

2010

STAFF HANDBOOK



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Acknowledgments

This Staff Handbook has been prepared by Employment Services and Operations (ESO) as an easy-to-read reference for present and prospective staff employees. It includes useful information about institutional policies and procedures, as well as available benefits, resources and services.

Producing the staff handbook was a major, collaborative endeavor and I would like to express my sincere thanks to those members of the ESO staff whose efforts have made this handbook a reality. Thanks to Linda Biddle and Veronica Alvarez for their research, writing, editing and organizing the entire project, and Lorenzo Morales for his creativeness in its design, format and style. Thanks also to Betty Powell, Doug teDuits, Tomas Turrubiates, Andrea Guillory and April Frank for their written contributions. These staff members spent many hours producing a high-quality, informative and thorough handbook.

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Ivonne Montalbano

Ivonne Montalbano
Vice President
Employment Services and Operations

Statement of Acceptance (Mandatory)

The University of Houston-Downtown (UHD or University) Staff Handbook provides information about UHD's policies, procedures, benefits, and working conditions. The Staff Handbook is not intended to be a contract of employment, nor is it intended to create any type of contractual obligation(s).

UHD reserves the right to revise the information provided in this Staff Handbook. Furthermore, UHD reserves the right to withdraw or change policies, procedures, benefits, and working conditions described in this handbook at any time. UHD will attempt to make every effort to notify employees when an official change in policy or procedure has taken place; however employees are responsible for keeping themselves up to date on all UHD policies, procedures, benefits, and working conditions.

UHD strives to provide an employee-friendly environment so that goal-oriented individuals can thrive and achieve ever more demanding challenges. UHD values the talents and abilities of its employees and seeks to foster an open, cooperative, and dynamic environment. Management encourages employees to resolve their problems with his or her immediate supervisor, and, if unable to resolve the conflict with his or her immediate supervisor, employees are encouraged to take the problem/issue to the next managerial level or the Campus Relations Officer.

The University of Houston-Downtown is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and is compliant with applicable state, federal and local labor laws. Furthermore, UHD does not make personnel decisions based on race, religion, gender, age, national origin, color, disability, sexual orientation, or U.S. veteran status.

By signing this document you affirm that you have received, read and understand all the policies, procedures, working conditions, and benefits described in this Staff Handbook. You also acknowledge that you agree to abide by all the policies and procedures set forth in this Staff Handbook and the UHD Policy Statements.

Signature

Date

Print Name

Employee ID

Welcome from the UHD President

As a member of the UHD team, you are part of a proud tradition in the nation's fourth largest city. Here on the banks of Buffalo Bayou, some 1,000 full- and part-time faculty and staff provide the energy and enthusiasm that drives one of the most diverse universities west of the Mississippi. This Staff Handbook provides information that will help you succeed here. I encourage you to read it thoroughly and to refer back to it from time to time.

UHD's history is one of inclusiveness and access, and UHD will continue building on its achievements as the city and the educational landscape grow and change. During the coming years, we will continue to improve our university through innovation and hard work. We will expand our existing programs and we will reach out more to our community through strategic partnerships and programs.

As we make a name for ourselves, our enrollment will continue to grow, pumping up UHD's reputation and taking us from "Good to Great," a book by Jim Collins but also a helpful guide to us as we head into the future.

At UHD, you have an opportunity to help build the university's reputation, recognition and stature as it moves to the next level. I count on your contributions and your commitment to help make this happen

Thank you,

William V. Flores

William V. Flores
President

Introduction

PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

The purpose of this handbook is to describe the University of Houston-Downtown (UHD or University) administrative policies and procedures that affect staff employees.

This handbook provides basic information on the University, summarizes key policies, outlines job expectations, and reviews the benefits available to eligible employees.

Whether you are a new employee, a prospective employee, or a continuing employee, you may have questions about your employment with UHD.

This handbook will provide you with many answers. It also suggests whom to contact if your questions are not answered. We hope you refer to it often.

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICIES

The information in this handbook is subject to change without notice and does not constitute a contract, express or implied, with UHD or the University of Houston System (UHS or System). UHD also reserves the right and discretion to amend, delete, deviate from, or change benefits, compensation, and policies at the sole discretion of the University.

This handbook is not intended to explain each subject fully. Rather, to make it easier for employees to understand its content, policies have been paraphrased. Hyperlinks to UHD policies are readily available within the handbook to support the information provided.

