

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON**  
**GRADUATE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK**

**PERSONNEL POLICY**

4/06

**GENERAL STATEMENT**

All employees of the Graduate College of Social Work (GCSW) are responsible for complying with the policies and procedures described below. Failure to adhere to these policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. This Personnel Policy is not all encompassing. For information regarding circumstances not discussed here, the policies contained in the current University of Houston Staff and Faculty handbooks and the Manual of Administrative Policies and Procedures (MAPP.02) will be followed.

**I. HOURS OF WORK**

All staff employees who are paid on a full-time basis are required to work a minimum of forty (40) hours per week unless on approved leave status. Employees are required to work the hours necessary to satisfactorily accomplish the job. The acceptance of such a requirement is a condition of employment.

The standard office hours of the GCSW shall be from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday (with a one hour lunch break).

1. Flex-Time

As long as offices of operation are open from 8:00-5:00, flex-time may be allowed with permission from supervisors and authorized through the College Business Office and the Dean. Flex-time is any working schedule that deviates from the standard hours of work.

2. Lunch Hour

Employees are encouraged to schedule one hour per day for lunch. Lunch breaks are not to be included in an employees' 40 hour work week and may not be negotiated as part of flex-time.

3. Breaks

All full-time employees are entitled to two 15 minute paid breaks during the workday. Employees are encouraged to take a fifteen-minute break for every four hours of work.

## II. TIME AND EFFORT REPORTING

All GCSW employees are required to account for 100 percent of their time during regularly scheduled workdays. All employees (including faculty, administrative and professional personnel (exempt), and biweekly staff (non-exempt) are required to prepare, sign and date a Time and Effort Report each pay period. Time and Effort Reports must be completed accurately and must depict the actual hours worked and leave taken for periods not at work during regularly scheduled workdays. Employee's supervisors shall approve the time and effort reported. In the event an employee is absent from work when Time and Effort Reports are due, the supervisor is responsible for completing the timesheet, with the employee's approval. **Reporting or approving time incorrectly may subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination and possible criminal prosecution.**

### Procedures:

**A. Biweekly /Non-Exempt Employee:** An employee who is in a position deemed non-exempt by the Fair Labor Standards Act and, therefore, subject to the overtime provisions of the FLSA. A non-exempt employee reports time and effort and is paid on a biweekly basis at an hourly rate.

#### 1. Leave Request/Notification

Form <http://www.uh.edu/admin/hr/YOURRESOURCES/HRFORMS/leave.xls>  
Non-exempt staff in the GCSW must use a Leave Request/Notification Form as a supplement to the Time and Effort Report. The Leave Request/Notification Form is used to request planned leave and to report variances in the normal work schedule due to unplanned absences, flex time needed to attend to personal/family matters, emergencies, etc. The Leave Request/Notification Form is intended to eliminate questions arising from GCSW Administration, to serve as additional documentation to reconcile payroll and financial reports, and to comply with Internal Audit requirements.

Vacation Leave - The Leave Request/Notification Form is to be prepared, submitted to and approved by the supervisor prior to requested vacation. The approved Leave Request/Notification Form must be submitted with the time and effort report.

Sick Leave - Immediately upon return from absence, the Leave Request/Notification Form is to be prepared, submitted to and approved

by the supervisor. The approved Leave Request/Notification Form must be submitted with the time and effort report.

2. Time and Effort Report

Employees must sign the Time and Effort Report, attach the Leave Request/Notification Form, and obtain supervisory signature (or designee, in the supervisor's absence) prior to submitting to the College Business Office for certifying signature. (For persons paid from Research Financial Services accounts, the approval authority must be an individual with knowledge of 100% of the employee's activities.)

**B. Monthly/Exempt Employee:** An employee in a position that is not subject to the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. Exempt employees include professionals, administrators, executives, and faculty and are paid on a monthly basis. An exempt employee reports time and effort and is paid on a monthly basis.

1. Leave Request/Notification Form

<http://www.uh.edu/admin/hr/YOURRESOURCES/HRFORMS/leave.xls>

The exempt staff in the Graduate College of Social Work must use a Leave Request/Notification Form, when applicable, a supplement to the Time and Effort Report. The Leave Request/Notification Form is used to request planned leave and to report unplanned absences. The Leave Request/Notification Form is intended to eliminate questions arising from GCSW Administration, to serve as additional documentation to reconcile payroll and financial reports, and to comply with Internal Audit requirements.

