



## STAFF HANDBOOK

**West Liberty University  
Human Resources Office  
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West Liberty, WV 26074**

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# INTRODUCTION

The West Liberty University *Staff Handbook* includes information related to the employment of full-time and part-time staff employees.

The *Staff Handbook* is not a comprehensive manual of all policies and procedures, but is intended to answer many basic questions and to direct readers to additional sources of information. It is the responsibility of every employee to be familiar with the current West Liberty University *Staff Handbook* and to comply with the guidelines contained therein. The *Staff Handbook* does not confer any rights or benefits and is NOT an employment contract, an invitation to contract or a promise of specific treatment.

Policies and procedures will change from time to time to accommodate changes in circumstances and applicable law. At any given time, existing policy and law will prevail over inadvertent errors or outdated material in the *Staff Handbook*.

The *Staff Handbook* is posted on the West Liberty University website.

The Human Resources website is an excellent source of information about employment issues and resources. <https://westliberty.edu/human-resources/>

# WEST LIBERTY UNIVERSITY MISSION, VISION, AND CORE VALUES

West Liberty University is a forward-looking, four-year public university steeped in a rich heritage as West Virginia's oldest institution of higher education. Established as West Liberty Academy in 1837 (26 years before the state was admitted to the Union), it was created to respond to the need for higher educational opportunities west of the Appalachian ridge. The institution is named for the town in which it is located. West Liberty was so named in the late 18th Century as the westernmost point of the new liberty provided through the Declaration of Independence.

## **Mission Statement**

To provide our students the opportunity for a high quality undergraduate, graduate, and professional education through appropriate formats and venues.

## **Vision Statement**

West Liberty University will be the premier 4-year institution of higher learning in the Upper Ohio Valley by:

1. Providing its students with a high-quality education wherever and however courses are delivered that will prepare them for employment in current and future job markets or for continuing their education.
2. Achieving excellence in all facets of university life, including academics, student experiences, athletics, and the visual and performing arts.
3. Providing a comprehensive and significant liberal arts foundation wherever and however courses are delivered that will prepare its students to communicate effectively, think critically, and assume roles as productive citizens of the global community.
4. Pursuing financial stability as an institution while also remaining affordable for its students.
5. Emphasizing high-quality professional relationships between students and faculty, both in and out of the classroom, through excellent instruction in any format or location and advising.
6. Standing as a vigorous and vibrant source for the creation of knowledge through innovative and creative research and scholarly activity.
7. Providing technological capabilities and infrastructure to reflect contemporary educational needs and standards.
8. Facilitating vibrant relationships with the surrounding community through social, civic, and economic engagement activities, and building strong and enduring relationships with alumni and benefactors; and
9. Supporting a safe campus environment that encourages diversity and inclusion for all members of the WLU community.

## **Core Values**

Opportunity, Caring, Professionalism and Integrity, Excellence, Civic Engagement

# HIRING AND ONBOARDING

## **Filling a Staff Vacancy**

In general, when a staff vacancy occurs the first step for the hiring manager is to initiate an online requisition with an updated position job description. After the position has been approved by everyone in the approval hierarchy and reaches the HR Office, HR posts and advertises as applicable. The University only accepts applications for employment when a specific job vacancy exists and a search officially commenced.

Applications are not accepted or kept on file in the event a position comes open. Search committees approved by the sponsoring vice president or administrator and HR, consisting of at least three (3) individuals who have direct knowledge of the position to be filled and as determined by the hiring manager conduct interviews. The search committee members receive legal guidelines and best practices from HR. Search committee members rate the interview candidates using an *interview analysis form* provided by HR. The search committee chair is responsible for making the official recommendation to the sponsoring administrator for the hiring of a candidate upon the completion of the interview process. Background and reference checks for selected candidates are completed by HR. The President makes the final determination for hiring all positions.

Please refer to Board of Governors Policy 11: Employment/Hiring.

## **Onboarding New Staff**

Human Resources welcomes new staff through an online onboarding system and in-person. The online onboarding system includes a letter from the President, campus information, employment and payroll forms plus online training links including but not limited to Preventing Harassment and Discrimination: Title IX & Clery Act, Data Security, and Drugs and Alcohol in the Workplace. Typically, day one of employment consists of an in-person session with Human Resources for a meet and greet, campus tour and to finalize required employment documents. Human Resources transitions the new staff member to his/her department contact.

# STAFF ADVISORY COUNCIL

Staff Advisory Council (Staff Council) is the representative body for all staff employed at West Liberty University. Our mission is to serve the interests and needs of the West Liberty University staff pertaining to their daily activities and work conditions as they strive to support the university's goal of providing quality education. Toward this effort, the Staff Council promotes understanding and cooperation by facilitating communication among campus constituencies, and by serving as an advocate for staff issues that affect them. In the efforts to enhance the quality of the West Liberty University work environment, Staff Council provides leadership and support to work together with all members of the university to enrich community spirit.

## **Improving Working Climate**

The Staff Council strives to improve the employment, general welfare, work environment, opportunities, and policies and procedures that affect staff. The Staff Council serves as advocates, as influencers, as event planners, as researchers, as confidantes, and so much more.

## **Enhancing Staff Communication**

The Staff Council focuses on enhancing internal communication among staff across campus to increase visibility and to promote awareness and understanding of the Staff Council through communication and education. The Staff Council strives to reach its constituents through its website, printed materials, personal engagement and email communication.

## **Goals**

The goals of the Staff Council are to provide staff development opportunities, community involvement opportunities and to provide funding for Staff Council operations and activities.

## **Increase a Sense of Community**

The Staff Council understands the importance of building a strong sense of community not only among staff, but also among staff and other groups on campus. The Staff Council works to enhance a sense of pride in who staff are, what staff do, and the important role staff play in the success of West Liberty University. Growing this sense of community and connection with West Liberty University will have a real and lasting effect on staff morale and job satisfaction.

For more information: <https://westliberty.edu/faculty-and-staff/staff-council/>

## EMPLOYMENT STATUS AND COMPENSATION

The West Liberty University compensation program for staff employees is designed to attract, retain, and motivate a talented and committed workforce to support the University's mission, vision, goals and culture. Competitive pay is an element in attracting, retaining, motivating and rewarding the type of employees needed to fulfill the mission of the University.

The University administers a compensation plan that incorporates information on performance, equity and impact where appropriate. Performance information is derived from the University's performance management program (annual performance appraisal) for purposes of establishing merit (pay for performance) for staff when applicable and as budget permits.

The Chief Human Resources Officer, will evaluate internal equity patterns and the HEPC Division of Human Resources reviews external equity.

The concept of impact allows the President or designee to prioritize resources to colleges, departments, teams, or individuals with the greatest effect or potential effect on achievement of institutional goals and excellence.

Please reference the Compensation Administration Guidelines.

### **Employment Status**

**Staff** – All non-faculty positions.

**Full-Time Regular** – A staff position created to last a minimum of nine months of a 12-month period and in which the employee is expected to work no fewer than 1,040 hours during this period. The full-time equivalent (FTE) of such a position must be reported at no less than .53 FTE. An employee in this status is eligible for all applicable benefits, subject to the qualifying conditions of each benefit. Benefits will be prorated, where applicable, for positions of less than 1.0 FTE. For example, leave accrual would be prorated. Insurance coverage and benefits would not be prorated.

If employees do not consistently work enough hours to qualify for full-time status (at least 1,040 hours during the year) there is the risk that these positions will be reduced to part-time, non- benefits-earning status. Supervisors must ensure that employees in full-time status work at least 1,040 hours per year.

**Part-Time Regular** – A staff position created to provide fewer than 1,040 work hours during a 12-month period. An employee in a part-time regular position is not eligible for most benefits.

**Temporary** – A position that is expected to last fewer than nine months of a 12- month period regardless of the number of hours worked per week. A temporary employee is not eligible for benefits.

**Casual** – A position created to meet specific operational needs in an institution for no more than 225 hours in a 12-month period. Individuals in casual positions are not eligible for benefits. Service in this capacity does not apply to any seniority or years of experience.

**Student** – A position created for degree-seeking students whose primary purpose for being at the institution is to obtain an education. A student employee is not eligible for benefits. Service in this capacity does not apply to any seniority or years of experience.

