

# HelpWest Employee Benevolence Program

## Guidelines

### **ARTICLE I. PURPOSE**

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On behalf of the faculty and staff of the University of West Georgia (UWG), the HelpWest Employee Benevolence Program steering committee is committed to a self-governed effort to provide appropriate relief to eligible employees of the University who are facing financial hardship. This charitable enterprise from which such relief will be drawn shall be known as the "HelpWest Employee Benevolence Program".

### **ARTICLE II. GOVERNANCE**

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The HelpWest Employee Benevolence Program shall be governed by the HelpWest Employee Benevolence Program steering committee in compliance with the policies and procedures of the University, University of West Georgia Foundation, and the University System of Georgia.

The committee will be made up of the Ombuds Office (which does not vote) and a voting representative from each University division, the Faculty Senate, and Staff Advisory Council. Non-voting advisory members may serve on the committee as appropriate.

The chair of the committee will be elected from among the committee's voting members. The committee will also have a member serving as chair-elect for one year prior to adopting the chair role. The chair and chair-elect will maintain their voting rights on assistance requests. Elections for the chair-elect position will be held in the spring, and terms will commence at the start of the fiscal year.

### **ARTICLE III. APPLICATION PROCESS**

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Any request for aid from the HelpWest Employee Benevolence Program shall be made by submitting an application to the Ombuds Office. This application shall be accessible through the Ombuds Office website or by contacting the Ombuds Office directly.

- The Ombuds Office will keep identifying information related to requests confidential, except as required by other University policies and procedures or by law.
- The HelpWest Employee Benevolence Program committee shall approve or deny requests according to the criteria noted in the following section, and to the extent that funds are available.
- Decisions of the committee are final.
- The person requesting assistance will be notified of the

committee's decision by the Ombuds Office within two business days.

- Upon approval of the request for assistance, funds shall be made payable directly to the beneficiary.
- Supporting documentation may be requested to determine approval of the request.

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#### **ARTICLE IV. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

The HelpWest Employee Benevolence Program committee evaluates employee requests and makes decisions regarding disbursement of funds according to the following criteria:

- Requestor must be a full-time or part-time appointed employee of the University of West Georgia.
- Requestor's need for financial assistance must be directly attributed to or caused by undue hardship or crisis. Examples include large medical bills, extensive loss of property due to fire or other natural disaster, or other unexpected financial challenges due to circumstances beyond the requestor's control.

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#### **ARTICLE V. RECORDKEEPING**

- The UWG Foundation is the official office of record for the HelpWest account.
- All supporting documentation submitted with requests will be retained by the Ombuds Office for the current fiscal year +1 and then be destroyed.

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#### **ARTICLE VI. AWARDS**

- Awards shall not exceed \$500 per recipient per twelve-month period except in unusual circumstances as approved by the Committee.
- If the request stems from a payroll error, requestors will be expected to pay back the funds when the error has been corrected. In other circumstances, the funds do not need to be paid back.

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#### **ARTICLE VII. NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The HelpWest Benevolence Program committee adheres to the non-discrimination policy of the University of West Georgia.