REVISIONS AND CHANGES

Revisions and changes to the handbook or institutional policies may be required in order for UHD to remain in compliance with state and federal laws, as well as with the [UH System](#) and the UHS [Board of Regents'](#) rules and regulations.

HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-DOWNTOWN

In 1974, the University of Houston acquired the assets of South Texas Junior College and opened the University of Houston-Downtown College (UHDC) at One Main Street as a four-year institution. By the end of the 1970s, the Texas Legislature had approved UHDC as a freestanding university in the UH System.

The early University focused on meeting the needs of Houston's diverse and dynamic work force. The college's first four-year degree was a Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice, and resident students attended for \$4 per credit hour. During the first five years, degree programs expanded quickly

to include accounting, office management, real estate, business services, and engineering technology. Soon the college received full accreditation, and enrollment reached 5,000.

By the early 1980s, it was clear that UHDC was more than a college. Therefore, UHDC officially dropped “college” from the institution’s name. During this decade, Houston was booming, UHDC succeeded in having the M & M building named to the National Register of Historic Places, degree programs continued to grow, and UHDC’s first Red Rose Ball became a signature fundraiser. Tuition increased in 1984 to \$12 per credit hour. UHDC’s outreach to the community remained strong, and Houston PREP—a pre-freshman engineering program for talented middle and high school minority students—began.

UHDC moved into the 1990s as the state’s third-fastest-growing university. UHDC welcomed Max Castillo as its new president in 1992. During the 1990s, UHDC focused on becoming a premier, metropolitan university, appealing to traditional students as well as to working professionals. Technology became one of UHDC’s hallmarks. During the early 1990s, UHDC also began key partnerships with community colleges and moved to meet the Greater Houston Metropolitan Area demand for qualified teachers when it added a teacher certification program in urban education. During this time, the Weekend College Program began, and a new Academic Building and the Jesse H. Jones Student Life Center opened.

As the 1990s ended, UHDC moved ahead again, earning full approval from the Texas Legislature and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to offer graduate programs; the University’s first master’s degree in criminal justice was approved. UHDC also began offering degree programs at The University Center in the Woodlands. By fall 1998, more than 8,300 students were enrolled on campus.

UHDC’s expansion and growth continued as a new millennium arrived. A master’s degree program in teaching was added. Physical growth also continued, and the Willow Street Pump Station was renovated while a new brick Commerce Street Building opened at the corner of Commerce and Main Streets, providing a new home for the College of Public Service. As UHDC grew, so did the number of students participating in commencement. In 2002, UHDC became the first university to hold graduation ceremonies at Minute Maid Park. UHDC won national recognition for its wireless campus and the Bachelor of Business Administration degree in general business became UHDC’s first on-line degree. By the 2007 fall semester, enrollment climbed to a record 11,793 students, and an impressive Shea Street Building opened to greet returning students in August 2007 as the new home of the College of Business.

Today, while degrees, buildings, and even the institution’s name continue to evolve, students remain at the heart of UHDC’s traditions.

UHD’S MISSION STATEMENT

UHD is a public, urban university committed to providing quality academic programs that serve the needs of the multicultural population of Houston and surrounding communities. It offers both undergraduate and a limited number of graduate academic degree programs that enable students to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in their chosen fields. Through instructional

excellence, creative and scholarly activities, and community involvement, the University contributes to the business, scientific, economic, technological, social, and cultural development of the area.

As an urban university, UH-Downtown has a special responsibility to provide educational access to those who have not had access in the past. Through flexible scheduling of courses, innovative use of technology and distance learning opportunities, and a policy of open admissions at the undergraduate level, the University provides educational opportunities for many who might not otherwise be able to pursue a college degree.

To facilitate the academic success of both its traditional and nontraditional students, the University offers a wide range of support services and employs faculty and staff who are dedicated to helping students meet the rigorous standards and requirements of its programs.

In its public service and outreach activities, the University offers numerous pre-collegiate programs as well as continuing education programs that maintain and upgrade specialized skills of professionals employed in the Houston area. Through selected programs, research initiatives, and collaborative efforts, the University also seeks to broaden its domestic and international academic programs and relations.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

The University of Houston-Downtown's [organizational chart](#) illustrates the structure of the University in terms of relationships among departments and personnel.

UHD'S CONNECTION

The University of Houston System (System) is a group of six public institutions of higher learning in the Houston area that share common goals and are governed by the System's Board of Regents.

The System comprises four universities and two multi-institutional teaching centers that offer degrees in partnership with the universities.