### **Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Status**

**Exempt** – A position that is not covered by the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) because it meets the FLSA criteria for executive, professional, or administrative positions. Employees in exempt positions are not eligible for overtime compensation. In the wvOASIS/Kronos leave and time keeping system, exempt employees are called Exception Paid.

**Non-Exempt** – A position that is covered by the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Employees in non-exempt positions are entitled to overtime compensation. Non-Exempt employees are paid at the overtime rate for hours in excess of 40. See section on overtime for more information. In the wvOASIS/Kronos leave and time keeping system, Non-exempt employees are called Positive Paid.

### **Staff Job Descriptions**

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that current job descriptions are on file for every staff member. It is recommended that Supervisors review job descriptions with employees at the time of annual performance reviews. If significant changes occur in the essential duties or responsibilities of a staff position, it is the responsibility of the supervisor to submit the revised job description to the Human Resources Office for review.

Job description reviews are conducted by the Chief Human Resources Officer or designee. The Chief Human Resources Officer may elect at any time to perform a desk audit of an employee's position in order to better determine the employee's responsibilities. It is an option for an employee to contact the State's Job Classification Committee (JCC) under the HEPC to request a review of the Chief Human Resources Officer's decision. Likewise, the Chief Human Resources Officer may elect to submit any job description to the JCC for review.



# WORK SCHEDULES

## **University Business Operational Hours**

The official business hours of West Liberty University are 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. University administrative offices are open during business hours to meet daily operational needs. The Cabinet Member over a particular department may implement flex time schedules and establish specific work schedules for each position.

## **Standard Work Week**

The work week is defined as a regularly recurring period of 168 hours in the form of seven consecutive 24 hour periods. Work weeks begin at 12:01 a.m. on Saturday and end at 12:00 a.m. (midnight) the following Friday. The standard number of work hours for a staff employee in a 1.0 FTE position is 37.5 hours during the work week, and supervisors need to schedule full-time employees to work the entire 37.5 hours each week. Staff employees work a minimum of 37.5 (Campus Police Officers work 40.0) hours per week.

Employees are expected to be punctual and functioning in their positions consistent with their scheduled work hours. Based on operational need, supervisors have the authority to require employees to work more than their normally scheduled hours. Supervisors also have the authority to assign employees to work different shifts on a temporary or permanent basis. When practical, employees will be given at least one full pay period advanced notice of any significant schedule change. However, employees have the responsibility of reporting as assigned by their supervisors, even if there has not been advanced notice of a significant schedule change given to the employee.

## **Flex Time**

An employee may request and, with the approval of the Cabinet Member over that department, work a schedule other than West Liberty University business hours, to include flex time, four-day work week, and job sharing, provided that the employee works the required number of hours in the respective work week. Flex time may be granted on a fixed schedule or on a short-term basis. Based on operational needs, the head of the department has the authority to require flex time only in unusual circumstances.

## **Overtime Pay**

Positions are either exempt or non-exempt from the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). This designation is made based on FLSA criteria and determines whether employees in those positions are eligible for overtime compensation. Questions regarding FLSA status and overtime should be directed to the Human Resources Office.

**Non-Exempt Employees** are entitled to overtime compensation at the rate of 1.5 times the actual hourly rate for all hours worked in excess of 40 during the work week. Hours worked between 37.5 and 40 are compensated at the straight time hourly rate. Holidays and sick or annual leave hours are not hours worked and they do not count toward the overtime rate mandate. Employees should presume that they should not work overtime at their own initiative but only with their supervisor's approval. It is misconduct for an employee to work overtime in contravention of a directive of a supervisor.

**Exempt Employees** do not receive overtime compensation. These employees meet the FLSA criteria for executive, professional, or administrative positions.

Overtime hourly pay rates are calculated including the employees' annual experience increment (AEI). The base salary is added to the AEI and that total is divided by 1950 hours for 1.0 FTE employees, as that is the number of hours that 1.0 FTE employees work during the year. For assistance in calculating an employee's overtime hourly pay rate, please contact the Human Resources Office.

The immediate supervisor must approve the overtime work requirement for non-exempt employees *before* the overtime is worked.

## **Required Overtime**

Employees may be required to work overtime under certain circumstances. However, the work must be of reasonable duration. Also, employee health, safety, and endurance must be considered, and the direction to work must be issued under reasonable circumstances.

Emergency conditions on campus may cause supervisors to demand greater levels of required overtime than would be reasonable in non-emergency conditions.

# LEAVE

## **Leave Requirements**

Leave earning employees must apply the appropriate type of leave (annual or sick) when they are absent from work. Leave must be taken in 15-minute increments.

## **Reporting Leave**

Supervisors must ensure that employees reporting to them submit leave requests whenever absences occur. Exempt and non-exempt employees are not permitted to be absent from work without submitting leave requests to account for that absence. Being absent from work without submitting leave requests to cover the absence is fraudulent and is grounds for disciplinary action.

## **Leave Management System**

The State of West Virginia payroll system uses Kronos as its leave management system and West Liberty University is required to use that system. Kronos is part of wvOASIS, the State's Enterprise Resources Planning (ERP) system, which includes all aspects of payroll processing. Leave earning employees request leave and supervisors approve leave requests through Kronos. Changes to leave requests that already have been approved can be made by the employee's supervisor. For full instructions on using the leave management system, please go to the Human Resources website <https://westliberty.edu/human-resources/kronos/> where you can access a user manual.

## **Procedures for Reporting Unscheduled Absences**

Notification of an unscheduled absence, prior to an employee's scheduled start time, is of the utmost importance. If for any reason employees are unable to report to work as scheduled, they must notify their supervisor prior to their scheduled start time with the reason and expected duration of the absence. If the absence exceeds one day, then the employee must notify the supervisor daily, unless otherwise arranged. Failure to notify an immediate supervisor concerning an absence can result in disciplinary action for the employee, up to and including the termination of employment.

It is the obligation of the employee to make certain that the immediate supervisor or designee is notified of an absence prior to the employee's scheduled start time, following whatever protocol has been outlined by the supervisor (for example, calling and speaking directly with the supervisor on the phone). Submitting a leave request through Kronos, the leave management system, does not satisfy the requirement of notifying the immediate supervisor of an unscheduled absence unless the supervisor has explicitly directed the use of that protocol. Each supervisor has the discretion to establish the notification protocols for each department, office, or category of employees.

## --- ANNUAL LEAVE ---

Annual leave is the term that the State uses for vacation days. Annual leave can be used by employees for any purpose. It must be approved in advance by the employee's supervisor. It is okay to use annual leave for illness but it is not okay to use sick leave for vacations or other 'personal days'.

### **Annual Leave Accrual**

#### **Staff Annual Leave Accrual**

Staff employees that are 1.0 FTE earn annual leave at a rate of two days per month.

#### **Twelve-Month Faculty Annual Leave Accrual**

Twelve-month faculty members earn annual leave at a rate of two days per month.

#### **Pro-Rated Leave Accrual**

Full-time regular employees working between 1,040 hours and 1,950 hours over at least nine months of a 12-month period (the fiscal year) accumulate annual leave on a pro-rated basis. Annual leave is not granted to casual, temporary, or part-time employees.

#### **Accumulation Limits**

West Liberty University permits, as an additional benefit, all employees to accrue up to twice what they earn in a 12-month period. Accumulated leave for continuing employees may not exceed twice the amount earned in any 12-month period. Employees are entitled to compensation for accumulated annual leave at termination of service, but in no case may this exceed twice that amount earned in any 12-month period.

#### **Transfer of Sick and Annual Leave from Another State Agency**

Sick and annual leave may be transferred with an employee from other agencies or institutions of the West Virginia State Government to West Liberty University. Certification of the balance which existed with the previous employing agency must accompany the request for transfer of annual leave by the employee and bear the signature of an officer of that agency.

## **Use of Annual Leave**

### **Scheduling and Use of Annual Leave**

Annual leave must be approved in advance by the employee's supervisor. Annual leave shall be arranged to fit operating schedules; however, consideration will be given to an employee's preferences. Seniority may be considered by the supervisor when arranging vacation schedules.

