



Personnel Handbook

Board of Regents University System Office

The Division of Human Resources at the Washington Street location serves as the Human Resources office for the University System Office and its employees. USO's Human Resources and Payroll staff are available to assist USO employees with any employment related matters or needs.

Human Resources
November 2015

Notice:

The policies and procedures in this handbook are designed to serve as guidelines for management action. All policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are subject to change. All updates, changes and/or revisions are noted in the on-line version of the Personnel Handbook. All references noted within should be reviewed against the most up-to-date version located at: <http://www.bor.usg.edu>.

Board of Regents University System of Georgia - System Office Personnel Handbook

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INTRODUCTION

The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia is a constitutional board responsible for making and administering the policies that govern, control and manage the public institutions of higher learning in the State of Georgia. The Board of Regents maintains the University System Office as an administrative office for conducting the business of the Board, which consists of one member from each congressional district and five members at-large from the State of Georgia appointed by the Governor. The Chancellor is the chief administrative officer of the University System and is the chief executive officer of the Board of Regents. Other staff officers assist the Chancellor in the performance of his/her duties. These officers are charged with the duty and responsibility of carrying out the functions of the University System Office as established by the Bylaws and Policies of the Board of Regents.

The nature of the work of the Board of Regents requires that the employees of the University System Office be selected on the basis of special training, ability, skills and individual qualities required to perform the duties of the positions to be filled. As an employee of the University System Office, whatever your job may be, you can be proud to be a part of this office dedicated to the education of Georgia's citizens. We hope you will find your job with the University System Office to be both challenging and rewarding.

This handbook has been prepared to provide you with information about the Board of Regents University System Office personnel policies and procedures and the guidelines under which this office operates. It is not a contract but serves merely as a guide to policies and procedures of the Board of Regents' University System Office. The handbook may be amended at any time. In addition to the information contained in this handbook, other applicable policies on the operation of the University System Office are incorporated in publications of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia entitled The Policy Manual and Business Procedures Manual, Volume 3A. These publications are available to employees and may be found on the University System's website, in the offices of all division heads, the Office of the Director of Human Resources at University System Office which oversees the provision of human resources and payroll services for University System Office employees, and the Office of the Executive Director for Business and Financial Affairs.

The Board of Regents has always sought the opinions of its employees about working conditions, ways and means of getting jobs done better, and other matters of employee interest. However, the Board of Regents, like any other organization, has to make decisions without prior consultation with its employees. The Board of Regents must, therefore, maintain exclusive discretion to exercise the customary functions of management including, but not limited to, the discretion to select, hire, promote, suspend, dismiss, assign, supervise, and discipline employees; to determine the size, organizational structure, and composition of the work force; to establish, change, and/or abolish policies, procedures, rules, and regulations; to determine and modify job descriptions and job classifications, salaries and titles; and to assign duties to employees in accordance with the needs and requirements determined by the Board of Regents.

1. EMPLOYMENT

1.1. CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL

All members of the staff of the University System Office are designated as classified employees. There are two categories of classified employees as follows:

A. Professional, Managerial and Technical Staff

Employees who are exempt from the Federal Wage & Hour provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) because of their professional or administrative responsibilities are referred to as “professional, managerial and technical staff.” In the University System job title listing they are designated as an exempt position. These employees are employed at a given salary per annum.

B. Organizational Support Staff

Employees who are not exempt from the provisions of the FLSA because of their job duties and responsibilities are generally designated as “organizational support staff.” These employees are paid on an hourly basis and must be compensated either by receiving overtime pay or compensatory time for any hours over 40 worked during any workweek. In the University System job title listing they are designated as non-exempt.

1.2. TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT

All employees are classified at the time of employment as full-time regular, full-time temporary, part-time regular, part-time temporary, students, interns and/or work study students. The following describes the employment status categories:

A. REGULAR EMPLOYEES

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, full-time or part-time, exempt or nonexempt. All regular employees serve their first six months of employment on a provisional basis as outlined in section 1.6 below

B. TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES

Temporary employment is short in duration to address business needs and must meet the requirements and characteristics described below:

1. A temporary is non-benefits eligible.
2. A temporary does not have an expectation of long-term employment.
3. 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 12 consecutive months, whichever comes first, the temporary employee must have a break in service of 26 consecutive weeks. Employment applies across all USG institutions and locations.

- 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.
4. 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.
 5. 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 40 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.

Note: If a temporary employee exceeds an average 30 or more hours per week during the ACA measurement period and meets the definition of healthcare eligibility under ACA, if they continue employment in a regular position, they will become eligible to enroll in healthcare benefits during the ACA administrative period.

C. STUDENT ASSISTANTS, GRADUATE ASSISTANTS, INTERNS, AND WORKSTUDY STUDENTS

Student Employees are considered temporary and include graduate assistants and student workers. Student Employees 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. Student employees' are not subject to the re-employment restriction requiring a break-in-service after 12-consecutive months of employment. International students in lawful F-1 and J-1 status who are enrolled full-time are eligible to work for an institution but must not work more than 20 hours per week in accordance with visa restrictions and must ensure compliance with Federal Work Study requirements. See the policy on position classification for additional information on student employees.

D. CONSULTANTS, TEMPORARY AND TEMPORARY AGENCY WORKERS

The University System Office occasionally may employ workers on a temporary basis. This type of work typically centers around a special project, a vacant position during the recruitment process, departmental temporary needs, etc. Consultants are also used and may be referred to as "independent contractor" or "contract employees" where a specified assignment and timeline is defined for the consultant's services. "Temp agency" and temporary workers are hired without benefits provided. Workers in these categories are not eligible for paid vacation, holidays, or sick time. Time away from the job should be approved by their supervisor. This time may be deducted from their pay during the pay period affected. Consultants, Temporary and Temporary Agency employees are not eligible for any University System benefits.

1.3. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY / STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

To insure that a strong program of nondiscrimination in employment practices and procedures will continue in the University System, the Board of Regents has adopted the following policy:

The Board of Regents has declared that no person within the University System of Georgia, including the University System Office, shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, creed, national origin,

age or disability be excluded from employment or participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. In addition, the Board supports the veterans' preference provisions of the Georgia Constitution.

1.4. EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES

No individual shall be employed in a department or unit, which will result in the existence of a subordinate-superior relationship between such individual and any relative of such individual through any line of authority. A marital or familial relationship shall constitute neither an advantage nor a disadvantage for any employee.

1.5. ORIENTATION

All new regular employees are introduced to the Board of Regents through a general orientation program conducted by the Office of Human Resources. The Office of Human Resources will notify new employees of the time and date to report for orientation.

The new employee orientation is an important introduction to the Board of Regents. It consists of an overview of the University System Office, a description of expectations for employees, and a review of payroll and benefits. Specific information such as work assignment, work hours, and departmental policies will be provided in each department by one's supervisor.

Each new employee shall be responsible for reading and familiarizing himself/herself with all policies, rules and procedures of the Board of Regents with regard to the following:

- A. Personnel policies, procedures and benefits; and
- B. Statement of duties to be performed and the conditions of employment including compensation. The department head or supervisor is responsible for explaining the duties and responsibilities of the job.
- C. A welcome package/orientation is provided to new employees. A welcome letter indicating start date, time, and location of orientation; introduction to the Board of Regents, Benefit enrollment paperwork, and all new hire paperwork for payroll processing, is also provided to each new employee. Customized "departmental" welcome packages may be issued as well.
- D. Consultants, Temporary and Temporary-Agency Workers may receive an abbreviated orientation when appropriate.

1.6. PROVISIONAL PERIOD

An employee hired to fill a regular position shall serve the first six months of employment in the University System on a provisional basis. During this period the employee has a chance to evaluate his/her new job, and the supervisor has an opportunity to evaluate how well the employee is adapting to the new position. If an employee is not to be continued beyond the provisional period, he/she will be notified prior to the completion of the provisional period. An employee may be terminated at any time during the provisional period without a right of appeal.

1.7. SECURITY QUESTIONNAIRE LOYALTY OATH

The State of Georgia requires that a Security Questionnaire/Loyalty Oath be executed and retained in the permanent files of the University System Office. This document must be completed by all persons employed for thirty or more days.