Vacation and Leave Request - The exempt staff in the Graduate College of Social work must request prior approval for vacation from their supervisor. The Leave Request/Notification Form is to be prepared, submitted to and approved by the supervisor prior to requested vacation. The approved Leave Request/Notification Form must be submitted with the time and effort report.

2. Time and Effort Report

Employees must sign the Time and Effort Report, attach the Leave Request/Notification Form, and obtain supervisory signature as applicable. (For persons paid from Research and Financial Services accounts, the approval authority must be an individual with knowledge of 100% of the employee's activities.)

It is not necessary for an exempt employee to record an absence of less than a day due to illness or for personal reasons if the employee works at least 40 hours in that workweek. If the employee does not work 40 hours

in that workweek, absences must be recorded as to the type of leave to comply with State law.

### C. Due Dates:

Biweekly/Non-Exempt Employees – The completed, signed and approved Time and Effort Report with Leave Request/Notification Form attached are due to the College Business Office by 5:00 p.m. one day prior to the due date printed on the Time and Effort Report.

Monthly/Exempt Employees – Time and Effort Reports with Leave Request/Notification Form attached are due to the College Business Office within one week of receipt of the Time and Effort Report.

## III. OVERTIME/COMPENSATORY TIME

The GCSW's policy is that units must plan, organize and schedule activities so that work may be accomplished within the standard 40-hour workweek.

Overtime is limited to that which is absolutely necessary. In unavoidable circumstances, such as emergencies or peak load periods, **non-exempt** employees will be given compensatory time off in lieu of monetary compensation. All overtime is to be authorized in advance by supervisors and submitted to the College Business Office and Associate Dean for Administration for recommended authorization to the Dean. **Non-exempt employees may not make unauthorized decisions to work overtime or extra hours. Working unauthorized time may subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.**

Similarly, compensation for overtime or extra hours may not be waived by the non-exempt employee.

Supervisors will be responsible for monitoring and documenting all overtime worked by employees under their supervision and ensuring that information reported on time and effort report is complete and accurate. This responsibility includes scheduling use of compensatory time by the employee.

**Compensatory time/overtime may not be worked as an option to accumulate hours in order to avoid using vacation or sick leave.**

**A. Non-exempt employees** are subject to the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and must be compensated according to FLSA guidelines for all hours actually worked in excess of 40 hours in the standard workweek. In compliance with established policies mandated by the University of Houston System, and in keeping with the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act, all non-exempt employees in GCSW must be compensated at time and one-half for all hours worked in excess of forty within the standard work week. The standard work week is defined as 12:01

a.m. Wednesday and extending through the seven-day period ending at midnight the following Tuesday.

1. Compensatory hours will be calculated as follows:
  - a. Hours in excess of forty hours actually worked within the standard workweek will be compensated at time and one half. Paid leave (vacation, sick, holidays) taken is not counted as hours worked in determining compensatory time computation.
  - b. In situations where a non-exempt employee has not worked more than forty hours in a workweek, but the total hours worked plus hours of paid leave exceeds forty, the employee will be compensated for the excess hours by computation of compensatory hours at straight time.

Time actually worked, paid leave and/or paid holidays, in addition to compensatory time earned and/or taken need to be reflected on the respective Time and Effort Report.

2. Limits and requirements of compensatory time
  - a. An employee may not accrue more than 240 total hours of compensatory time for overtime hours worked.
  - b. Accrued compensatory time must be taken during the 12-month period following the end of the workweek in which the overtime was worked.
  - c. Any FLSA compensatory time not taken within the 12 months or such compensatory time in excess of the applicable 240 hour limits will be forfeited, as it will if not taken within the 12-month period, or upon termination.

**B. Exempt employees** are not eligible to receive overtime payments or compensatory time for hours worked in excess of the standard workday.

#### IV. LEAVE BALANCES

Each employee is responsible for tracking his/her leave balances and ensuring that the requested leave is available. **Leave without pay will only be considered after all applicable accrued paid leave balances have been exhausted. Leave without pay requires the prior approval of the Dean and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.** Please see SAM 02.D.03

[http://www.uh.edu/sam/AM/Am\\_02d03.htm](http://www.uh.edu/sam/AM/Am_02d03.htm) for additional information. If the type of leave reported is not available, leave will be charged as follows:

- If sick leave is unavailable, time will be charged to vacation. If vacation is unavailable, time will be charged to unpaid leave. **Leave without pay**

**requires the prior approval of the Dean and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.**

- For non-exempt employees:
  - If vacation is unavailable, time will be charged to compensatory time 1.0
  - If compensatory time 1.0 is unavailable, time will be charged to compensatory time 1.5
  - If compensatory time 1.5 is unavailable, time will be charged to unpaid leave. **Leave without pay requires the prior approval of the Dean and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.**
- For exempt employees
  - If vacation is unavailable, absences of one full day or more must be reported as and charged to unpaid leave. **Leave without pay requires the prior approval of the Dean and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.**

The GCSW maintains time and attendance records, records of vacation and sick leave accrual, absences and the reasons for absences and leave without pay for all employees. These records are retained at the departmental business level and verified every pay period.