An employee may not take leave before it is earned and may not take annual leave unless the employee's supervisor has approved it in advance.

## **Administration of Unused Annual Leave**

### **Annual Leave Conversion Upon Retirement**

For employees hired prior to July 1, 2001 and upon meeting certain requirements, individuals retiring from West Liberty University may be eligible to apply unused annual leave as a credit toward the premium for the West Virginia Public Employees Retirement Insurance Plan, just as they can apply unused sick leave for this purpose. This option is not available to employees hired after July 1, 2001.

### **Unused Annual Leave Credits**

In the event of an employee's death, accumulated annual leave will be credited to the employee's estate.

### **Lump Sum Payment for Unused Annual Leave**

Upon termination of active employment through resignation, retirement, or otherwise, an employee will be paid in a lump sum for their accrued annual leave.

## --- SICK LEAVE ---

Sick leave may be used by an employee who is ill or injured or when employees need to actively participate in the care of a member of their immediate family who is seriously ill as defined by the treating physician, or when a death occurs in the immediate family. Sick leave may also be used for employee and family medical appointments which are approved in advance by the supervisor. It is okay to use annual leave for illness but it is not okay to use sick leave for vacation time. While annual leave can be used for any reason, sick leave can be used only for specific purposes as described in the University's policies.

### **Definition of Immediate Family**

For purposes of administering the sick, funeral, and emergency leave policies, the immediate family is defined as: spouse, or equivalent, child, step child, foster child, parents, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, in laws (parent/sibling/child), or others considered to be members of the household and living under the same roof.

### **Sick Leave Accrual**

#### **Sick Leave Accrual Rate**

Full-time regular staff accrue 1.5 days of sick leave per month of active employment. This equates to 5.2 hours of sick leave accrual for each of the 26 pay periods.

#### **Pro-Rated Leave Accrual**

Full-time regular employees working between 1,040 hours and 1,950 hours over at least nine months of a 12-month period shall accumulate sick leave on a pro-rated basis. Sick leave shall not be granted to casual, temporary, or part-time employees.

#### **Unlimited Accrual**

Accumulation of sick leave is unlimited. Employees do not lose it if it is not used within any particular time period as long as they remain in leave earning status.

#### **Transfer of Sick Leave From Another State Agency**

Accumulated sick leave may be transferred to West Liberty University for employees coming to West Liberty University from other agencies of West Virginia State Government. Certification of the employee's sick leave balance which existed at the state agency must accompany the request for transfer and bear the signature of an officer of that agency.

### **Use of Sick Leave**

Annual leave may be used when an employee is sick. However, sick leave may not be used for vacation time in place of annual leave. Sick leave can be used only for the specific purposes provided for by policy.

### **Sick Leave Use for Immediate Family Members**

Sick leave generally can be used for absence relating to care for immediate family members under the following circumstances:

- If the employee is caring for an immediate family member at home;
- If the employee is taking the immediate family member to medical appointments;
- If the immediate family member is in the hospital and the employee must be there because they might be needed to help make decisions about the family member's care or to speak on behalf of their family member.

### **Administration of Unused Sick Leave**

#### **Sick Leave Conversion Upon Retirement**

Upon meeting certain requirements, individuals retiring from West Liberty University may be eligible to apply unused sick leave as a credit toward the premium for the West Virginia Public Employees Insurance Plan, just as they can apply unused annual leave for this purpose. This option is not available to employees hired after July 1, 2001.

#### **Reinstatement of Sick Leave Upon Reemployment**

When an employee terminates employment for reasons other than retirement, all sick leave credited to that employee shall be considered ended as of the last working day with the institution and no reimbursement shall be provided for unused sick leave. Employees who resign in good standing and are later reemployed may have their accumulated sick leave reinstated if the date of termination is less than one year from reemployment. However, if the employee returns to work after more than one year from the date of termination, then no more than 30 days of sick leave may be reinstated.

## **Medical Leave Documentation**

Medical leave verification may be required to document an employee's illness or adverse health condition (or that of an immediate family member, if applicable). Medical leave verification is a signed statement from the treating health care provider to validate the illness or other cause for which sick leave or medical leave of absence may be granted. The health care provider signing the medical assessment must be currently and appropriately licensed. The document must provide information regarding the individual's medical condition, diagnosis, prognosis, and functional limitations, including duration and treatment plan, if any. All medical records are to be kept in the Human Resources Office only and are not to be kept in the departments. Based upon the medical assessment, employability and/or accommodation determinations will be made by West Liberty University.

### **Medical Leave Verification/Assessment is Required:**

- To validate a sick leave absence of more than five consecutive days (needed as of the sixth day of absence) under the terms of the sick leave policy;
- To return to work following a sick leave absence of more than five consecutive days, or a medical leave of absence;
- If requested of the employee by the supervisor following a sick leave absence, regardless of duration, as a condition of returning to work;
- To apply for and sustain catastrophic leave eligibility;
- To apply for and sustain a medical leave of absence; and/or
- To assure continued access to benefit coverage while on medical leave of absence.

It is the employee's responsibility to pursue and obtain the necessary medical assessment from the treating health care provider, and to present the completed evaluation to the University in a timely manner.

Supervisors need to notify the Human Resources staff when one of their employees has missed, or is scheduled to miss, more than five consecutive days of sick leave. This will facilitate communication between Human Resources and the employee as to required documentation.

### **Incomplete, Unacceptable, or Untimely Medical Information May Result in:**

- Prohibition to charge time absent from work to accrued sick leave;
- Prohibition to return to work if one's capacity to perform essential duties is in question;
- Disallowed or discontinued medical leave of absence;
- Discontinuation of benefit access; and/or
- Disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment with the University.



## ---ADDITIONAL LEAVE TYPES---

### **Catastrophic Leave**

A full-time regular employee experiencing a catastrophic illness or injury as defined by the West Virginia Code and West Liberty University policy may request approval to receive paid leave time donated by other employees. Within established limits, employees may voluntarily donate accumulated sick or annual leave directly to an approved recipient. The Catastrophic Leave policy with required forms are located on the Human Resources website.

### **Funeral Leave**

When a death occurs in the immediate family, a reasonable amount of time (maximum of five days) may be charged to accrued sick leave as required for the employee to arrange for and attend the funeral and related services, including travel time. "Reasonable" amount of time is determined at the discretion of the supervisor, and is based upon geographic distance, workload, and similar factors. Sick leave is not provided for an extended bereavement period or to attend to the affairs of the estate; annual leave may be requested for these purposes.

### **Witness and Jury Leave**

Employees who are subpoenaed or directed to serve as jurors or appear as witnesses for review proceedings of the Federal Government, the State of West Virginia, or a political subdivision thereof, shall be entitled to work release time for such duty and for such period of required absence which overlaps regularly scheduled work time. Employees shall submit to the Human Resources Office a copy of any notification they receive showing that they have been called to serve on jury duty. Employees are entitled to leave with pay for the required period of absence during the regularly scheduled work time including reasonable travel time.

When attendance in court is in connection with usual official duties, under subpoena, or as directed by the supervisor, time required, including reasonable travel time, shall not be considered as absence from duty. Likewise, time spent by West Liberty University employees as hearing officers, hearing committee members, and parties or witnesses in a grievance hearing is considered legitimate work time if it occurs during their normally scheduled work hours, and is part of a service to West Liberty University. Appearing as a witness without a subpoena at the request of a fellow employee and without the request of an authorized supervisor does not constitute University business. This policy does not apply to employees who are called to testify as expert or consulting witnesses and who are paid for their witness services. Further, this policy does not apply to employees involved as parties to a personal lawsuit unrelated to work.

An employee who is scheduled to work prior to the court or hearing start time shall initially report to work, travel time permitting. An employee who is excused from court/hearing prior to the end of the scheduled work day shall immediately report to work for the remainder of the work day.

## **Parental Leave**

West Liberty University adheres to the requirements of the West Virginia Parental Leave Act. A full-time employee who has worked at least 12 consecutive weeks for the State may request up to 12 weeks unpaid parental leave. Parental Leave will run concurrent to FMLA if the employee is FMLA eligible.