1.8. DISQUALIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT

A person shall be disqualified for employment for any of the following reasons:

- A. Conviction of a criminal drug offense. The first conviction shall disqualify a person for not less than two years. Any person who has been convicted of a second or subsequent criminal drug offense shall be ineligible for employment or reemployment for a period of five years from the most recent date of conviction;
- B. Any false statement of material fact during the recruitment, application or hiring process;
- C. Membership (past or present) in any organization advocating the violent overthrow of the Government of the United States;
- D. Conviction of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude, unless he/she has been pardoned, when the position for which the individual is being considered is a position of trust.

1.9. IMMIGRATION FORM I-9

All new employees are required by the provisions of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 to complete a government form I-9 before, or within three (3) days of, employment. This form attests to the individual's eligibility for employment in the United States. Certain specific documents, which will prove your eligibility for employment in this country, must be presented to the person processing your employment papers. This law applies to all individuals, regardless of employment status, who enter into an employee/employer relationship with the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.

1.10. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

Georgia law provides that persons previously convicted of certain crimes are not eligible to hold some positions with the Board of Regents. In order to fulfill this mandate, the Office of Human Resources will conduct criminal background checks on all persons seeking employment. Certain convictions may disqualify an applicant for consideration in sensitive positions or positions of trust. Human Resources shall maintain a list of all positions that are considered positions of trust for the purposes of compliance with this policy.

1.11. PERSONAL DATA SHEET

All new employees of the Board of Regents University System Office are required to complete a Personal Data Sheet with the University System Office. This form, along with other personnel records on all employees are maintained in the Human Resources Office. Employees have the right to review their personnel records in the Office of Human Resources upon arrangement with the office.

1.12. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGE OF NAME, DEPENDENTS, ADDRESS, ETC.

Employees may make changes to personal information, beneficiary designations and most health insurance updates using the Employee Self-Service features of ADP. Certain changes, i.e. name changes and marital status, require submitting supporting documentation to Human Resources. Completion of a Personnel Data Sheet may be requested. Change of name, telephone and address are important and should be reported promptly.

1.13. EMPLOYEE SERVICE DATE/HIRE DATE

A Board of Regents' employee service date is the date of your initial employment with the University System of Georgia unless there has been a break in service by termination of employment. For those who change from part-time to full-time and/or regular to temporary status or vice versa, the following policies apply:

A person who has a part-time regular appointment will retain his/her service date when changing to full-time regular.

A person who is full-time regular who changes to part-time regular will retain his or her service date.

The service date of an employee changing from a full-time temporary appointment to a regular appointment, whether full-time or part-time, will be the effective date of the change to regular status.

The service date of an employee changing from a part-time temporary appointment to a regular appointment will be the effective date of the change to regular status.

1.14. WORKING HOURS

The standard workweek for the University System Office begins on Saturday at 12:01 A.M. and runs for seven calendar days thereafter. The University System Office operates on a flex-time 40 hour workweek basis with each regular, full-time employee expected to work eight hours per day between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 7:00 P.M. with at least one-half hour off for lunch. Certain work situations may demand different hours of work, and a particular work schedule may be designated by the immediate supervisor; however, in all instances the employee's work schedule must be approved by the immediate supervisor. You are expected to report to work on time daily and to remain on the job throughout your regular work hours. If you have to be absent from work or have an urgent reason for leaving, you must have prior permission from your supervisor or department/unit head.

Overtime/Compensatory Time (applies to non-exempt employees only): It is expected that most work will be completed within a normal 40-hour workweek. Your supervisor may occasionally ask you to work overtime because of unusual operational requirements. Non-exempt, hourly paid employees may not work more than 40 hours a week unless specifically requested to do so by the employee's supervisor.

Non-exempt employees who are required to work overtime will receive compensatory time off at the rate of 1.5 times the number of hours worked over 40 in a workweek. An employee may not accrue more than 60 hours of compensatory time in one calendar quarter and such compensatory time must be taken before the end of the following calendar quarter. An employee who has accrued comp time must request use of the comp time of his/her manager and the manager will be expected to monitor an employee's comp time balance to ensure such time is taken.

A manager may choose to pay an employee who works more than 40 hours in a workweek overtime at 1.5 times the employee's regular rate of pay if that manager has identified funding from his/her existing budget to cover the overtime expense prior to the overtime work being performed. The manager should notify the employee regarding whether the employee will receive compensatory time or overtime pay.

Equivalent time off during the same workweek may be scheduled by a manager to preclude the requirement for providing compensatory time off or overtime pay. Holiday time, vacation time, or sick leave time is not computed as "time worked" in determining overtime/compensatory hours.

Employees who are exempt from the overtime/compensatory time requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act are employed on a job basis and are expected to perform their duties for whatever periods of time are required. Such employees are not eligible for overtime pay or compensatory time off.

1.15. REST PERIODS

Work schedule permitting, rest periods may be allowed, i.e. coffee breaks, snack breaks, stretch breaks, etc. Taking a break for a short rest period depends upon the department involved and whether or not normal work can be continued while employees take breaks. Where rest periods are allowed, they are limited to two, 15-minute breaks per day. Breaks cannot be used to allow employees to leave work early.

1.16. WAGES AND SALARY

Salary ranges are established for each position classification. Adjustments to salary ranges are normally based on the fiscal year of July 1 to June 30. New employees are usually hired at the beginning base rate for their job classification. If you have previous experience in a particular field, you may be hired at a salary higher than the beginning rate. This action will be taken only upon the recommendation of the department/unit head with approval of the Office of Human Resources.

Existing employees moving to new positions are usually assigned compensation between the beginning base rates to the midpoint for the job classification. Salaries usually will be commensurate with qualifications, experience, career path, service date and budget.

1.17. PERSONAL CONDUCT AND THE WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Employees of the University System Office are expected to provide reasonable effort and productivity and to adhere to published rules and regulations and accepted customs and standards of courtesy, conduct and cooperation.

Because the Board of Regents University System Office seeks to maintain an environment conducive to the conduct of business and one in which the rights of others are respected, the Board of Regents expects of its employees behavior consistent with the expectations of a professional environment. Part of the intent of this section is to identify typical offenses or behavior patterns for which disciplinary actions are taken. This is necessary in order to provide consistent treatment of all employees so that the rights of some employees will not be violated by other employees.

Although this is not an all-inclusive list, the following are work rules covering deficiencies or offenses for which disciplinary actions may be appropriate and which may result in discharge:

1. Failure to perform duties required by the employee's job description or assignments directed by management, including the failure to abide by the particular rules of an employee's place of work.
2. Failure to maintain work quality and/or productivity.
3. Failure to adhere to established safety policies and procedures.
4. Rude or discourteous behavior toward employees at the USO or its customers, including threats, intimidation, coercion, the use of profanity and other harassing statements.
5. Tardiness, temporary unauthorized absence from the University System of Georgia premises or work area during work hours, and leaving the work area early.
6. Presence in an unauthorized area.
7. Failure to report an injury occurring on premises operated by the University System of Georgia concerning an employee, staff member, student or any other person.
8. Behavior, which interferes with the work performance of other employees and/or disrupts any teaching, administrative or other activity of the University System of Georgia.
9. Failure to adhere to established Information Technology policies and procedures.
10. Absenteeism and misuse of sick leave.
11. Unauthorized absence from work for an entire shift or workday without notification to the supervisor. Note: If an employee is absent from work for three days without authorization, they are considered to have quit without notice.
12. Insubordination or willful disobedience.
13. Consumption, possession or being under the influence of alcohol or other impairing substance on University System of Georgia property or during working hours.
14. Carrying a weapon, whether licensed or unlicensed, on University System of Georgia property.
15. Wasting time, loitering, or loafing at work, including sleeping while on duty.
16. Fighting in the work place.
17. Sexual harassment. (See also separate policy.)
18. Acceptance of additional compensation in any form for work performed in the scope of employment at the University System of Georgia for which compensation has been or will be made through the payroll.
19. Commission of a criminal act.
20. Violation of confidential information pertaining to patients, students, employees or research/intellectual property, to include gaining unauthorized access to records or information, with or without harmful intent.
21. Drug offenses.
22. Dishonesty.
23. Refusal to cooperate in University System of Georgia administrative actions (i.e. refusal to appear as a witness at an official grievance or other hearing, refusal to cooperate in an official investigation or inquiry, etc.)
24. Illegal use of the computer and/or network that would include, but not be limited to, copyright and software license violation.
25. Failure to adhere to all federal and state laws including those prohibiting slander, libel, harassment and obscenity.
26. Private use of state property including computing/IT resources for personal gain or benefit, or for the gain or benefit of others.