Relationships among System institutions are collegial and collaborative. Credits transfer easily from one to another, and students move freely from one campus library to another. Each institution within the System has a distinct mission; together, the institutions' missions and programs complement and support one another.

Together with [UH](#), the universities that make up the System are [UH-Clear Lake](#), [UH-Downtown](#), and [UH-Victoria](#), each with its own president and administration. The two established teaching centers are the [UH System at Sugar Land](#) and the [UH System at Cinco Ranch](#).

Diversity and Equity

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

UHD embraces diversity as a defining characteristic of our institutional mission. We are committed to the building and preservation of a diverse, civil, and supportive campus community that seeks out employees with diverse backgrounds, experiences, and cultures.

To this end, the University of Houston-Downtown is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity employer that provides equal treatment and opportunity to all persons without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, veteran's status, or sexual orientation, except where such distinction is required by law, in any aspect of the terms, conditions, and/or privileges of employment, including recruitment, appointment, benefits, training, promotion, retention, discipline, or termination in accordance with state and federal law.

UHD believes the inclusion of diversity of backgrounds and ideas are fundamental to the promotion of intergroup respect, understanding, and tolerance, which leads to enlightened individuals and a positive overall campus community. The University continually strives to expand as an inclusive organization. It is our belief that inclusiveness is the cornerstone of any successful institution, as diversity affords the organization the opportunity to draw upon the many valuable skills, experiences, talents and perspectives unique to each employee.

An inclusive campus community is more than simply adhering to policies and procedures that discourage harassment and other behaviors that infringe upon the freedom and respect of the individual and his/her differences; rather it is an active promotion that results in the celebration of differences. UHD recognizes that this process requires a significant amount of dialogue and a continual commitment of each employee and supervisor. As a result, UHD will continue to provide learning opportunities for its employees and will continue to work collaboratively to seek out solutions and actions that are sensitive to others' differences, making UHD an employer of choice for all people.

Employment Services

AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT

The policies referenced in this Staff Handbook are intended for all staff at the University of Houston-Downtown. The University reserves the right to revise, change, or rescind policies or procedures at any time, with or without notice.

Nothing contained in this Staff Handbook or in any other materials or information distributed by UHD creates a contract of employment between an employee and the University. Employment at UHD is on an “at will” basis.

The basic rule of Texas employment law is [employment “at will,”](#) which applies to all phases of the employment relationship. In the absence of a statute or an express agreement (such as an employment contract) to the contrary, the employer may modify any of the terms or conditions of employment, or terminate the relationship altogether, for any reason, or no particular reason at all, with or without advance notice.

The University and the employee retain the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without notice, for any reason, or no reason, without incurring any legal liability to the other. No statements made to the contrary, either written or oral, either before or during an individual’s employment, can change this rule. Furthermore, no individual supervisor or manager can make a contrary agreement to change the “at will” nature of the employment relationship, unless made in writing and signed by the employee and the University President.

EMPLOYMENT PROCESS

The Employment Services and Operations (ESO) staff at UHD is dedicated to the recruitment and retention of qualified individuals. ESO is continually searching for talented individuals to join our superior working environment. Information on becoming a UHD employee may be found on the [UHD employment webpage](#).

EMPLOYMENT ELIGIBILITY

UHD complies with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. Each employee must provide evidence that he or she is eligible to work in the United States within three business days of the employment start date.

Employees must complete a [Department of Homeland Security Form I-9](#). ESO maintains a complete list of [documents](#) that are accepted by the University as proof of identity and eligibility.

NEW EMPLOYEE ORIENTATION (SAM 02.A.36)

Newly hired employees are expected to attend an orientation session conducted by Employment Services and Operations. Orientations are typically held every Monday, except on holidays.

MANDATORY TRAINING

In accordance with the State of Texas (Texas Administrative Code, § 21.010.C) and University of Houston System institutional compliance requirements, all UHS employees are required to complete the following training within the first 30 days of employment and annually thereafter.

- [Code of Ethics](#)
- [Employment Discrimination](#)
- [FERPA](#)
- [Fraud Awareness](#)
- [Secure Our Systems](#)

UHD employees are also required to read and acknowledge their understanding of the UHD Employee Compliance & Ethics Guide.

Employees who meet at least one of the following criteria are also required to complete the [External Consulting & Related Party Disclosure form](#).