Parental leave may be used for the following reasons:

1. Birth of a son or daughter of the employee
2. Placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption
3. Because of a planned medical treatment
4. To provide care of a son, daughter, spouse, parent or dependent (any person who is living with or dependent upon the income of the employee, whether by blood or not) who has a serious health condition.

Employees must provide their supervisor with written notice two weeks prior to the expected birth or adoption, medical treatment, or supervision of a dependent. Failure to submit a written request may be cause for denial. The employee must provide WLU with certification by the treating physician and/or documentation regarding dependency status.

All annual leave must be exhausted before parental leave begins. No more than a total of 12 weeks of parental leave may be taken in any 12 consecutive month period.

During parental leave by an employee, WLU will continue group health insurance coverage provided that the employee pays the full premium cost of such group health plan (i.e., both the employer and employee share of the premiums). The position held by the employee immediately before the leave is commenced shall be held for a period not to exceed the 12-week period of the parental leave and the employee shall be returned to that position. WLU may employ a temporary employee to fill the position for the period of the parental leave.

## **Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA)**

WLU will grant up to 12 weeks (or up to 26 weeks of military caregiver leave to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness) during a 12-month period to eligible employees. The leave may be paid, unpaid or a combination of paid and unpaid leave, depending on available leave accruals, and as specified in this policy.

To qualify to take family or medical leave under this policy, the employee must meet all of the following conditions:

- 1) The employee must have worked for WLU for 12 months or 52 weeks. The 12 months or 52 weeks need not have been consecutive. Separate periods of employment will be counted, provided that the break in service does not exceed seven years. Separate periods of employment will be counted if the break in service exceeds seven years due to National Guard or Reserve military service obligations or when there is a written agreement, including a collective bargaining agreement, stating WLU's intention to rehire the employee after the service break. For eligibility purposes, an employee will be considered to have been employed for an entire week even if the employee was on the payroll for only

part of a week or if the employee is on leave during the week.

2) The employee must have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave. The 1,250 hours do not include time spent on paid or unpaid leave. Consequently, these hours of leave should not be counted in determining the 1,250 hour eligibility test for an employee under FMLA.

3) The employee must work in a worksite where 50 or more employees are employed by WLU within 75 miles of that office or worksite. The distance is to be calculated by using available transportation by the most direct route.

To qualify as FMLA leave under this policy, the employee must be taking leave for one of the reasons listed below:

- 1) The birth of a child and to care for the newborn child within one year of birth.
- 2) The placement with employee of a child for adoption or foster care and the care for a newly placed child within one year of placement.
- 3) Any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a covered military member on "covered active duty."
- 4) A serious health condition (described below) that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of the employee's position.

A serious health condition is defined as a condition that requires inpatient care at a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility, including any period of incapacity or any subsequent treatment in connection with such inpatient care or a condition that requires continuing care by a licensed health care provider.

Generally, a chronic or long-term health condition that would result in a period of three consecutive days of incapacity with the first visit to the health care provider within seven days of the onset of the incapacity and a second visit within 30 days of the incapacity would be considered a serious health condition. For chronic conditions requiring periodic health care visits for treatment, such visits must take place at least twice a year. Employees with questions about what illnesses are covered under this FMLA policy or under WLU's sick leave policy are encouraged to consult with the Human Resource Department.

Generally, employees must give HR at least 30 days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave. When the need for leave is unexpected, the employee must provide notice to the employer as soon as possible and practical.

Employees do not have to share a medical diagnosis, but must provide enough information to the employer so it can determine if the leave qualifies for FMLA protection. Sufficient information could include informing an employer that the employee is or will be unable to perform his or her job functions, that a family member cannot perform daily activities, or that hospitalization or continuing medical treatment is necessary. Employees must inform the employer if the need for leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employers can require a certification or periodic recertification supporting the need for leave. If the employer determines that the certification is incomplete, it must provide a written notice indicating what additional information is required.

# EMPLOYMENT RELATED LAWS AND POLICIES

## **Access to Personnel Files**

A confidential personnel file containing pertinent employment information is maintained in the Human Resources Office for each employee. The employee is entitled to inspect or copy his or her personnel file in the presence of a Human Resources staff member. The employee shall not be entitled to inspect or copy any letter of reference or other similar record that he or she has previously waived the right to inspect when the information was solicited by or supplied to West Liberty University based on such waiver. The employee shall not be entitled to inspect or copy any other record exempted by WV Code 29B-1-4 unless there is clear and convincing evidence of a legitimate reason sufficient to overcome exception. If employees wish to examine their personnel files, they should notify the Human Resources Office by phone or by filing a written appointment request at least 24 hours in advance of the desired appointment time. Personnel files may be examined only during normal West Liberty University business hours. The response of the Human Resources Office to outside requests for employment verification is generally restricted to the release of the employee's name, employment dates, and job title. Salaries of State employees are a matter of public record.

## **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Job Accommodation During Employment**

An employee in his or her present position, who is otherwise qualified and has or acquires a permanent medical impairment or impairments causing functional restrictions or limitations that can be reasonably accommodated, will be provided such measures by West Liberty University if reasonable accommodation will permit the employee to meet the essential requirements of his or her particular job. ADA Reasonable Accommodation information and forms are available on the Human Resources website <https://westliberty.edu/human-resources/leave-management-accommodation/>. The Accommodation Request form and Medical Document Form & Physician's Statement should be completed and submitted to the Human Resources Office.

## **Background Checks**

West Liberty University is committed to providing a safe working and learning environment for its employees, students, and visitors. It also seeks to protect its assets, preserve its reputation, and comply with laws, regulations, and agreements. Depending upon the position and the duties within the University, initial employment, and/or continued employment may be contingent upon a satisfactory background check.

In order to verify the pertinent backgrounds of individuals before being hired into positions at West Liberty University, the University conducts employment background checks as part of its employment procedures. The University contracts with an outside agency to perform the background checks.

The background checks may involve review of any information which would be lawful for the University to acquire and to consider as a part of its consideration for employment. The authorization, signed by the candidate, expressly includes, but is not limited to, authorization for release of education records of institutions of higher education and prior employment records

(including any information relating to confidential information about job performance, attendance, reason for separation, if applicable, or matters of discipline or misconduct, whether alleged or documented), as well as the authorization to conduct a criminal records background check of the candidate. Depending on the nature of the position, a credit check may also be completed.

Job postings for positions subject to background investigations will usually contain notification to applicants that, as a condition of hiring, the final candidate must successfully pass an employment background investigation. As a general rule, the results of the investigation should be received before an offer of employment is made. However, under some circumstances, an offer of employment may be made prior to the completion of the background check provided the contract states that employment is contingent upon a satisfactory report. For this particular situation, the contract must contain the following statement: "This offer is contingent upon you successfully passing the established background screening and the ability to provide satisfactory documentation verifying your eligibility to work for the university." Although the offer may be made in this manner, the employee may not begin working for the University without a completed satisfactory background investigation.

If an individual is to be denied employment, promotion, or transfer wholly or partly because of information obtained in a background check, the individual will be so informed. In addition, where required by law and to the extent applicable, the individual will be given (a) a copy of the relevant background check report, (b) a summary of the individual's legal rights concerning the background check report, and (c) the name, address and phone number of the third-party vendor if the individual has questions about the results of the report or wants to dispute the accuracy of the report. (Note, however, that the vendor does not make employment decisions and will be unable to provide any individual with specific reasons as to why the adverse action was taken.) Any questions concerning this policy may be directed to the Office of Human Resources.

### **Criminal Convictions Self Disclosure**

Current employees must notify the Chief Human Resources Officer of any criminal conviction in writing within three business days of the conviction. Criminal convictions, as used here, include all felony and misdemeanor convictions, as well as guilty pleas, pleas of no contest or nolo contendere, and acceptance of deferred adjudication. The term does not include criminal convictions related to minor traffic violations except in cases where the relevant position requires operation of a motor vehicle. Employees who fail to disclose criminal convictions or fail to provide accurate details regarding criminal convictions will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Upon report of a criminal conviction, the Chief Human Resources Officer, in consultation with the Legal Counsel, will determine whether the criminal conviction bears a significant relationship to the employee's suitability to continue to perform the required duties of the position. If it is determined based on the conviction that the employee is no longer suitable, the employee's employment may be terminated. If it is determined that the employee is suitable or it is unclear whether the employee is still suitable, the employee may be placed on administrative leave with or without pay pending further review.