27. Disclosing information that is confidential by law, including educational records; unauthorized release of confidential or official information.
28. Willful damage or theft of University System of Georgia property or property belonging to another person.
29. Falsification of institutional documents or records including applications for employment.
30. Violation of University System of Georgia procurement card or purchasing policies.
31. Violation of University System of Georgia or USO policies or procedures.
32. Theft, misappropriation of funds, and/or unauthorized access, use or removal of State property.
33. Unauthorized release of confidential or official information.

Please note: since a complete list of specific offenses is impossible, discharge is not limited to the situations described above.

1.18. PERSONAL APPEARANCE AND DRESS CODE

Use good judgment at all times regarding your personal appearance. You are expected to dress appropriately, to be neat, to wear clean clothing, and to be careful of your personal hygiene. Flagrant violations of commonly accepted standards of cleanliness or dress may be cause for disciplinary action. If you have a question concerning the standard of dress for your area, ask your supervisor.

1.19. PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

The University System Office subscribes to the concept of performance management. Therefore, an annual Performance Appraisal should be prepared on each employee by the immediate supervisor for purposes of advising the employee of his/her strengths and weaknesses of job performances as well as providing a basis for the determination of pay increases, promotion, demotion, retention, or transfer. It also provides an opportunity for a discussion of job description changes, of plans for employee development and of goals for the year. This process should include a personal interview with the immediate supervisor. The process may also include a mid-year review at the discretion of the supervisor. The employee has the right to include a written response to the performance management assessment to be included or attached thereto and made a part of the personnel file.

1.20. CONTINUING EDUCATION AND OTHER TRAINING

Human Resources regularly provides workplace-training opportunities to University System Office employees. University System Office employees are eligible to obtain ongoing education as well as other job specific training opportunities, if money is available. These opportunities may include conferences, specialized training, conventions, association memberships, etc., which are available, as job relatedness requires. Employee supervisor, department manager, and/or senior vice chancellor approval may be required.

1.21. SALARY AND BASIS FOR INCREASES

The rate of salary for a particular position is dependent upon the responsibilities of that position. Other factors to be considered are an employee's knowledge, training, special skills and experience. Constant effort is made to maintain a competitive wage or salary range for each position and an equitable relationship between the ranges of positions.

Salary increases normally are granted on the basis of merit at the beginning of each fiscal year July 1, with an effective date of January 1, provided funds are available. A decision on a salary increase is made after considering the performance of the employee during the previous year. If one's performance evaluation indicates that one's overall job performance is satisfactory, one may be recommended for a salary increase in accordance with the salary administration guidelines for the new fiscal year. These guidelines are based on the availability of funds and Board guidelines regarding salary adjustments for any given fiscal year.

1.22. PROMOTIONS AND TRANSFERS

An employee may be eligible for promotion and transfer opportunities during his/her tenure at the Board of Regents System Office. Whether employee initiated, department reorganization, or a vacant position opportunity, employees are urged to follow the procedures described below to ensure a smooth transition.

An employee who wishes to apply for a vacant position opportunity within the University System Office may confer with his/her supervisor before making application for the new position, if desired. Employees normally are not eligible to apply for a transfer during the probationary period.

Sometimes it may be desirable in the interest of the employee and/or the University System Office for an employee to be transferred from one position to another requiring comparable skill sets and within the same salary range.

1.23. PERSONNEL RECORDS

The official, permanent personnel file of each employee is maintained by the Office of Human Resources.

Employees may review their official, permanent personnel file with the appropriate Human Resources staff member by appointment.

1.24. RESIGNATION

Employees who resign for any reason should give as much notice as possible. The normal and expected minimum notice for support staff (nonexempt) employees is two weeks. A shorter period of time may be agreed upon in writing between the supervisor and the employee. A minimum notice for administrative staff (exempt) employees is one month, although in certain positions less time may be appropriate. Upon resignation, employees should contact their immediate supervisors for specific exiting procedures and information.

Prior to leaving the University System Office, an employee may schedule an exit interview with the Office of Human Resources. At this time employees will also have an opportunity to arrange for the conversion or transfer of certain benefits. All Board property must be returned or paid for prior to the last working day.

1.25. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT, DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS, AND DISSMISSALS

A. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT, COUNSELING AND DISCIPLINE

Supervisors are responsible for achieving the highest performance possible from the activities under their control. Therefore, it is incumbent upon all supervisors to address unacceptable performance or conduct by their employees. Supervisors are given the discretion to choose the best available method to address unacceptable performance or conduct in light of overall circumstances. Such action may range from a simple verbal warning to discharge. Supervisors are encouraged to consult with Human Resources for assistance. Supervisors may use the performance appraisal process when applicable but should also address problems as they occur using other methods as appropriate, including, but not limited to, verbal coaching, review of expectations, additional training, to documented conferences and warnings.

B. DISMISSAL, DEMOTION OR SUSPENSION

Dismissal, demotion or suspension of employees may be effected by the immediate supervisor. Supervisors are expected to consult with Human Resources prior to a decision to demote, suspend or dismiss an employee. The following procedures do not apply to employees serving their provisional period. Prior to the decision, the supervisor is expected to gather relevant facts; including allowing the employee an opportunity to provide an explanation regarding the performance or conduct that is prompting the decision. An employee affected by demotion, suspension or dismissal should be informed in writing of the reasons for the action taken. The effective date of a dismissal is immediate. The effective date of a demotion or suspension shall be five (5) days following the notification. An employee affected by a demotion, suspension or dismissal may appeal to the next level of authority within five (5) days of the action notification.

The employee shall also be entitled to the procedural protections of a hearing before a Board of Review. (See Grievance Policy). The request must be made within ten (10) working days following the documented adverse action. The Board of Review hearing may take place either before or after the effective date of the personnel decision in question.

An employee who has been dismissed or suspended without pay and is later reinstated shall be entitled to recover back pay unless the Chancellor or his designee determines otherwise.

Any employee who is convicted of the unlawful manufacture, distribution, sale, use, or possession of marijuana, any controlled substance or other illegal or dangerous drug, or who admits guilt of any such offense in a court proceeding, shall be suspended for not less than two months or dismissed after compliance with procedural requirements set forth below. Such employee shall be required as a condition of re-employment following suspension to complete a drug abuse treatment and education program approved by the Chancellor or his/her designee.

1.26. RE-EMPLOYMENT

Former employees whose separations were under satisfactory circumstances are eligible to reapply for vacant positions and may be re-employed in the same type of work or in another job for which they are qualified. Special conditions relate to the re-employment of University System of Georgia retirees and are covered in a separate policy. Upon re-employment, an individual will serve an initial six months provisional period and will receive benefits and privileges of employment on the same basis as a new employee.

Sick leave, vacation, personal holiday, eligibility for merit increases, and all other benefits or privileges of employment based on length of service will accrue from the most recent service date.

1.27. SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Federal law provides that it shall be an unlawful discriminatory practice for any employer, because of the sex of any person, to discharge without cause, to refuse to hire, or otherwise discriminate against any person with respect to any matter directly or indirectly related to employment or academic standing. Harassment of an employee on the basis of sex violates federal law. Sexual harassment of employees or students in the University System is prohibited and shall subject the offender to dismissal or other sanctions after compliance with procedural due process requirements. Unwelcome sexual advancements, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic standing;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment or academic decisions affecting an individual; or
3. Such conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual's work or academic performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or academic environment.

1.28. REPORTING, INVESTIGATION AND RESOLUTION

Other than charges made against the chancellor, a senior vice chancellor or an officer or member of the Board of Regents, all charges of sexual harassment within the University System Office of the Board of Regents shall be made in writing to the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources or his/her designee and will be investigated.

The Vice Chancellor of Human Resources shall either investigate the complaint of sexual harassment, or at his or her discretion, refer the complaint for investigation to the Office of Legal Affairs or an employee of the Board of Regents who is not employed in the University System Office and who possesses the requisite training and experience to investigate charges of sexual harassment.

The investigator, after investigating the complaint shall within fourteen days submit findings and recommendations to the Chief Operating Officer, who shall, within a reasonable time after the submission of the investigation report, make a determination in the matter and, if appropriate, determine any disciplinary measures to be imposed.