## **V. EMPLOYEE FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

University employees are required to satisfy their financial obligations to the university in a timely manner. Failure of an employee to pay for services provided, or fines assessed by the due date noted on any billing statement will constitute debt delinquency and may result in loss of these services, loss of certain university opportunities, assessment of a collection charge, disciplinary action up to and including termination from employment, referral to a collection agency, and reporting to a credit bureau.

## **VI. DISCIPLINE AND DISMISSAL**

The GCSW follows the University of Houston MAPP 02.04.03 - <http://www.uh.edu/mapp/02/020403.htm>

## **VII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Employees are prohibited from using their positions to influence the university's business, academic, administrative, or other decisions in a way that could lead to personal financial gain or advantage for that employee or that employee's family business.

Similarly, employees are prohibited from assuming obligations outside the university or elsewhere within the university which interferes with or prevents them from adequately discharging their primary obligations and commitments to

the university. Therefore, employees should not engage in activities which create a conflict of interest or commitment.

Should such conflict arise, disclosure and resolution of conflicts of interest and conflicts of commitment must be made in writing through appropriate administrative channels. Specific procedures may be obtained from College Business Office/Dean's Office.

The existence of a conflict of interest, failure of an employee to disclose a conflict of interest, or failure to eliminate a conflict when so directed, may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **VIII. DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION**

Reasonable accommodations refer to modification or adjustment of a job, the work environment, or the way things usually are done that would enable a qualified individual with a disability to enjoy an equal employment opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other federal and state laws require reasonable accommodation in three aspects of employment. They (1) ensure equal opportunity in the application process, (2) enable a qualified individual with a disability to perform the essential functions of a job, and (3) enable an employee with a disability to enjoy benefits and privileges of employment equal to those enjoyed by employees without disabilities.

In order for an accommodation to be considered, a university employee or applicant must inform their supervisor or interviewer they have a disability and request an accommodation. In most cases, a physician's statement including diagnosis, prognosis, work-related restrictions or limitations, and recommended accommodations will be required to document the disability and to assist with accommodations. Medical records are confidential and will be kept separate from personnel files.

The university is not required to provide employment accommodations that are unduly burdensome (financially and/or administratively). Otherwise qualified employees must be able to meet the essential functions of a job, either with or without accommodations.

## **IX. PERFORMANCE COMMUNICATION AND DEVELOPMENT (PCD)**

Performance Communication and Development reviews provide a means for informing employees of the quality of their work. PCD reviews are designed to assess the staff member's ability to perform tasks, to fulfil responsibilities, to meet

behavioural and conduct standards, and to achieve other job requirements or desired levels of competence. PCD reviews help supervisors make the most effective use of their staff resources. Further, PCD reviews provide a supportable basis for making personnel decisions including, but not limited to, training needs, merit pay adjustments, promotions, transfers, continued employment, or termination.

The GCSW conducts PCD reviews each academic year. Regular staff employees who have completed their probationary period will receive a formal review annually. PCD reviews may also be conducted at other times for valid business reasons.

## **X. PROBATIONARY PERIOD**

At the University of Houston, the initial six months of employment and six months of re-employment, following a break in service, for all non-exempt staff employees is probationary. The initial twelve months of employment and twelve months of re-employment following a break in service, for all exempt employees is probationary. At any time during this initial probationary period, the employee may be terminated without application of the discipline and dismissal policy and procedure. During the probationary period, the supervisor will monitor the employee's performance to determine whether employment should continue beyond the probationary period.

The supervisor is not required to conduct a PCD review prior to the end of the probationary period, although this is highly recommended. By conducting a formal PCD review, and assuming the employee's performance is acceptable, the basis for continued employment is thereby documented. However, in the absence of a decision to terminate employment, whether a review has been conducted or not, once the probationary period is complete, the employee is no longer on probation. [Employees approved for leave without pay during the probationary period will have the probationary period extended by the amount of time taken for the leave.]