### **Drug-Free Workplace Policy and Procedures**

All employees of West Liberty University, including faculty, staff, administrators, and student employees, must comply with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. §§ 8101 to

8106) and The Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace. Employees may not share prescription drugs with anyone else either for payment or free of charge. Reporting for work under the influence of a controlled substance or alcohol is prohibited. As a condition of West Liberty University employment, every employee shall abide by the terms of this policy and notify their supervisors and the Human Resources Office, in writing, of any conviction of drug or alcohol related charges resulting from any activity occurring in the workplace or otherwise on University premises no later than five days after such conviction. Any employee found in violation of this provision shall be subject to disciplinary action, including dismissal, and may be required to participate in a drug abuse assistance or drug rehabilitation program.

### **Entering into Contracts**

Employees are prohibited from entering into contracts on behalf of the University or any department within the University. Contracts include agreements with an entity to provide some service or commodity. Contracts may be entered into only by those at the Vice President/Executive Officer level or their designees.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidential materials that employees may come in contact with must remain confidential and must stay secured in the relevant department unless otherwise directed by the supervisor or as expressly delineated in employees' job duties to process the information, as directed by their supervisor. Confidential information in the form of paper or electronic media may include but is not limited to: student records, parent/family records, financial statements, grades, teacher's records, employee records, and student employee documents. Employees are expected to maintain professionalism by ensuring that all of these materials remain confidential.

It is a breach of employees' duties to fail to adhere to the following standards:

- Use and disclose confidential information only in connection with and for the purpose of performing assigned duties.
- Request, obtain or communicate confidential information only as reasonably necessary to perform work duties, and refrain from requesting or obtaining or communicating a broader scope of confidential information than is necessary for work duties.
- Confidential information on computers must be appropriately secured, including to reasonably diminish the risk of inappropriate persons viewing confidential information on the computer monitor. Unattended computers must be secured by either log-off or password-protected screen-saver/sleep mode.
- Passwords to University network accounts must never be shared with other persons and should not be used for any other accounts, personal or business.

If an unauthorized use or disclosure of confidential information occurs, or is reasonably believed to

be likely to have occurred, employees must make their direct supervisors aware of the breach immediately. If it is found that an employee has failed to comply with these standards of confidentiality, workplace discipline may possibly include termination of that employee from the University.

### **Information Security**

Employees are expected to maintain the confidentiality of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) and other confidential materials and information, and of student records, any of which may be of a personal, academic, financial or health nature. The unauthorized access of or disclosure of confidential information may compromise the integrity of the department and/or otherwise violate individual rights of privacy. The confidentiality of each of these categories of information is required under West Liberty University policy, state law, and federal laws including FERPA, GLBA, and HIPAA.

### **Service and Support Animals in the Workplace**

Approval for West Liberty University employees to bring a service animal or support animal to the workplace must be obtained from the Human Resources Office through an Americans with Disabilities (ADA) accommodation request. For details about employees' responsibilities and the causes of disallowance from continued use, please reference University Policy No. 118: Animals in the Workplace.

### **Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action**

It is the policy of West Liberty University to provide equal education and employment opportunities for prospective and current members of the student body, faculty and staff on the basis of individual qualifications and merit. In order to ensure equal opportunities for all,

- West Liberty University prohibits discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, and retaliation for reporting, participating in, and/or opposing a discriminatory practice.
- West Liberty University will take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment and otherwise treat without discrimination qualified women, minorities, individuals with disabilities, disabled veterans, and veterans of the Vietnam era.
- West Liberty University does not affiliate with nor grant recognition to any individual, group or organization having policies or practices that discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, veteran status or disabilities.

## **Harassment Policies**

West Liberty University does not tolerate harassment in the workplace, or of members of the University community, and wants to provide an environment free of any form of harassment.

Harassment is defined as any form of conduct that would be offensive, intimidating, or threatening to the average person and is based upon an individual's race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, marital or family status, pregnancy, veteran status, service in the uniformed services (as defined in state and federal law), religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, or gender expression.

Harassment may be of a sexual, racial, or more general nature. Harassment may also include bullying and cyber-stalking.

Workplace bullying refers to repeated, unreasonable actions of individuals (or a group of employees), which is intended to intimidate and creates a risk to the health and safety of the employee(s). Cyber-stalking is the use of electronic means (such as the internet, smart phones, and other electronic devices) to stalk or harass an individual, a group of individuals, or an organization.

Employees or students who believe that they have been harassed in violation of this policy should take the steps that are outlined in the Board of Governors Policy 32 Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Domestic Misconduct, Stalking, Retaliation, And Relationships. The harassment policies outline formal and informal resolution steps. Individuals such as the Chief Human Resources Officer and the Title IX Coordinator are available to provide assistance. Any supervisor, agent or other employee who is found, after appropriate investigation, to have engaged in the harassment of another employee or student will be subject to appropriate sanctions depending on the circumstances, up to and including termination of employment.



## **Hazardous Materials**

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are to be maintained in the workplace for any hazardous material present. Supervisors of departments where chemical hazards are present are responsible for establishing and maintaining MSDS information in a readily accessible location within the department. Employees are encouraged to review those safety sheets. Employees who are concerned about materials which they believe may be hazardous, but which have not been identified as such, should consult with their supervisor before handling the material. If the concern is not satisfied, then the employee may contact the Health and Safety Director at (304-312-8116).

## **Employment of Relatives**

Consistent with West Liberty University procedure, employees may neither initiate nor participate in institutional personnel decisions involving a direct benefit to a relative/immediate family member. Such decisions include, but are not limited to, hiring, supervision, retention, promotion, salary, and leave of absence. Family member is defined by the following: Any person who is related or who is a cohabitating sexual partner of a WLU employee. Generally, relatives include those who are related by blood, law or marriage as a spouse, parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece or first cousin.

Employees must notify their supervisor (e.g. dean, chair, vice president, direct supervisor, etc.) if any family member applies for a position for which they will be responsible or may influence the employment actions referred to in this procedure. In such instances, the individual has a duty to cooperate in making alternative arrangements.

Supervisors must be attentive to avoiding any conduct that would violate the Ethics rules on nepotism, including any instance of a relative working for a supervisor who reports under them. If a supervisor has an issue of possible nepotism, it is the supervisor's responsibility to review the matter with the Chief Human Resources Officer. Additional information about this procedure can be found at <https://westliberty.edu/human-resources/files/2018/06/Employment-of-Relatives-Procedure-20-022018.pdf>

## **Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986**

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 requires all employees, as a condition of employment, to provide original documents which establish their identity and employment eligibility. The Human Resources Office must receive the employee's completed and signed Section 1 of the USCIS Employment Eligibility Verification Form (Form I-9) not later than the employee's first day of work. By no later than the employee's third day of work, the Human Resources staff must complete Section 2 of the Form I-9. Employees may not continue to work beyond the first day unless the Form I-9 is completed. West Liberty University retains copies of completed I-9 forms for a period of years as required by the Act.

## **Tobacco Free Policy**

Use of tobacco products and electronic cigarettes is prohibited on the property of West Liberty University. The use of tobacco products and electronic cigarettes also is prohibited in any motor vehicle owned, leased, or otherwise operated by the University. Tobacco products such as snuff and similar substances are prohibited on the property of West Liberty University and in institutional vehicles.

## **Solicitation**

Solicitation and selling of products and articles on West Liberty University property, owned or leased, is prohibited except by organizations and groups directly affiliated with and recognized by West Liberty University, and authorized by written approval of the University President or the President's designee. The names of West Liberty University and the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission may not be used to secure funds for any purpose or through any means without the written permission of the University President or the President's designee. Employees may not participate in the solicitation of funds by sales or donation, stated or implied, using the name of the institution or their title without the written permission of the University President or the President's designee.

## **Telecommunications and Computing Resources**

All use of I.T. resources must be in compliance with the Computer Policy, which is located at the following web address <https://westliberty.edu/it/student-technology-serv/computer-policy/>.