A final decision of the Chief Operating Officer may be appealed to the Chancellor within ten (10) days of the Chief Operating Officer's determination. The Chancellor may, at the request of the charging party or the party charged, refer any matter to an appropriate person or body for a hearing. The Chancellor shall issue a determination on the appeal within a reasonable time.

No provision of these policies shall prevent an employee from reporting instances of sexual harassment in writing directly to the Chancellor if the employee believes that the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources cannot fairly and objectively investigate the charge.

1.29. DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The University System of Georgia is an affirmative action/equal opportunity/equal access employer that prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, or status as a Vietnam War Era veteran. Allegations of discrimination will be handled in accordance with the complaint and investigation procedures outlined in section 2.34 above.

1.30. WORKPLACE CONFLICTS AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION

In the day-to-day operation of any office or department, problems and misunderstanding sometimes occur. If left unresolved, serious personnel problems might result. While consideration, cooperation, and common sense can resolve most of these situations, a few require special attention. It is the policy of the University System to resolve disputes fairly, and at the lowest possible level. When conflicts or disagreements occur, employees should first attempt to resolve them through discussion with their supervisor. However, an employee must follow their supervisor's orders, even if they disagree with them, unless the orders are clearly illegal or unsafe, in which case the matter should be brought immediately to the next higher authority. When discussion with their supervisor fails to resolve a dispute, an employee has several other options. They may take the issue up with the next higher authority, or they may consult Human Resources.

1.31. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

An employee may file a grievance under the following circumstances:

1. The employee has been suspended;
2. The employee has been discharged; or
3. The employee has been demoted or had his/her salary reduced.

An employee may not file a grievance, even in the above circumstances, if:

1. The discharge occurred during the six-month provisional period;
2. They have been adversely affected by a reorganization, program modification or financial exigency (such employees may apply to the Board of Regents for review);
3. The issue underlying the grievance is a charge of discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age, disability or religion. Such charges should be handled in accordance with section 2.34 above.
4. The issues being grieved have been previously heard by an administrative panel at the University System of Georgia. At the discretion of the Chancellor or his designee, he may direct that a hearing be held concerning any matter related to the employment of a classified employee.

Employees are advised to present any grievance or statement of charges in writing to Human Resources. If Human Resources is unable to resolve the issue, it will be referred to the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources.

The USO Grievance Procedures will be followed in the event of a grievance by a University System Office employee with the panel recommendation being directed to the University System Chief Operating Officer for a decision. If the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of the grievant, he/she may file a written application for review with the Chancellor within 20 calendar days following the decision of the Chief Operating Officer. The appeal shall state the decision complained of and redress desired. An appeal to the Board of Regents from the Chancellor's decision may be filed and processed in the same manner as provided for by Article VIII of the Bylaws of the Board of Regents.

1.32. INTERNAL INVESTIGATIONS

All employees of the System Office shall cooperate to the fullest extent possible in any internal investigation when directed to do so by their immediate supervisor or other persons given investigative authority by the Chancellor.

Failure to cooperate fully shall be grounds for adverse personnel action, including possible termination.

2. GENERAL PROVISIONS

2.1. IDENTIFICATION CARD

All University System Office employees, whose work location is in an Atlanta based facility (Trinity-Washington building or Georgia Public Library Services facility) must have a valid I.D. card made by the Georgia Building Authority. I.D. badges for employees located at the facility in Athens will be issued a badge for that location. Contact the Office of Human Resources for further information. Replacement ID's are subject to a replacement fee.

2.2. PARKING

Parking in the Capitol Hill area is extremely limited. However, if state-owned parking is available, employees are able to sign-up for parking in this area at a relatively nominal monthly rate, which can be paid through payroll deduction. For those employees for whom such parking is not currently available, a waiting list for parking is maintained by the Georgia Building Authority. Availability of parking is dependent on length of service with the State. Employees should contact the Georgia Building Authority for further information.

2.3. KEY ISSUANCE/BUILDING ACCESS

All Atlanta based University System Office employees must have a building access cardkey made by the Georgia Building Authority. Contact the Office of Human Resources for further information.

In order to maintain maximum security, employees receiving access keys to State offices/areas must adhere to established procedures. "Key Request" forms are available from the Coordinator of Office Services. The appropriate department/unit head or administrative officer may authorize the key request. Under normal circumstances, keys will be issued within three days from the receipt of the request. In case of emergency, contact Business and Financial Affairs. Keys are not transferable and must not be passed from one employee to another. Replacement keys are subject to a replacement fee.

2.4. PAY SCHEDULE

Exempt employees are paid on the last working day of the month. Non-exempt employees are compensated on a bi-weekly schedule of 26 pay periods per year.

2.5. PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

Mandatory payroll deductions may include:

1. Federal Income Tax
2. Social Security (FICA)
3. State Teachers' Retirement Program (if required, based on employment status)
4. State income tax
5. County occupational tax
6. Court-ordered garnishments and child support orders
7. Federal and state income tax levies
8. Georgia Defined Contribution Plan (if required, based on employment status)

Voluntary deductions include:

1. Health insurance
2. State Charitable Contributions Program
3. U.S. Savings Bonds
4. Georgia 529 Higher Education Savings Plan
5. Public Transit Passes
6. Certain approved commercial insurance premiums
7. BOR-sponsored voluntary life and accident insurance premiums
8. Parking fees

For a more complete list of current payroll deductions, contact the Office of Human Resources.

2.6. SERVICE AWARDS

USO recognizes full-time regular employees who complete five years of continuous service and every five years thereafter at an annual service awards program. These awards generally are given each year to those who completed the required years of service by December 31 of the preceding year.

Other types of employee awards may be given throughout the year by USO and various USO units. If such awards include a monetary gift, the award must be paid through payroll services, and appropriate taxes will be withheld.

2.7. OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Any outside occupation, pursuit or endeavor that interferes with the regular and punctual performance of an employee's System Office duties is prohibited. In such cases, University System Office employment may be terminated. Before engaging in self-employment or salaried work or accepting positions of responsibility outside the University System Office, the employee should discuss his/her plans with the immediate supervisor if there are any questions as to whether such activities might interfere with or be in conflict with University System Office employment.

Professional employees are encouraged to participate in professional activity that does not interfere with the regular and punctual discharge of official duties provided the activity meets one of the following criteria: (1) is a means of personal professional development; (2) serves the community, state or nation; or (3) is consistent with the objectives of the University System Office.

No employee of the Board of Regents (whether paid or unpaid) may hold or be a candidate for public

or political elective office at the state or federal level while employed by the Board of Regents or take an active part in a political campaign. Employees may seek and hold elective office at other than the state or federal level or appointive office when such candidacy does not conflict or interfere with the employee's duties and responsibilities to the University System Office.

2.8. SOLICITATION

Employees who are in any University System Office area to perform their jobs should not engage in commercial solicitation or vending. This includes selling, delivering, or collecting for products, insurance, etc. Neither should University System Office telephones or other equipment be used for those activities.

2.9. GARNISHMENTS

The University System Office considers the acceptance and settlement of just and honest debts to be a mark of personal responsibility. Failure to meet personal financial obligations causes discredit to the University System Office. By law, the System Office is required to accept and process garnishments served by court officials. Continuing instances of default in payment of debts resulting in repeated garnishment of wages shall be sufficient grounds to terminate for cause, in accordance with state law and Board policy.

2.10. EMPLOYEES AFFECTED BY REORGANIZATION, PROGRAM MODIFICATION, OR FINANCIAL EXIGENCY

Employees who are terminated, demoted or otherwise adversely affected by reorganization, program modification, or financial exigency, as approved and determined by the Chancellor or his designee, shall not be governed by the Dismissal, Demotion, or Suspension, or Grievance Procedures as described in this handbook. Such employees shall, however, have the right to appeal to the Board of Regents.

2.11. CONFIDENTIAL RECORDS AND INFORMATION

Many employees will have access to confidential records and information in their regular work assignments. Privileged and confidential information must not be shared with unauthorized personnel or individuals. Employees who violate confidentiality will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

2.12. USE OF STATE PROPERTY

Employees of the University System Office have a responsibility to help minimize the costs of daily operations. State property should be given the same care as one's personal property. Employees are not permitted to use any System Office supplies or equipment for private/ personal purposes. The conduct of any activity on USO property shall be in such a manner as not to obstruct, or unreasonably interfere with, legitimate business or the free flow of traffic by persons rightfully using the grounds or facilities. You are responsible for the conduct of any visitors you bring to the office as your guest. Violations of these guidelines by a visitor can subject the employee to disciplinary action.

