



STAFF EMPLOYMENT MANUAL

Title: 6.0 Employee Relations

Chapter: 6.02 General Expectations

Issuance Status and Effective Date: March 2013

1. Policy

As a condition of employment, each employee is expected to be responsive to the University's operating needs and its institutional purposes, customs, traditions and general expectations. Supervisors are authorized to act upon any conduct which may be detrimental to the orderly function of the University, and to take necessary corrective and/or disciplinary action as deemed appropriate, up to and including termination.

2. General Expectations

Conduct which would be wrong wherever people gather for socially acceptable purposes is also wrong at the University. Common decency and lawful conduct are standard expectations. In general, employees are expected to adhere to all University and departmental policies and procedures. These expectations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Maintaining good attendance and punctuality. (See also **6.05, Attendance Management**).
- b. Using work time effectively and properly.
- c. Carrying out all reasonable supervisory requests.
- d. Refraining from interfering with the work of others.
- e. Cooperating with and refraining from interfering with an ongoing investigation.
- f. Refraining from any kind of harassment - personal, sexual or discriminatory - towards visitors, employees or students. (See also **3.01, Equal Employment Opportunity and Non-discrimination** and **6.14, Sexual Harassment Prevention**).
- g. Following safe practices and safety rules. (See also **6.12, Health and Safety**).
- h. Conserving University resources, materials and supplies.
- i. Promoting an attractive campus by making use of appropriate receptacles.
- j. Acting responsibly with equipment and property of the University, employees or students including, but not limited to, adherence to the Responsible Technology Use Policy (located in the University's self-service center on a password-protected webpage).
- k. Accurately representing facts and maintaining records, including time/pay records.
- l. Maintaining the confidentiality of personnel or confidential information. (See also **6.11, Access/Disclosure - Employee Records/University Property**).
- m. Refraining from gambling or betting in the workplace.
- n. Reporting to work fit, and not under the influence of intoxicants or drugs.
- o. Complying with the University's policies on maintaining a drug-free workplace, and elimination of drug and alcohol abuse on campus.
- p. Firearms, weapons of all kinds, and other dangerous or hazardous devices or substances are prohibited from University of Hartford premises at all times.
- q. Using e-mail and/or the web exclusively for matters relating to University business and not for communication of a private or personal nature, [except as permitted in Section 5, below](#). The viewing and/or transmission of any messages or materials that may be disruptive, offensive or harmful to morale is prohibited.
- r. Using the University name or printing the name or University logo in any form for personal profit other than for official University business without prior permission from an Officer is prohibited.

3. Solicitations

A University employee may not solicit another University employee for any purpose while either employee is on work time, unless it has been authorized by an Officer of the University. Authorization will be limited to internal programs, such as benefit options, retirement or savings programs, insurance, University contributions, or for fund-raising by the United Way. Work time is defined as any period when an employee has duties or tasks to perform. It does not include established rest periods, lunch periods or personal time, which may or may not be paid time.

The distribution of any materials relating to the above also must have prior approval. University email, mail services and bulletin boards are to be used only for authorized distribution or posting of solicitation or promotional materials. The distribution of chain letters is considered to be a form of solicitation and is also prohibited.

Non-employees are not permitted to distribute any material or solicit employees on University property at any time and/or for any purpose.

4. Telephones and Personal Calls

Necessary personal calls may be made using University telephones. These calls should be kept to a minimum and made as brief as possible. Monthly telephone expense reports are distributed to supervisors. If charges are made for personal calls, employees will be required to pay these charges immediately.

5. University-issued Electronic Resources

The University of Hartford recognizes that there are many work-related situations that require the use of University-issued electronic resources including, but not limited to, SMART phones, cell phones, personal digital assistants (PDAs), pagers, computers and email devices. The University further recognizes that its employees may occasionally need to make personal use of these electronic resources. The personal use of University-issued electronic resources is only permitted to the extent that (i) the personal use is reasonable, (ii) the University incurs no additional cost from that use and (iii) the use does not inappropriately interfere with official University business. All uses of University-issued electronic resources, whether for business or personal reasons, and all appliances connected to or otherwise using University networks or systems, whether University-issued or not, are also subject to the University's Responsible Technology Use Policy, which can be found at <http://new-ned.hartford.edu/forms/policies.htm>. In all cases, there should be no expectation of privacy when using a University-issued electronic resource or the University's information technology systems.

6. Electronic Monitoring

The University may engage in monitoring practices, both electronic and non-electronic. Such practices may include, but are not limited to, those for the purpose of recording the hours of work, monitoring the nature and quality of our services, and monitoring security and the conduct of people on our premises.

All employees should recognize that University facilities, equipment and time are to be used in furtherance of legitimate University purposes. The University reserves the right to engage in monitoring activities, both electronic and non-electronic, at its sole discretion and without further notice unless otherwise restricted by law.