- Full-time faculty (excludes adjunct faculty)
- Exempt (salaried) employees
- Non-exempt (bi-weekly) employees with purchasing responsibilities

Employees who do not complete annual mandatory training by the published deadline will not have met their job expectations and will therefore **not be eligible for merit increases**, as outlined in [PS 02.B.12](#) and [SAM 02.A.26](#).

SELECTIVE SERVICE

Federal law requires that all males between the ages of 18 and 25 be registered with the U.S. Selective Service System, unless they meet certain exemptions under Selective Service law. Employees who knowingly and willfully fail to register are ineligible for employment with the University. Any offer of employment is contingent upon compliance with [Selective Service](#) law.

SECURITY-SENSITIVE POSITIONS (PS 02.A.17)

All UHD non-faculty positions are designated as security sensitive; as a result, all finalists are required to undergo a [criminal background investigation](#) prior to receiving a formal job offer. As a result of certain job duties and responsibilities, some positions may also require a [motor vehicle records check](#) and/or credit check.

Background investigation(s) will occur after a contingent job offer has been extended by the Employment Coordinator. Applicants failing to submit to the requested background investigation will not be considered for employment. The results of the background investigation will be reviewed by the Vice President for Employment Services and Operations to determine employment eligibility.

PRIOR STATE SERVICE

Staff employees with previous State of Texas employment are entitled to receive previously earned vacation and longevity service credits. ESO Personnel Records staff will assist employees in establishing their records of prior state service upon receipt of the name(s) of each state agency and the approximate dates of employment with each agency. Prior state service information should be included on the [Employee Data Sheet](#).

PERSONNEL RECORDS AND EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION

Official personnel records are maintained by ESO. It is the responsibility of each employee to submit to ESO official verification of degrees, certifications, and/or licenses earned. Likewise, employees must submit proof of name changes to ESO.

ESO also provides employment verification for current and former employees.

Staff members are required to have a valid UHD identification (ID) card. ID cards are needed to check out books in the W. I. Dykes Library, to purchase parking permits, and to access the Academic Computing Lab.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Probation begins on the first day of work. The initial six (6) months of employment at UHD for each non-exempt staff employee is probationary. The initial twelve (12) months of employment for each exempt staff employee is probationary.

During the probationary period, the supervisor has an opportunity to determine whether the employee has the skills and abilities necessary to perform the duties required of the position, and the new employee may assess whether the working relationship should continue. The probationary period may also serve as a time to identify training needs and begin the training process.

At any time during the probationary period, supervisors may terminate the employment relationship if it is deemed unsuitable. Additional details are explained in [SAM 02.A.18, Probationary Period for Regular Staff Employees](#). Employees may not transfer or be promoted to another position during their probationary periods. Exceptions to this restriction may be granted by the President, or designee, in consultation with the Vice President for Employment Services and Operations on a case-by-case basis.

RESIGNATION

UHD employees who resign from their positions are encouraged to provide their supervisors with two weeks notice, in writing, of intent to leave. Employees are also encouraged to schedule an [exit interview](#) through ESO. The exit interview process is to inform employees of all their rights, benefits, and options upon termination.

REEMPLOYMENT

Former employees who wish to return to work at UHD must apply online through the [employment application system](#). If the former employee meets the position's minimum requirements, is eligible for rehire, and has satisfactory prior UHD employment, ESO will release the on-line application to the hiring department.

REDUCTION IN FORCE

Reduction in Force (RIF) is defined as the elimination of an occupied position or positions resulting from an administrative decision when lack of funds or sufficient work, reorganization, changes in technology or research needs, or other factors require a reduction in the University's investment in non-faculty personnel.

Employees affected by a reduction in force will be given written notice as soon as practical, but not less than thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of the action. An employee affected by a RIF decision may appeal this action in writing to the [Vice President for Employment Services and Operations](#) within five (5) working days of receipt of the written notice of reduction in force. Failure to comply with this requirement will be deemed a waiver of the right to appeal. See [SAM 02.A.06](#) Reduction in Force of Regular Staff Employees, for specific information.

CONSULTING AND OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT (PS 02.A.04)

Consulting and other outside employment are activities undertaken for compensation from a third party outside the UH System, where said activity falls within the scope of activities, functions, or expertise for which the individual is compensated by the University.