2.13. TELEPHONE SERVICE, FAX MACHINES, AND COMPUTERS

Telephones, fax machines and computers are to be utilized for business purposes, not personal calls, faxes, emails or projects. Prompt calls and courteous manners are expected by all users.

Employees should consult their supervisor to become familiar with the procedure to place calls.

Telephone procedures:

1. Prompt, courteous answers to telephone calls should be a self-imposed rule. It is a good practice to identify oneself and one's department/unit when answering or making a call.
2. Personal long distance calls must not be charged to USO telephone numbers. If it is necessary to make a personal long distance telephone call from a USO telephone, the call must be charged to a personal telephone credit card, must be placed as a collect call, or must be charged to a third number that is not a USO telephone number.
3. Personal telephone calls should be kept to a minimum. Supervisors are required to observe the frequency of such calls and to warn employees who use the phone excessively for personal calls.
4. All personal use of equipment should be kept to a minimum. Failure to abide by these procedures requires the reimbursement of the State and may lead to disciplinary action.

Computer procedures:

Extensive guidelines governing acceptable use of University System Office computer equipment have been established. For additional information or for a copy of the policy, contact the Director of System Office Technology Support Services or visit the USO website.

2.14. USO MAIL SYSTEM

The USO mail system exists for the delivery of official interoffice/interdepartmental mail. Correspondence from non-USO entities such as corporations, companies, and nonprofit organizations must be processed through the United States Postal Service. Once processed, it will be delivered by Office Services. Personal mail should not be regularly delivered to the person at his or her USO address. Also, under no circumstances may the postage for personal mail be charged to a USO account. Use of the USO mail system for personal purposes is unauthorized use of USO property and may lead to discharge. Use of the USO mail system for sending chain letters is a misuse of USO and state property; therefore, use of the USO mail system for sending personal chain letters is strictly prohibited.

2.15. PUBLICATIONS

Several publications are designed specifically for employees of the University System Office.

1. USO Intranet website: <http://www.bor.usg.edu>
2. USG Internet website: <http://www.usg.edu>

2.16. PERSONAL USE OF STATE VEHICLES

State vehicles may not be used for personal purposes except as stipulated by the state. Non state employees should not be permitted to drive state vehicles.

2.17. SAFEGUARDING USO EQUIPMENT

If you handle USO equipment, you are responsible for the care and security of that equipment while it

is under your control. You are not permitted to use USO equipment for personal reasons. Unauthorized use or removal of USO equipment or property may be cause for immediate discharge. If you are found guilty of carelessness or mischievous, malicious, or willful destruction of USO equipment or loss of property, you may be required to pay for the repair, recovery, or replacement of such equipment or property. In addition, this may be a cause for immediate discharge.

2.18. OWNERSHIP OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia recognizes that research and scholarship should be encouraged and carried out without regard to financial gain from licensing fees, royalties, or other such income. However, the Board of Regents also recognizes that patentable inventions, discoveries, software programs, and other intellectual property often arise from University System of Georgia-related staff or faculty efforts.

The policies governing the administration of inventions are included in the Board of Regents Policy Manual. Other board policies govern other forms of intellectual property including computer software. Those policies also provide recognition and incentive to inventors and at the same time ensure that University System of Georgia shares in the rights pertaining to inventions in which it has an investment. Any income accruing to the USG is used in the furtherance of its academic mission.

2.19. GRATUITIES

A. Prohibited Receipt of Gifts by University System of Georgia Employees

An employee of the Board of Regents shall not directly or indirectly solicit, receive, accept, or agree to receive a thing of value by inducing the reasonable belief that the giving of the thing will influence his/her performance or failure to perform any official action. The acceptance of a benefit, reward or consideration where the purpose of the gift is to influence an employee in the performance of his/her official functions is a felony under O.C.G.A. § 16-10-2.

An employee of the University System of Georgia or any other person on his/her behalf, is prohibited from knowingly accepting, directly or indirectly, a gift from any vendor or lobbyist as those terms are defined in Georgia statutes (O.C.G.A. 21-5-70(6) and 45-1-6(a)(5)b. If a gift has been accepted, it must be either returned to the donor or transferred to a charitable organization. A gift may be accepted by the employee on behalf of the institution subject to reporting requirements of the Board of Regents. If the gift is accepted, the person receiving the gift shall not maintain custody of the gift for any period of time beyond that reasonably necessary to arrange for the transfer of custody and ownership of the gift.

For purposes of this policy a gift is defined as lodging, transportation, personal services, a gratuity, subscription, membership, trip, loan, extension of credit, forgiveness of debt, advance or deposit of money, or anything of value. A gift shall not include:

1. Food or beverage consumed at an occasional meal or event, provided the value is reasonable under the circumstances but in no event exceeds \$100 per person;
2. Food, beverages, and registration at group events to which substantial numbers of employees of an institution and/or the University System Office are invited;
3. Food, beverage, or expenses afforded employees, relatives or others that are associated with normal and customary business or social functions or activities;

4. Actual and reasonable expenses for food, beverages, travel, lodging and registration provided to permit participation in a meeting, demonstration, or training related to official or professional duties if participation has been approved in writing by the Chancellor, or his/her designee;
5. Promotional items generally distributed to the general public;
6. Textbooks, software, and instructional materials to be reviewed;
7. An award, plaque, certificate, memento, or similar item given in recognition of the recipient's civic, charitable, political, professional, private or public service or achievement;
8. Legitimate salary, honoraria, benefit, fees, commissions, or expenses associated with the recipient's non-public business, employment, trade, or profession;
9. Gifts from a person or entity who is neither a lobbyist nor a vendor as those terms are defined in State Statutes, nor a student or patient at an institution;
10. Consulting fees, honoraria, or financial benefits from sponsors or foundations, received as part of a negotiated contractual agreement and in conformance with University System and campus policies;
11. Gifts to or from University System foundations or other separately incorporated, charitable entities.

B. Appearance of Conflicts of Interest

An employee shall make every reasonable effort to avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest. An appearance of conflict exists when a reasonable person will conclude from the circumstances that the employee's ability to protect the public interest, or perform public duties, is compromised by personal interest. An appearance of conflict can exist even in the absence of a legal conflict of interest.

Employees are referred to State Conflict of Interest Statutes O.C.G.A. §45-10-20 through §45-10-70 and The Board of Regents Policies 802.13, 802.15 and 802.16, to include University System of Georgia Ethics Policy found at <http://www.usg.edu/audit/compliance/ethics/> and institutional policies governing professional and outside activities.

C. Other Rules of Conduct

1. Every employee shall make a due and diligent effort to determine whether he/she has a conflict of interest or appearance of conflict before taking any action.
2. Every employee shall continually monitor, evaluate, and manage his/her personal financial and professional affairs to ensure the absence of conflicts of interest and appearance of conflicts.

D. Violations

A violation of this policy may subject an employee to disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

2.20. SAFETY

All employees are expected to perform their duties in a safe manner. On-the-job safety is the employee's responsibility and every effort should be made to avoid careless work habits. Any unsafe working conditions encountered by an employee should be reported to his/her supervisor. If injured while on duty, an employee should immediately report the incident to his/her immediate supervisor.

2.21. BULLETIN BOARDS

Bulletin boards are placed in the break rooms on each floor of the USO Offices and display information of interest to employees. They are intended for official and semi-official information. Good judgment and discretion should be practiced in the use of these bulletin boards.

2.22. LOST AND FOUND

Articles found on the premises should be turned in to your supervisor or department head. Usually such items are turned over to the GBA Police.

2.23. EMPLOYEE TRAVEL

Travel by employees on official State business is covered by regulations relating to reimbursement for reasonable and necessary expenses. Employees required to make official University System Office trips out of state must complete a Prior Approval for Out of State Travel form and have the form approved by the appropriate personnel before reimbursement of travel will be allowed.

After completing travel, a travel expense statement should be completed, signed and approved by the appropriate personnel and submitted to the Office of Business Affairs for reimbursement. Any questions concerning travel regulations also should be directed to that office.