6. Personal Appearance and Dress

It is not the University's policy to dictate a particular mode of dress. It is, however, everyone's responsibility to dress in a manner which is in common good taste and in keeping with generally accepted standards of good grooming.

7. Keys

Employees issued keys agree, under penalty, that they will not loan those keys to any unauthorized person, will not duplicate University keys, and will safeguard those keys and return them to the University upon demand or separation of employment.

8. Policy on Elimination of Drug and Alcohol Abuse (See also 6.15, Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace.)

The University subscribes to the guidelines recommended by the State of Connecticut Department of Higher Education on the elimination of drug and alcohol abuse in the educational environment. The University also meets the requirements of the federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988. The manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of controlled substances is prohibited on the campus and properties of the University of Hartford. The unsanctioned distribution, dispensing, possession or use of alcoholic beverages is also prohibited on the campus and properties of the University of Hartford. University employees are expected to comply with all laws and regulations governing alcoholic beverages, including laws prohibiting the furnishing or serving of alcoholic beverages to minors.

Alcohol and/or drug addiction are approached from the point of view that they are illnesses which may interfere with the employee's ability to meet the general expectations of the job. When alcohol or drug addiction is apparent on the job, the employee must obtain medical treatment in order to continue employment. This does not mean the University accepts an obligation to continue employment of an otherwise unsatisfactory employee.

HRD, or if unavailable, Public Safety, should be contacted before taking any action or confronting an employee suspected to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. HRD will coordinate with agencies and other resources that can offer assistance, and will work with supervisors in resolving related problems.

9. Confidentiality, Press Releases and Labeling Confidential Material

Employees often come into contact with information that, if released without authorization or carelessly handled, could have critical consequences to other staff, faculty, students or those responsible for the University's administration.

Unauthorized disclosure of personnel data or confidential information about the University or its employees to the press or others is considered a serious breach of responsibility. If a newspaper or television reporter calls with questions on University policy, or for general information about the University, the caller should be referred to the Office of Communication. If the reporter is querying about a specific area of a person's expertise, the person may feel free to speak, bearing in mind, however, that when a reporter calls, he/she is usually fighting a deadline and will compress a statement into a few quotable lines if it is used at all. The Office of Communication should be advised about the call, because the University's news operation maintains a record of such media contacts.

All information, reports and correspondence, including email, which should be treated as confidential should be labeled **confidential** and will only be disclosed as permitted by law. All envelopes, packages and containers used in mailing or transporting confidential material should also be labeled **confidential**, and should be opened only by the addressee or designee. However, information which is confidential in nature will be treated as such and the employee will be held accountable for treatment of the information as confidential regardless whether it is labeled as confidential.

Employees who disclose an employer's illegal activities have specific protection under the law (Connecticut Public Act 82-289). Also, under Connecticut Public Act 83-578, employees' rights, as they exist under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and sections of the State of Connecticut Constitution, are given special protection in the workplace. Before any discipline is taken in regard to violations infringing upon the principles of free speech or the concept of whistle blowing, the matter should be referred to HRD.

The University reserves the right to share confidential information as appropriate for legitimate University purposes. Notwithstanding this section, the University shall provide information as required by law or for contractual purposes.

10. Garnishments, Wage Attachments

The University complies with various federal and state laws that pertain to garnishments, assignments and levies against salaries as served by court order against the salary of any employee. The Payroll Office processes all pay attachments. HRD ensures compliance with state mandated support enforcement orders, as required by law.

The law restricts the extent to which discipline may be taken in these cases. HRD must be consulted before any disciplinary action is taken.

11. Conflict of Interest

It is the University of Hartford's policy, initiated by the Board of Regents and currently in full force and effect, to respect the rights of its employees to invest in private enterprise and engage in outside activities of a private nature with the understanding that, in all facets of their duties with the University, employees are expected to act in the best interest of the University, to the exclusion of considerations of personal preference and private gain. To ensure conformity with this policy, the Officers have concluded it is proper to set forth in writing the University's policy regarding conflict of interest.

A potential conflict of interest exists whenever an employee or any member of his/her family has a financial interest in, or any connection with, an enterprise that does business with the University if the employee is in a position, either directly or indirectly, to make or influence decisions concerning transactions with such outside enterprise. Good judgment is key to the effective and fair implementation of any conflict of interest policy.

This is a statement of University policy as established by the Board of Regents in regard to conflicts of interest and business ethics. It is not intended to cover detail, but serves only a general guide. Every employee is responsible for being aware of the importance of personal conduct and the University places its basic reliance on the integrity, good judgment and high ethical standards of the employee. Management reserves the right to determine when an employee's activities bring about a conflict with the University's best interest and to take whatever action is necessary to resolve the situation. That action can include progressive discipline, up to and including termination.