Incidental personal use of institutional computers and network systems for a non-institutional purpose is permitted in moderation during an employee's personal time. Incidental personal use is permissible as long as it:

- Is completed on personal time (i.e. lunch time, break);
- Does not consume more than trivial amount of systems resources;
- Does not interfere with worker productivity;
- Does not preempt business activity;
- Does not violate any State, department, or agency policy; and
- Is not used for illegal activities.

However, whether on University time or personal time, some personal uses of the computers and network systems are not permitted unless expressly authorized by the supervisor of the employee. Prohibited activities include and are not limited to:

- Downloads and/or streaming of entertainment media, including but not limited to television shows, movies, and other video transmissions which are not directly related to West Liberty University and/or the work of the employee;
- Downloading software or other copyrighted material in violation of the copyright;
- Any form of gambling;
- Playing of any games, unless actually related to the employee's job duties; and
- Unauthorized downloading of shareware programs, peer-to-peer software or files for use without the advanced authorization of the employees supervisor and I.T. Services, unless directly related to the employee's job duties

Egregious violations of these policies may be deemed to be gross misconduct.

## **University Property**

West Liberty University programs, personnel, time, titles, and property, including equipment, systems, vehicles, information, supplies, and office space are to be used in conducting authorized business of the University. Use of such property for personal benefit or gain may be grounds for disciplinary action.

Private information protected under policy or law, such as certain financial, personnel, patient, donor, or any student information, histories, and mailing lists, is to remain confidential. Such information may be disclosed, viewed, or copied only with proper authorization and must be disposed of in a manner that retains this confidentially. Willful disclosure, viewing, or copying of private information without the authorization from one's supervisor may result in disciplinary action and/or legal prosecution.

Employees are responsible for securing the University building, office, room, equipment, and other keys assigned to them for work-related reasons. Costs incurred by the institution as the result of unauthorized use or the misuse of University property, such as but not limited to personal telephone calls, will be recovered from the responsible employee. Personal calls must be limited at all times except for emergencies. An employee may not use institutional phones for personal long-distance calls unless he or she is charging them to his or her home telephone number or personal credit card or securing a personal access code whereby charges will be incurred directly to the employee.

## **Social Media**

The University expects professional and ethical behavior from its employees when posting content on behalf of the university. Those using social media on behalf of the University must assume that all postings will be automatically available for the public at large and that these may be republished and discussed in perpetuity via all forms of media. Refer to University Policy No. 45: Social Media.

As a guide, when posting personal comments be clear that you are sharing your personal views and that they do not represent the views of the University. Refrain from harassing, abusive, threatening, intimidating, endangering, fear-provoking, dishonest, deceptive, coercive, or harmful language toward others. You can be held legally liable for what you post on your own site and on the sites of others. Legal liability may arise for comments that are proprietary, copyrighted, defamatory, libelous, or obscene. Before posting, consider your audience. Future employers may search the web to screen applicants.

# WORKPLACE STANDARDS

## **Dress and Grooming**

All employees are to be suitably attired and groomed during work hours or when representing the interests of West Liberty University. Appropriate clothing must be worn at all times during the course of an employee's work. The supervisor will determine the appropriate dress and grooming codes for each department or work area, according to operational need. Supervisors who feel that a specific dress or grooming code is needed for a department should consult with the Chief Human Resources Officer. Dress and grooming codes will be nondiscriminatory.

## **Employee Responsibilities**

Employees are required to provide a full day's work each day of the job; to conduct themselves in a civil, professional manner; to treat others with respect; to comply with state and federal laws and regulations related to individual rights, business operations and procedures, health and safety, and conflict of interest; and to comply with West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and West Liberty University regulations, rules, policies, and procedures. Employees are to be treated with respect and dignity by supervisors and other employees, and have the ability by statute and policy to file a grievance for work-related disputes, free from retaliation.

## **Management Responsibilities**

Managers and supervisors at West Liberty University are expected to treat employees with respect and dignity. Likewise, they are to be treated with respect and dignity by their colleagues and subordinates. Managers and supervisors are responsible for compliance with University policies and procedures and for communicating and applying operational based directives. Managers and supervisors also are responsible for carrying out administrative directions and decisions.

Management/supervisory responsibilities include, but are not limited to, such things as: Determining the work force direction and objectives; determining the number and type of positions required, changed or consolidated; establishing standards of performance and conduct; determining the people to be hired; conducting employee evaluations; determining disciplinary action; scheduling of the work force, including determination of the number of shifts to be worked, and the scheduling and amount of overtime to be worked; determining when reductions in workforce are required, including hour reductions and layoffs; establishing a safe work environment; providing the materials and equipment to do the work required; and ensuring adherence to applicable laws and policies.

# CLOSINGS

## **Cancellation Policy**

Employees encountering severe travel conditions that prevent their attendance at work should notify their supervisors of their absence and discuss work conditions, leave time, and special needs.

Should an extreme weather emergency or power or water failure warrant the closing of offices and/or cancelling or altering the schedule of classes by the University President, then public notification will be made via Rave text-messaging system and area media.

## **Inclement Weather**

During periods when classes are in session, the decision to close the institution for any period of time due to weather is reached by the President's designees; the Provost in conference with the Vice President of Student Services/Registrar. At other times, the decision is made by the President. During the period of the closure, only employees necessary for the continuance of vital services must report to work. Supervisors and department heads are to inform in advance those employees who will be required to come to, or to remain on, campus during such closures.

# HOLIDAYS

Guidelines for University observed holidays are provided in University Policy No. 112: Holidays. Established holidays are intended to grant full-time regular staff the benefit of one work day of paid time off.

Proclamations of a legal holiday by the President of the United States, governor, or any other authority are generally recognized at West Liberty University. If a specified holiday falls on either a Saturday or a Sunday then either the preceding Friday or the following Monday will be observed as the legal holiday, as designated by the University President. Any specific adjustment regarding a day of observation will be announced by the Office of the President or designated authority.

## **Holiday Pay**

One holiday equals no more than 8.0 hours, regardless of the employee's normal work schedule (for example, if the employee normally works 9.5 hour days). Employees whose normal work schedule is less than 8.0 hours a day will be paid for holidays at the number of hours normally worked per day.

West Liberty University's paid holidays are a benefit provided to active, continuing employees. This includes not only the days designated on the formal list of annual holidays, but also any days or portions of days added to the holiday schedule after the fiscal year has begun. The occasional circumstances of all or part of a scheduled business day which is cancelled due to inclement weather or other emergency condition is not included in this policy.

## **Holiday Time Off**

When a hourly staff employee is required to work on any designated Board or institution holiday, that employee shall receive regular pay for the number of hours actually worked on that holiday plus additional pay at the rate of one and one-half (1 ½) times the number of hours actually worked on the holiday. This applies only to designated holidays as listed on the Institutional Holiday Calendar. A designated holiday must be part of an employee's regular work schedule to be eligible for holiday pay. For example, if the holiday falls on Monday and the employee's regular schedule is Tuesday through Saturday, then the employee is not eligible for holiday pay.

# STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

## **Workplace Training**

West Liberty University subscribes to an online training service, this service offers training programs on multiple human resources issues for faculty and staff. Training modules are delivered online via the Everfi web portal. Examples of training topics available from Everfi include, but are not limited to:

- Preventing Harassment and Discrimination, Title IX and Clery for Non-Supervisors and Supervisors
- Data Security EDU
- Drugs and Alcohol in the Workplace

## **Educational Activities**

Employees are encouraged to utilize University educational opportunities for career development and self-improvement. Employees, at the discretion of their immediate supervisors based on operational need, may receive time off during scheduled work hours for the purpose of attending educational activities. Work release time and reimbursement of expenses are subject to the prior approval of the employee's executive officer or director. Occasional in-service training may be required as a term of employment. Supervisors have discretion over requiring employees to attend specified training activities.

# BENEFITS

## **Employee Benefits Plan**

West Liberty University provides benefits-eligible employees an opportunity to participate in a comprehensive package of benefits, including health, life, disability, retirement, dental, vision, and medical spending accounts. Employees will learn more about each of these plans from the Human Resources staff. All plans, programs, benefits, services, and other provisions are subject to review and change. Benefit details can be found at <https://westliberty.edu/human-resources/employee-benefits/>

## **Health Insurance**

West Virginia Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA) offers hospital, surgical, major medical, prescription, and other medical care coverage. Employees pay a portion of the premium cost.