2.24. TIME LOST DUE TO BAD WEATHER OR OTHER EMERGENCIES

Occasionally the Metro Atlanta area experiences bad weather with snow and ice on the roads making it difficult for employees to get to work. If open, employees should make every effort to safely get to work. When driving is difficult, employees may judge their ability to complete the commute and determine if they should claim Inclement Weather Leave using their accumulated annual leave. Further, it is the employee's responsibility to inquire of his or her supervisor and to understand the inclement weather practices as they apply to the employee's specific work circumstances.

The Governor shall make decisions regarding the conditions affecting the closure of all agencies statewide. In the event of inclement weather or any emergency making attendance difficult for Board of Regents employees, the Chancellor may declare leave with or without pay as he/she shall decide.

If inclement weather or other emergency conditions affecting all agencies statewide or within a geographic region develop during the workday, agencies will be notified by telephone and/or fax of any authorized changes to normal work hours. If such conditions develop during the night and warrant delayed opening or official closing, official announcements will be made by the Governor through the following media outlets:

1. In Metropolitan Atlanta: Television Broadcast Station WSB (ABC) Channel 2, and Radio Stations WSB 750 AM and WSB 98.5 FM shall serve as official notification stations.
2. In Areas outside Metropolitan Atlanta: Local Radio Stations that are part of the Peach State Public Radio Network will carry official announcements. Agencies with operations outside of metropolitan Atlanta are encouraged to identify appropriate Network member stations in the areas of need and communicate specific tuning information (or other instructions, such as a phone number to call) to employees in those areas.

Announcements will be made as soon as possible following any decision to close state operations in any area. Employees should listen to one of the above stations for information about alternate work hours or office closing, and should be reminded that announcements on other stations may not be accurate. In the absence of official notification of delayed opening or office closure, employees are expected to report to work on time or contact their supervisor or other appropriate agency personnel as directed by their agency head.

Once again, it is your responsibility to contact your supervisor during such emergencies and to report the conditions that are peculiar to your own situation.

When an employee is prevented from reporting to work or remaining at work because of the closure of the agency or subsection thereof by action of the Governor or chancellor, as applicable, such absence is considered to be with pay and not charged to any accrued leave or compensatory time. Otherwise, unless declared by the Governor, Board of Regents or the Chancellor, such absences due to an employee's personal circumstances shall be charged to available leave or compensatory time or shall be unpaid. The employee or department manager must submit such leave via ADP on the employee's timecard.

2.25. FIRE AND OTHER EMERGENCY EVACUATIONS

The Trinity/Washington building, including the basements, is a non-smoking facility. The importance of fire prevention in all areas cannot be overemphasized. Carelessness and thoughtlessness are two primary reasons for fires. Fire hazards such as smoking in nonsmoking areas, defective wiring, fire doors propped open, blocked corridors/exits, and the accumulation of combustible items should be reported to the Human Resources Generalist as soon as possible.

A. Provisions for Individuals with Disabilities

The landings inside each stairwell and protected elevator lobbies are considered "safe" areas for individuals with disabilities. It is routine procedure for emergency personnel (that is, Fire Department and Police) to check those areas for individuals with disabilities and/or injured persons. In the event that your building must be evacuated, individuals with disabilities should be escorted to the closest stairwell, and a staff member will notify emergency personnel when they arrive.

General Procedures if you detect fire or smoke, no matter how minor it may appear to be, do this at once:

- A. Stay calm and use common sense. Students and visitors will depend on your actions.
- B. Close the door to confine the fire and smoke.
- C. Activate the fire alarm (a small red box located on the wall near each exit). Follow the instructions on the alarm.
- D. Report the fire. Call GBA Police at (404)-656-3281, identify yourself, and tell the dispatcher the exact location of the fire or smoke and what is burning.
- E. Notify your supervisor and emergency coordinator immediately.
- F. Location maps and emergency routes are located in each conference room and bathroom.
- G. Evacuate yourself and visitors.

B. Building Evacuation

Should it become necessary to evacuate the building, all building occupants should proceed to the nearest exit, move away from the building, and assemble in a location predetermined by each department or building administrator. This will provide a quick and easy way to account for all personnel. It also is important for the Fire Department to have clear and unobstructed access to the building. Do not return to the building unless told to do so by the Fire Department, Police, or the Emergency Floor Coordinator.

3. BENEFITS

3.1. ANNUAL LEAVE

The University System Office provides paid vacations for all regular employees working at least one-half time under a policy of annual leave accrual. The annual leave policy for University System Office employees is as follows:

Annual/Vacation

Employees with 0 to 5 years of service accrue vacation leave at the rate of one and one-fourth days a month (10 hours) for a total of 15 days annually. After 5 years of service, the accrual increases to one and one-half days a month (12 hours) or 18 days annually. After 10 years of service, the accrual increases to one and three-fourth days a month (14 hours) or 21 days annually. Employees whose appointment is subject to approval by the Board of Regents shall accrue annual leave at the rate of one and three-fourth working days per month (14 hours) or 21 days annually. A regular employee working one-half time or more but less than full time will earn and accrue annual leave in an equivalent ratio to the percentage of time employed. Annual leave is accrued on the last working day of each month and employees who begin work prior to the 16th of the month will earn annual leave for that month.

Earned annual leave may be accrued up to a maximum of 45 working days although, during the year, the annual leave balance may be greater than 45 days. At the end of each calendar year all annual leave account balances in excess of 45 days will be reduced to 45 days.

Earned annual leave shall be taken at times mutually acceptable to the employee and his/her immediate supervisor; however, the supervisor should make an effort to accommodate the employee, if at all possible.

Employees shall be compensated for all accrued annual leave time up to 45 working days upon termination of employment for any reason. A terminating employee shall not accrue any annual leave after his/her last working day.

Temporary employees and regular employees working less than one-half time do not earn or accrue vacation time.

3.2. EDUCATION SUPPORT LEAVE

Each full time, regular University System of Georgia employee is eligible for up to eight (8) paid hours of Education Support Leave per calendar year. The purpose of the leave to support and promote education in Georgia as well as supplement work life balance options for USG employees. This leave is in addition to, and not charged against, an employee's other leave.

Activities deemed to promote education in Georgia may include, but are not limited to, some of the following:

- Attend Parent/Teacher conferences
- Participate in classroom activities, such as reading to a class or presenting on career day
- Tutor students without receiving compensation
- Proctor examinations
- Attend award and recognition ceremonies or graduation exercises
- Participate in field day activities or chaperone field trips
- Attend open house functions

Full details are available on-line at: http://www.usg.edu/hr/manual/education_support_leave

3.3. HOLIDAYS

Regular employees working one-half time or greater are entitled to twelve paid holidays each year. Nine of these holidays are designated as “official holidays” and three are designated as “unscheduled holidays”.

A. Official Holidays

The University System Office is closed on the following designated official holidays (subject to adjustments when a holiday falls on Saturday or Sunday):

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| New Year’s Day | January 1 st |
| Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Birthday | 3 rd Monday in January |
| Memorial Day | 4 th Monday in May |
| Independence Day | July 4 th |
| Labor Day | 1 st Monday in September |
| Thanksgiving Day | 4 th Thursday in November and the day following |
| Christmas Day | December 25 th plus one additional day |

Regular employees working one-half time or more but less than full-time are entitled to receive holiday pay equivalent to the hours they were scheduled to work on the holiday. Terminating employees shall not be paid for any official holidays occurring after their last working day of employment.

B. Unscheduled Holidays

Because the University System Office is only closed for nine holidays, regular employees working full-time will accrue three unscheduled holidays. Eligible employees will accrue one Unscheduled Holiday at the end of January, one at the end of April, and one at the end of July. To receive credit for an Unscheduled Holiday, you must be on the payroll on the first working day of the appropriate quarter in

which the holiday is earned. Unscheduled Holidays may be taken with supervisory approval once accrued. Unscheduled holidays may not be taken in advance of the quarter in which they are authorized. Accrued unscheduled holidays may be taken by the day or by the hour. Employees on inactive payroll status the first working day of a calendar quarter are not authorized an Unscheduled Holiday for that quarter. Unscheduled Holidays do not accrue beyond December 31 each year and will be lost if not used by that date. Therefore, you should plan to take your Unscheduled Holidays prior to the end of December each year. The University System Office may also designate unscheduled holidays as official holidays as deemed appropriate.

