a UWG facility. In order to avoid a possible financial loss, it is strongly recommended that such items be mailed or shipped to the employee's home address.