New employees should enroll in benefits programs as soon as possible after they are hired into a benefits-eligible position. Insurance coverage will take effect the first of the month following enrollment in the programs. Premiums for the health and life plans are pre-tax, meaning that no federal or West Virginia state tax or Social Security are deducted from the premiums, under Section 125 of the IRS Code.

Guidelines allow existing employees to enroll or change coverage during the open enrollment period each year, which typically occurs in April. If a family status change occurs, employees should read the PEIA Summary Plan Description and contact the Human Resources staff to work through the insurance plan change. Except in the cases of status change qualifying events, employees may make changes only during the open enrollment period.

## **Mountaineer Flexible Benefits Plan**

Various benefit plans are available on a pre-tax basis, including dental and vision insurance. These plans are administered through FBMC.

## **Life Insurance**

The basic, no-cost life plan is a \$10,000 term life insurance with an accidental death and dismemberment benefit. Employees who do not need coverage under the health plan may elect life insurance only. Additional optional life insurance and dependent life insurance may be purchased by employees for a monthly premium.

## **Long-Term Disability Insurance**

The Mountaineer Flexible Benefits Plan provider offers two of these plans - Plan 1 (50% coverage level) and Plan 2 (70% coverage level). Benefits are payable according to a maximum benefit period as detailed in the plan documents.



## **Retirement Programs**

Participation by benefits-eligible employees in a tax-sheltered retirement program is required by West Virginia State law. Employees must contribute six percent of their gross pay to a TIAA 401A account. TIAA is the default company if the employee does not designate a retirement program.

West Liberty University matches the employee's six percent contribution. Vesting is immediate.

Retirement income is based on the employee's age at retirement, the amount of dollars accumulated, and the income option chosen. For additional information about retirement programs, please go to the Human Resources website <https://westliberty.edu/human-resources/retirement/>.

## **403(b) Supplemental Retirement Plans & 457 (b) Deferred Compensation Plans**

In addition to the basic retirement plan, all West Liberty University full-time and part-time employees have the option of tax sheltering additional money through a 403(b) Supplemental Retirement Account or 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan. Supplemental Retirement Accounts and Deferred Compensation Plans are available through TIAA.

## **Employee Tuition Waiver Program**

For the academic year employees, their dependents and spouses are eligible for a 100 percent Undergraduate tuition. In addition, only the employee would be eligible for a 50 percent Graduate tuition waiver. Please read the requirements below. If you wish to apply, please complete a form for each applicant and return to the Human Resources Office with required documentation.

Requirements:

1. For employees: Must be a benefits eligible employee
2. For Dependents: Status as a dependent must be verified by Federal Tax Transcripts or FAFSA; for Spouse: Status verified by marriage certificate or Federal Tax Transcript.
3. All recipients must notify the Financial Aid Office of a drop in registered hours.
4. Tuition waiver may be reduced if any other tuition based award is received.
5. Tuition waiver will be renewed annually as long as continuous enrollment is maintained with a minimum 2.0 GPA up to a maximum of eight semesters.

For more information, go to <https://westliberty.edu/financial-aid/employee-forms/>

## **COBRA**

On April 7, 1987, federal law adopted the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Act (COBRA). COBRA mandates employers to offer continuation of group health insurance to certain employees who lose coverage. In the case of employee terminations, the law requires the employer to notify the plan administrator within 30 days after the employee's termination of employment. The Public Employees Insurance Agency (PEIA), not West Liberty University, will notify terminating employees of his or her COBRA rights. The University is required to report to PEIA every PEIA participant who leaves West Liberty University or becomes ineligible for benefits. Any employee on a nine-month contract who terminates in May, June, or July, regardless if benefits are escrowed, will generally be covered by insurance only to the end of the month in which regular wages are received.

### **Employee Class Attendance**

Given the rapidly changing nature of higher education and the need for greater productivity from its workforce, the primary goal of West Liberty University is to improve the preparation of its employees. A full-time West Liberty University employee may be allowed time off during scheduled work hours to attend class, provided the employee's absence will not interfere with his/her work unit's operation. Before each semester in which classes are to be taken, employees are required to provide their supervisor the completed Educational Release Time Application and Approval Form. Each supervisor has the responsibility to approve or reject requests. All release time granted will be required to be made-up by the employee or otherwise accounted for by the employee through prior agreement with the employee's supervisor. Additional information can be found in Procedure No. 112: Educational Release Time.

### **Lactation Privacy Room**

A designated location has been created to provide a space for those who are nursing; it is in the Student Union, Room S3. This designated area was created in support of West Liberty University students, staff, and faculty who have chosen to continue breastfeeding while also working or attending classes. The room offers a quiet area and is available on a first-come, first-served basis.

# PAYROLL

## **Paychecks**

Employees are paid on a bi-weekly cycle, every other Friday. The University is required by law to make deductions from paychecks for federal and state income taxes, Social Security, and, for full-time employees, retirement contributions. Employees should immediately notify their supervisors or the Payroll Office if they believe there is a problem with their paycheck.

## **Direct Deposit of Checks**

All employees are required by the West Virginia State Auditor to have their paychecks deposited directly into their bank accounts or else they will be paid through a Visa pay card. Direct Deposit applications are available on the State Auditor's website. The state no longer issues paper notices of deposit. Employees can view notices of deposit online at <http://www.wvsao.gov/>, by clicking on the MyApps link. The creation of an online account for this system is required. Instructions can be found on the Human Resources website.

## **Annual Experience Increment**

All full-time regular employees are eligible for Annual Experience Increment (AEI) pay based on their length of service. Employees who have three or more years of qualifying service as of June 30th will receive AEI in recognition of their past service as a State employee. The AEI is \$60 for each full year of qualifying service as approved by the West Virginia State Budget Office. Typically, the increment is paid in a lump sum at the end of July.

## **Time Keeping**

Staff employees record their hourly time through Kronos, which is part of the State's wvOASIS system. All employees are required to approve their time card each pay period.

## **Social Security**

All employees except student employees must contribute to Social Security. The employees' contributions are matched by West Liberty University.

## **W-2 Forms**

Paper W-2 forms are mailed by the State of West Virginia. Electronic W-2 forms are available on the State Auditor's website <http://www.wvsao.gov/>. Once logged onto the State Auditor's website, click on MyApps.

# GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The statutory grievance procedure is available to all state employees for resolution of most work-related concerns. For additional information refer to WV Code §6C-2-1, contact the Human Resources Office, or go to the Grievance Board's website <http://www.pegb.wv.gov>.

Under all procedures, the employee or the employee's designated representative has the responsibility to clearly indicate that a grievance is being filed, provide an explanation of the issue including the specific policy violation, and describe the specific remedy sought for resolution of the issue.

# PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

## Performance Appraisals

Staff members will have their job performance evaluated by their supervisors on an annual basis. Supervisors are responsible for evaluating all staff employees who report to them.

Annual performance reviews are a key component of employee development. The performance review is intended to be a fair and balanced assessment of an employee's performance. The annual review is to provide all regular university staff and their supervisors an opportunity to:

- Discuss job performance
- Set goals for professional development
- Establish objectives for contributing to the department's mission
- Discuss expectations and accomplishments

For more information, go to the Human Resources website <https://westliberty.edu/human-resources/performance/>.

## DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The University has a progressive disciplinary system which allows opportunities for correction of unacceptable workplace conduct and/or job performance while maintaining fair treatment to all. Employees may be disciplined for unacceptable conduct and/or poor job performance and the discipline may include termination of employment. In order to maintain and operate the University in the best interest of both the employee and the University, it is necessary that all employees adhere to certain standards of conduct designed to create a friendly, cooperative, and effective work atmosphere. This requires each employee to respect the rights and feelings of others as well as assure that each employee's personal conduct is not harmful to others or to the University. Employees are expected to act professionally during working hours, (including but not limited to lunch hours), when conducting University business, when performing their job duties, and/or when representing the University in their official capacity as a University employee. Employees are expected to perform their job duties effectively and to maintain satisfactory levels of job performance. Employees may be disciplined for failure to perform the duties of their position and for unacceptable job performance. Off duty conduct may also be the source of disciplinary action if the conduct adversely affects the employee's ability to perform his/her job duties and/or bears a rational nexus to the employee's job. Employees found responsible for gross misconduct may be terminated immediately. All disciplinary actions will be determined on a case-by-case basis. The type of discipline imposed by the University may depend upon, but not be limited to, the seriousness of the performance/conduct issue(s) and the impact on the University.