3.4. SICK LEAVE WITH PAY

All regular employees shall accumulate sick leave at the rate of one working day per calendar month of service with no maximum accrual limit. All regular, part-time employees working one-half time or more will accumulate sick leave in an equivalent ratio to the percentage of time employed. If sick leave is claimed for a continuous period in excess of five workdays, a physician's statement is required for the employee to claim further sick leave.

In the event of illness, injury or death in one's immediate family, an employee may, upon approval by his/her immediate supervisor, be allowed necessary time off with pay chargeable to sick leave. The amount of time allowed shall be determined by the immediate supervisor based on individual circumstances. In the event of death in the immediate family, sick leave with pay may not exceed five working days. For purposes of leave granted in the event of death, immediate family is defined to include husband or wife, children, mother, father, sister, brother, the in-laws of the fore mentioned, and certain other relatives when, in the judgment of the employee's immediate supervisor, the employee's presence is justified.

LEAVE FOR MARROW AND ORGAN DONATION

1. Employees who serve as an **organ donor** for the purpose of transplantation shall receive a leave of absence, with pay, of thirty days.
2. Employees who serve as a **bone marrow donor** for the purpose of transplantation shall receive a leave of absence, with pay of seven days.

3.5. SICK LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

An employee unable to return to work after using up all accumulated sick leave may be granted sick leave without pay for a period not to exceed one year. Such approval of sick leave without pay does not guarantee the absent employee a position upon return from the leave of absence; however, it does allow the absent employee to continue his/her insurance benefits with System participation in the premium cost. All other benefits are prohibited which would otherwise accrue to the employee.

3.6. PERSONAL LEAVE

At the discretion of the Division's Senior Vice Chancellor, personal leave of absence without pay for periods not to exceed one year may be approved. Such approved personal leave shall allow the employee the right to elect to continue group insurance benefits.

3.7. FAMILY/MEDICAL LEAVE

Consistent with the provisions of the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993, an eligible employee may be entitled to up to twelve (12) work weeks of leave during any twelve (12) month period for one or more of the following reasons:

- The employee's own [serious health condition](#), including an on-the-job injury or occupational disease covered by Worker's Compensation, which causes the employee to be unable to perform the functions of his or her job.
- The care of an immediate family member with a serious health condition
- The birth and care of a newborn child
- The legal placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care
- A spouse, son, daughter or parent being on active duty or having been notified of an impending call or order to active duty in the Armed Forces. Leave may be used for any "qualifying exigency" arising out of the service member's current tour of active duty or because the service member is notified of an impending call to duty in support of a contingency operation.

3.7.1 NDAA

Consistent with the provisions of the federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993 and the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 2008, an eligible employee may be entitled to up to twenty-six (26) work weeks of leave during any twelve (12) month period per service member and per injury or illness, for the following reason:

- A spouse, son, daughter, parent, or nearest blood relative caring for a recovering service member. A recovering service member is defined as a member of the Armed Forces who suffered an injury or illness while on active-duty that may render the person unable to perform the duties of the member's office, grade, rank or rating. Any family and medical leave, whether paid, unpaid, or a combination thereof, will be counted towards the twelve week leave entitlement.

3.7.2 Employee Responsibilities Under FMLA

FMLA allows employees to balance their work and family lives by taking reasonable unpaid leave for certain family and medical reasons. The FMLA seeks to accomplish this in a manner that accommodates the legitimate interests of employers, minimizes the potential for employment discrimination on the basis of gender, while promoting equal employment opportunity for men and women.

As an employee requesting family leave, you are expected to provide your supervisor with appropriate notification and documentation.

- To be entitled to leave, employees must give at least a 30-day advance notice for [foreseeable leave](#), or as much notice as is possible and practicable. An employee must first obtain a [Family & Medical Leave request form](#). For [unforeseeable leave](#), you must provide notice as soon as possible. Your supervisor or department head will provide you with written notice regarding the approval or denial of your request for family leave.
- Your institution may require documentation of the need for leave by having the [health care provider](#) complete the [Form WH-380-E - Certification of Health Care Provider for Employee's Serious Health Condition](#). An employee must provide the requested certification to his/her employer within the time frame requested (the institution must allow at least 15 calendar days after its request), unless it is not practicable to do so despite the employee's diligent, good-faith efforts.

- Medical recertification may be required every 30 days for prolonged illnesses. Please get the [Form WH-380-E - Certification of Health Care Provider for Employee's Serious Health Condition](#).
- For a personal serious health condition, you may be required to present a fitness-for-duty clearance from your [health care provider](#) before being reinstated to active duty. Please get the [Medical Evaluation \(Return to Work\) form](#).
- You must make arrangements to pay your health insurance premiums. Please contact Human Resources to discuss these arrangements.
- You must notify your employer of any [change of circumstances](#) for which your leave is being taken.
- You are expected to return to work by the end of the approved FMLA leave. If you do not return, and if failure to return is not due to a continued or newly documented qualifying serious health condition, you may be required to reimburse the institution for the employer portion of the health coverage premiums that it paid on your behalf during the leave.
- Once you have reviewed your responsibilities, please consult Human Resources if you have further questions.

3.7.3 Military Notification

Leave is available to covered family members of members of the National Guard or Reserves, or of retired military, who are on active duty, called to active duty, or are notified that they will be called to active duty in support of a contingency operation, as that is defined in various statutes governing military service. Leave is not available to regular members of the Armed Forces, and it is normally not available to members of state militias, unless they are called up in support of a U.S. operation.

The regulations define eight categories of “qualifying exigencies”:

- short-notice deployment (7 days notice or less and only available for 7 days total);
- military events and related activities (such as ceremonies and briefings);
- child care and school activities (for non-routine matters);
- financial and legal arrangements;
- counseling;
- rest and relaxation (up to 5 days);
- post-deployment activities (including debriefings or funeral services for up to 90 days following the termination of the covered military member’s active duty status); and
- any additional activities agreed to by employer and employee.

3.7.4 FMLA and Health Insurance

Whether utilizing paid or unpaid time, employees may continue their insurance benefits during FMLA leave by paying their portion of the premiums. In order for insurance benefits to continue (as is the case with other types of sick leave without pay) the employee must make the normal premium payment. If you have any questions about your insurance as it relates to Family & Medical Leave or making payments while on leave, please contact Human Resources.

3.7.5 FMLA and Leave

FMLA leave is unpaid (employers are not required to grant such leave as paid time off). However, employees may elect to utilize – or the institution may require that employees utilize – their accrued paid sick leave and/or annual leave, as appropriate for such absences. (*Exception:* If your FMLA leave is a result of an on-the-job injury, you have the option of using unpaid leave even if you have paid leave available.)

If an employee is on unpaid FLMA leave he/she would not accrue annual leave or sick leave during this period of time. If an employee is using unpaid FMLA on an intermittent basis, leave accruals will only calculate on that paid portion of the pay period. Questions regarding the calculations of leave accruals should be directed to Human Resources.

If a request for family leave is denied for any reason, notice of the denial will be provided to the requesting employee by the supervisor denying the request in a timely manner. The notification will be provided in writing and will include the reason for denial.

Employees are referred to the Family and Medical Leave Act on-line at:
http://www.usg.edu/hr/benefits/family_and_medical_leave_act_fmla

3.8. MILITARY LEAVE

Leave with pay will be granted to regular/full-time and regular/part-time employees who are members of the Georgia National Guard or a reserve component of the Armed Forces of the United States for periods specified by official orders. This type of leave does not cover drill periods and/or reserve training periods on “week-ends” or other scheduled days off. The amount of Military leave with pay is limited to eighteen (18) workdays in any one federal fiscal year (October 1 - September 30), and may not exceed eighteen (18) workdays in any one continuous period of such absence.

In the event the Governor declares an emergency and orders an employee to State active duty as a member of the National Guard, such employee, while performing such duty, shall be paid his/her salary or other compensation as an employee for a period not exceeding thirty (30) days in any one federal fiscal year (October 1 - September 30) and not exceeding thirty (30) days in any one continuous period of such State active duty service.

3.9. MILITARY DIFFERENTIAL PAY

In accordance with the University System of Georgia Military Differential Pay policy, the University System Office has elected to provide Military Differential compensation for absence while performing ordered military duty and while going to and returning from such duty, after expiration of the paid military leave detailed in the previous section. Military differential pay is equal to the amount by which an employee’s projected state base pay for a covered pay period exceeds the employee’s actual military pay and allowances as applicable to that pay period. Military pay differential may not exceed a total of twelve months. At the expiration of the maximum Military Differential, continued absence by the employee shall be considered military leave without pay unless annual leave is allowed. Funding for Military Differential Pay is based on existing institution budgets.