Presented below are some, but not all, of the cautions and concerns University employees must consider:

- a. An employee should not be in a position to gain from the present or potential dealings of the University with suppliers, contractors or service organizations.
- b. Buying, renting or selling property, facilities, equipment or services to the University by employees of the University must have prior approval from the appropriate Officer.
- c. No University employee should accept, either directly or indirectly through his/her family or friends, gifts (other than those of nominal value) or other considerations from firms or individuals doing or seeking to do business with the University.
- d. Outside activities of University employees should not interfere with their University duties, time schedules or normal participation in appropriate University events.
- e. All compensation of University employees for any and all services rendered to the University, and in recognition of past, present or future services to the University, is the responsibility of the direct supervisor of the employee in question. No gift (other than those of nominal value), gratuity or

additional compensation may be given to, or accepted by, a University employee without the knowledge and express advance approval of that individual's direct supervisor and such other officials as would normally be involved in compensation decisions relating to the individual in question.

Where there is any question of interpretation of the above policy, employees should first consult with their supervisor. If there is still any reasonable doubt as to the proper action, the full situation should be presented to HRD for review and further action.

12. Confidential Telephone Reporting Process/Whistle Blower Hotline

Rigorous accountability standards remind all University departments and colleges of the importance of continually reviewing and improving business practices as well as establishing avenues for providing internal and external feedback. As a result, the University established a formal process, called the *Confidential Telephone Reporting Line*, as a means for callers to report allegations of questionable and/or inappropriate business conduct. Issues raised to the Confidential Telephone Reporting Line are taken seriously and will be researched and evaluated for appropriate follow up. This confidential reporting line, 860.242.0138, allows callers to leave a message of up to three minutes in length.

While calls can be placed anonymously, callers should know that some types of issues are difficult to investigate without the ability to obtain additional information that can only be obtained through follow-up with the caller. A caller may, on a purely voluntary basis, leave contact information to allow for follow-up. If a caller chooses to provide contact information, the University will make every effort to keep the caller's identity confidential, unless (a) the caller agrees to be identified; (b) identification is necessary to allow law enforcement officials to investigate potentially criminal activity; or (c) release of the identity is required by law.

Faculty and staff are encouraged to report any activity which they believe could be illegal or otherwise improper under applicable law or University policy. Examples of these activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- unauthorized or inappropriate use or misappropriation of University resources;
 - theft, embezzlement, fraud, self-dealing, or private benefit;
 - discrimination (i.e., use of any epithet, slur, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating or hostile act) against an employee or potential employee due to a person's race, color, sex, age, religion, national and ethnic origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, veteran status, genetic information or any other protected class under applicable law;
 - sexual harassment;
 - violation of the University's Drug-Free Workplace policy;
 - conflict of interest;
 - breach of confidentiality or privacy;
 - any suspected cases of child abuse occurring on University property or involving any University activity
- Note: The University also encourages everyone to report suspected cases of child abuse directly to law enforcement officials);
- violation of NCAA regulations;
 - violation of the University's policies related to human subjects research, and other research and academic misconduct;
 - violation of the University's obligations under federal, state and local grants, contracts and sponsored research agreements; or
 - any other conduct which would constitute a violation of any federal, state or local law.

The Confidential Telephone Reporting Line shall supplement and complement, rather than replace, other existing mechanisms and avenues for reporting employee concerns. The whistleblower system shall not be used as a replacement for normal supervisory reporting lines or interdepartmental interactions.

Reports to the Confidential Telephone Reporting Line should be made in good faith by verifying that the report has a reasonable factual basis, and includes as much specific information as possible in the message to allow the University to properly assess the nature, extent and urgency of any applicable incident. In the event that it is apparent that a report was not brought in good faith but rather was intended in a capricious or malicious manner, grounds may exist for instituting formal disciplinary action against the reporting employee.

Retaliatory action of any kind taken by an employee of the University of Hartford against any other employee or student of the institution as a result of that person's use of the Confidential Telephone Reporting Line is prohibited by University policy, and in certain instances, by law. If an employee is concerned that another individual has retaliated in response to his/her use of the Confidential Telephone Reporting Line, then he/she is entitled to file a written complaint under the University's grievance procedure or with the University's Internal Auditor, CC327.

13. Employee Honesty

The employment relationship at the University is based upon mutual honesty and trust. Normal good sense dictates the difference between right and wrong. There are, however, rare instances of dishonesty which are grounds for immediate dismissal. These include theft, fraud, and padding claims and expense accounts. This list of terminating offenses is not all inclusive. Management retains the right to decide the level of discipline which is appropriate based upon relevant facts and circumstances. Any employee who is aware of or suspects an employee of dishonesty should notify HRD or the Confidential Telephone Reporting Line immediately.