# SEPARATION FROM EMPLOYMENT

## **Voluntary Resignation**

In accordance with the notification requirements of this section, an employee should submit a signed and dated resignation letter or statement to his/her immediate supervisor, indicating the date when the resignation is to become effective. If an employee provides verbal rather than written notice of his/her intention to resign from employment, a supervisor should confirm acceptance of the resignation in writing to the employee. The supervisor or cabinet member should forward a copy of the signed written resignation letter or confirmation to Human Resources for placement in the employee's personnel file. A staff member shall provide at least two weeks written notice of the resignation, whenever possible. A shorter period of notice may be provided if authorized by the immediate supervisor. A staff member is expected to be present and functioning at his/her position, as scheduled, throughout the two week notice period, unless this requirement is waived by the immediate supervisor. Failure by an employee to meet these responsibilities and/or the resignation notice requirements may result in the employee leaving the University in poor standing and may result in unfavorable consideration for re-employment at the University.

## **Termination**

Staff members may be terminated for any reason, however, the University may but is not required to implement progressive discipline to remediate the conduct of a will and pleasure employee but does not waive the employee's will and pleasure status by doing so.

## **Dismissal for Cause**

When it is determined that an employee is not meeting performance or conduct standards or fails to comply with legal or policy requirements, termination for cause may occur consistent with the disciplinary procedures.

## **Dismissal for Non-Work-Related Conduct**

In limited instances, an employee's personal conduct not related to West Liberty University employment may be so egregious as to make the employee unsuitable for work at a public university and disqualify the employee from further employment by the University.

# ON-THE-JOB INJURIES

## **Reporting On-the-Job Injuries**

On-the-job injuries must be reported to an employee's supervisor and the Health and Safety Director as soon as possible, and no later than 24 hours after they occur, regardless of whether medical treatment is sought or whether they result in a Workers' Compensation claim.

In addition to on-the-job injuries, all accidents must be reported, regardless of whether they result in a Workers' Compensation claim.

Special rules apply to leave caused by Workers' Compensation claims. For further information, employees should contact the Human Resources Office. The Accident/Incident Report Form is available on West Liberty University's website <https://westliberty.edu/health-and-safety/accident-injury-investigation-report/>. When in doubt, an Accident/Incident Report Form should be completed.

## **Accidents/Incidents**

An accident or incident is an event that results in personal injury or property damage, at any on-campus activity or approved off-campus activity which is inclusive of administrators, faculty, staff, students and visitors. Accidents causing personal injury which is significant enough that it requires wound management or pain medication should be reported, as well as any time an ambulance or other medical provider is called or used. Incidents are generally defined as those events which cause damage to people or property, and those also must be reported.

If an accident or incident occurs, it is the responsibility of the staff person most immediately involved to fill out an Accident/Incident Report form and to assure its distribution. This can be accomplished online at <https://westliberty.edu/health-and-safety/accident-injury-investigation-report/>. Every employee who is personally involved in an accident/incident has a responsibility to report the incident to their supervisor and to either complete a report or confirm that the report is completed on their behalf. In the event of an injury, immediate medical attention should be sought.

- Call 911 for serious injuries when the injured cannot make a decision as to treatment options, is unconscious, entrapped, or needs physical assistance.
- Whether to call an ambulance should always be the decision of the injured unless they are unable to do so. University employees are not to act or function as an ambulance service.
- Treatment of the injured should be attempted only by those trained in medical procedures.
- Injured persons may elect to seek their own treatment or none at all.

For accidents involving exposure to chemical substances please contact the Health and Safety Director at 304-336-8116.



## **Hazards**

A hazard is an observable situation that could result in injury, property damage, and risk exposure to the university or to an individual if it is not addressed. The hazard should be reported to the Health and Safety Director at 304-336-8116. Examples include slip, trip and fall hazards, potential chemical spills, or the improper storage of hazardous substances. This form will be used to document the reported hazard and record investigation and abatement activity and for applicable reporting. Employees completing this form may send it to their immediate supervisor, the Safety Committee, Facilities Management, or other administrators.

## **Workers' Compensation**

West Liberty University employees are protected against job-related injuries by Encova, formerly BrickStreet Insurance Company, which administers Workers' Compensation in West Virginia, and to which West Liberty University pays premiums for all employees. Employees injured on the job must report the injury to their supervisor within 24 hours. All accidents must be reported on a West Liberty University Accident Report Form. The employee should secure a BI-1 Form from the medical provider which should be submitted to Encova. The time limit for filing a Workers' Comp Claim for job-related injury or illness is six months from the date of injury. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations require that each department report any occupational injury or illness.

It is very important that supervisors ensure that all accidents are appropriately and promptly reported, including completion of the official Accident/Incident Report Form.

Supervisors must contact the Health and Safety Director as soon as they learn of an accident requiring medical treatment – without waiting for the Accident/Incident Report Form to be completed. This will ensure that Human Resources can notify Encova in a timely manner.

## SUPPORT/RESOURCES

### **Human Resources Staff**

The Human Resources staff is available to assist employees with various issues such as hiring, benefits, leave, Workers' Compensation, on-the-job injuries, and other employment related matters. The Human Resources Office is located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of Shaw Hall.

### **Additional Information Sources**

- Human Resources Office website <https://westliberty.edu/human-resources/>

# MISCELLANEOUS EMPLOYMENT ITEMS

## **Identification Cards**

A Topper Card is issued to each full-time and part-time regular employee as a form of identification. Employees may obtain a Topper Card by visiting the mailroom. This first card is free of charge. You can add Topper Dollar to your card so it can be used at various vendors across campus. Topper Dollars can be added by registering at the following website <https://westliberty-sp.blackboard.com/eaccounts/AnonymousHome.aspx>

## **Parking**

All employees are expected to have a valid parking permit on their vehicle each year and may not park on campus without one. Questions on obtaining a parking pass should be directed to the Business Office. Questions concerning traffic or parking regulations should be directed to Campus Police.

## **Official Communications with Employees**

Every employee has a responsibility to maintain a record of the current mailing address with the Office of Human Resources. Every employee is issued a West Liberty University email account, and must regularly monitor their University email account for official communications. Some important University communications are sent only via email.

## **Name/Address Change**

If you need to change your name or address, please schedule time to meet with a Human Resources Representative. It is important that this information be kept current in order to ensure that W-2 Wage and Tax Statements and other important mail reach the employee. Employees will also need to update their address for health, life and retirement benefits.

A new social security card is required to change your name on payroll and benefit plans and must be presented at the time of the name change request.

## **Direct Deposit/Tax Changes**

If you need to update your tax or direct deposit information, please schedule time to meet with the Payroll Department.

## **Policy/Procedure Questions**

All West Liberty University policy and procedures can be found by accessing <https://westliberty.edu/human-resources/university-policy-procedure/>

## CONCLUSION

Copies of policies, rules, and laws cited in the *Staff Handbook* are available on the HR website (<https://westliberty.edu/human-resources/university-policy-procedure/>). If you have any questions or comments about the contents of the *Staff Handbook*, you should discuss them with your supervisor or the Human Resources staff.

The *Staff Handbook* is not an implied or expressed employment contract. The provisions of the *Staff Handbook* are guidelines rather than policies, and West Liberty University reserves the right to depart from such guidelines where circumstances warrant. Existing policy and law will prevail over any inadvertent errors in the *Staff Handbook* text. The Staff Handbook includes the provisions of all rules of the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission and the West Liberty University Board of Governors. Guidelines outlined in the *Staff Handbook* may be changed at any time at West Liberty University's discretion. The duration of employment for any employee is unspecified, and is at the discretion of West Liberty University within appropriate parameters established by applicable rules, policies, and laws.

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