Full details are available on-line at: http://www.usg.edu/hr/manual/military_leave

3.10. INCLEMENT WEATHER/EMERGENCY LEAVE

In the event of inclement weather or any emergency, making attendance difficult for employees, the Chancellor may declare leave with or without pay, as he shall decide. (For additional information please see section 2.24.)

3.11. LEAVE PROCEDURE

If an absence from work is for leave purposes, the employee must submit an on-line annual/sick leave request. If no leave is available, the earnings for the pay period affected will be reduced.

3.12. SHARED SICK LEAVE PROGRAM

University System Office regular employees with at least one year of service may participate in the Shared Sick Leave Program.

The Shared Sick Leave Program is a means for University System Office employees to donate sick leave to a pool for possible use by a fellow University System Office employee experiencing a serious health condition or whose immediate family member is experiencing a serious health condition which has caused or is likely to cause the employee to use all of their accumulated paid leave. (The immediate family includes spouse, parent, parent in-law, brother, sister, child, stepchild, son-in-law, daughter in-law, grandparent, grandchild or foster parent or legal guardian.)

Employees are allowed to donate up to 80 hours of sick leave (in eight (8) hour increments) during the annual Open Enrollment period for the following calendar year. Leave donations are irrevocable. Employees who contribute to the Shared Sick Leave Program must maintain a minimum of 40 hours of personal sick leave. The hours cited in this section are prorated for part-time employees.

3.13. COURT DUTY

Employees called for jury duty or witness duty will be paid at the normal rate of pay for any regularly scheduled time lost from the job. This leave will be granted upon presentation of official orders from the appropriate court.

3.14. VOTING

Employees are encouraged to vote in all federal, state and local elections. An employee whose work schedule would otherwise prevent him/her from voting may, at the discretion of his/her immediate supervisor, be permitted sufficient time off with pay, not to exceed two hours, in order to vote.

3.15. RETIREMENT PLANS

Retirement benefits for most regular, half-time or greater employees of the University System Office, as a condition of employment, are provided through the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia. However, certain employees of the University System Office whose positions are eligible for participation in the Optional Retirement Plan pursuant to the authority granted to the Board of Regents under O.C.G.A Section 47-21-7 and whose positions have specifically been identified as meeting the criteria under this law have an option to become a member of the either the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia or the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP).

As a condition of employment, all employees eligible for the Optional Retirement Plan must elect to become a member of that program within 60 days or they will automatically become members of the Teachers Retirement System of Georgia. **The retirement plan election is irrevocable.**

A contribution of gross salary is required under either the Teachers Retirement System or the Optional

Retirement Plan. For more information, please refer to the retirement section of the USG benefits website or contact Human Resources.

3.16. HEALTH BENEFITS

3.16.1. Health Plans

The University System of Georgia offers group health benefit plans to all regular employees working one halftime or more. There are currently several plans available to USO employees, all of which are administered by a third party. Plan materials providing detailed information on the options available are distributed to employees at the time of hire and during the Annual Open Enrollment period.

For each plan, application for coverage must be made within 31 days of employment; otherwise an application would have to be made during the annual open enrollment period or if an employee experiences a qualifying life event.

Available coverage options include:

- Medical and Pharmacy
- Dental
- Vision
- Life and AD&D Coverage
- Disability
- Health Savings Account
- Flexible Spending Accounts
- Lifestyle Discount Programs

Please refer to the health benefit website <http://www.usg.edu/hr/benefits> for further information on the available coverage options.

3.16.2. COBRA

If a System Office employee or his/her dependent loses medical or dental coverage, he/she may be able to extend coverage under the provisions of a federal law known as the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986 (COBRA). This law provides for the continuation of insurance benefits to employees and/or dependents if certain qualifying events take place such as termination of employment, a reduction in work hours, divorce or attainment of the maximum age by a dependent. Benefits may be extended for a maximum of 18, 29, or 36 consecutive months, depending upon the qualifying event. The covered individual must also make full and prompt premium payment. Under COBRA the entire premium plus a 2% administrative fee must be paid by the employee. Employees should consult the health benefits section of the website for more information on COBRA continuation rights. Requests to elect COBRA continuation are coordinated through the USG Shared Services Center.

3.17. SOCIAL SECURITY

University System Office employees participate in the Social Security Program. Contributions under this program are jointly made by the individual and the University System. The rates of contribution and the retirement benefits are established periodically by Congress.

3.18. WORKERS' COMPENSATION

All employees of the University System Office are covered under the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act. This Act provides protection for the employee in the event of injury or death while performing services for the University System Office.

If an employee incurs an on-the-job accident, he/she should immediately notify the immediate supervisor in order that the necessary paperwork may be completed within the ten days required by law. The supervisor is responsible for promptly reporting any accident, injury, exposure or illness **that does not require medical** treatment to the Benefits section of the Human Resources Division using the "Incident Notice Only" form.

3.19. TAX DEFERRED ANNUITIES

The U.S. Internal Revenue Service Code provides that the University System of Georgia may purchase tax deferred annuities on behalf of employees of the University System Office and that the portion of the employee's salary put into an annuity will not be taxed to the employee currently but when received in a refund or in retirement income. Employees interested in this voluntary program should contact the Office of Human Resources.

3.20. STATE OF GEORGIA DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN

In accordance with the provisions of Section 457 of the Internal Revenue Code, the State of Georgia has established a Deferred Compensation Plan for employees of the State, and this plan is available to employees of the University System Office. This plan allows employees to make pre-tax contributions to various investment options, which have been selected by the State. While the plan is similar to the Tax Deferred Annuity Program available, there are differences, including different investment vehicles. Please contact the Office of Human Resources for further information.

3.21. TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP)

As part of its mission statement the University System of Georgia is committed to "the recruitment, hiring, and retention of the best possible faculty, staff and administration." The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia is committed to creating a more educated Georgia. Both of these commitments extend internally, as well as, externally. As part of its desire to meet its employees evolving needs, the University System of Georgia (USG) has established an educational assistance program, the Tuition Assistance Program (TAP). The purpose of TAP is to foster the professional growth and development of its eligible employees. The tuition assistance program is available to full time benefits-eligible employees of the USG who have successfully completed at least six (6) months of employment in a benefits-eligible position.

Full details are available on-line at http://www.usg.edu/hr/benefits/tuition_assistance_program_policy

3.22. LIBRARY PRIVILEGES

Through The University System of Georgia Joint Borrowers Library Card Program, all regular employees are entitled to use Institutional Libraries. Contact the Office of Human Resources for further information.

3.23. AMERICAN EXPRESS CORPORATE CARD

The University System Office makes available to eligible employees the opportunity to obtain an American Express Corporate Card at no cost to the employee. The Corporate Card is provided to be of benefit to those eligible employees who must travel at state expense.

The agreement entered into between the State of Georgia Department of Administrative Services and the American Express Travel-Related Services Company, Inc. stipulates that an employee must have a certain income level to be eligible for the corporate card.

3.24. UPDATES, CHANGES AND/OR REVISIONS TO PERSONNEL HANDBOOK

As a reminder, the policies and procedures in this handbook are designed to serve as guidelines for management action. **All policies and procedures outlined in this handbook are subject to change. All updates, changes and/or revisions are noted in the on-line version of the Personnel Handbook.** All references noted within should be reviewed against the most up-to-date version located at: <http://www.bor.usg.edu>.

3.3. WHO'S WHO IN EMPLOYEE MATTERS

Employees in Atlanta, Morrow or Non-ITS Virtual Employees:

- Frances (Miki) Peterson; frances.peterson@usg.edu , (404) 962-3246
- Andrea Mitchell; andrea.mitchell@usg.edu , (404) 962-3085

Employees in Athens and ITS Virtual Employees:

- Marie Ballard-Myer, mballardmyer@usg.edu, (706) 583-2009

Employees in Sandersville:

- Kim Gore, kgore@ssc.usg.edu, (478) 240-6428

University System Office HR Director:

- Quint Hill, quint.hill@usg.edu, (404)962-3238

For payroll related questions, contact the following:

- USG Shared Services Center (SSC), (478) 240-6500