The Board of Regents of the University of Houston System recognizes that full-time members of the professional or administrative staff may be asked to provide consultation or other professional services on a private basis outside the University and/or System. Such activities, if properly conducted can benefit the institution and its students by enriching the educational environment, and thus, may support the basic purposes of the University. For this reason, faculty and professional or administrative staff are permitted to engage in a limited amount of consulting and other outside employment. Those individuals requesting to provide outside consulting must complete and submit the [Consulting and Outside Employment Application and Approval form](#) to their supervisors.

The Standards of Conduct of State Officers and Employees, which are provided by State of Texas law, deal with the conflict of an employee's private interests with the interests of the State of Texas.

Any employee who violates such standards through consulting or other outside employment is subject to discipline, up to and including termination, regardless of whether an application to engage in such an activity has been approved. Such dismissal will be processed according to applicable discipline and dismissal procedures.

DUAL EMPLOYMENT (PS02.A.05)

Dual employment within the System is defined as employment in two positions within the University of Houston System. When employees have multiple component assignments within the University of Houston System, agreements shall be entered designating the principal employer, whose responsibility is to maintain personnel and leave records in compliance with provisions of this section.

Dual employment outside the System is left to the discretion of the institution. Outside employment shall not interfere with the performance of the employee's duties at the University.

University of Houston System employees are prohibited from holding another state or federal position simultaneously when there is a conflict of interest. Employees may hold these positions when no conflict of interest exists and when the dual employment benefits the State of Texas. Individuals must complete the [Dual Employment](#) form and submit it for approval before engaging in such employment.

Employee Status

EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES

In accordance with the rules and regulations mandated by the [Fair Labor Standards Act](#) (FLSA), the University of Houston-Downtown has designated the following employment categories for its employees:

Staff: Employees employed on a regular basis for a period of at least four and one-half months, excluding students employed in positions that require student status as a condition for employment and those holding teaching and/or research positions, classified as faculty.

Exempt Employees: Employees in positions that are not subject to overtime provisions of the [Fair Labor Standards Act](#) (FLSA). Exempt employees are paid on a monthly basis and include employees who are employed in a bona fide executive, administrative, or professional capacity, including certain computer employees.

Non-Exempt Employees: Employees who are paid hourly according to FLSA and who are subject to receive overtime compensation (pay or compensatory time at a rate of 1.5 times) when they work over forty hours in a given work week.

Benefits-Eligible Employees: Employees who are employed for 20 hours or more per week for a period of at least four and one-half continuous months, excluding students employed in positions that require student status as a condition of employment and employees holding teaching and/or research positions, classified as faculty.

Other types of employment at UHD include temporary appointments, term appointments, student workers, and faculty positions.

- **Temporary appointments** typically occur when a person is appointed to a position of limited duration (less than 4.5 months). Temporary appointments may also include positions that are intermittent or non-recurring in nature, or positions that are impractical to employ an individual on a continuing basis.
- **Term appointments** are created for positions that will be needed for a specific period of time, and typically longer than 4.5 months.
- **Student positions** include **college work study** and **non-college work study**. These positions require that, as a condition of employment, the incumbent be a UHD student and that the incumbent work no more than 20 hours per week during the regular academic session.
- **Faculty positions** are those positions that are actively involved in academic instruction and are either ranked or unranked.
- **Unranked faculty** titles include **adjuncts, visiting, and lecturers**.

- **Ranked faculty** positions may include **instructors, assistant professors, associate professors and professors.**

The University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) is committed to equality of opportunity in all areas of education and employment and as such, does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, disability, religion, national origin, veteran's status, sex, or sexual orientation, except where such distinction is required by law. UHD supports the protections available to members of its community under all applicable state and federal laws including the Texas Commission on Human Rights Act of 1983, Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Equal Pay and Age Discrimination Acts, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992, and Executive Order No. 11246, as amended by Executive Order No. 11375 and Executive Order No. 12086.

Workplace Policies

PERSONAL TELEPHONE CALLS

The use of University telephones for local personal calls is a privilege that should not be abused. Personal calls should be limited to ensure that telephone lines are open to receive business calls.

Personal cell phone usage should also be limited to emergencies and meal and break times. Employees should be considerate of their colleagues by keeping cell phone rings low or on vibrate while in their work areas.

Some employees may be provided cell phones by the University and must adhere to the guidelines established in [SAM 03.A.19](#).

Personal long distance telephone calls on University phones are strictly prohibited. Should an emergency situation occur requiring an employee to make a long distance call while at work, the call must be charged to the employee's personal long distance calling card.

Employees not adhering to the guidelines for personal telephone calls are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

UNIVERSITY COMPUTER USE

UHD computer systems exist to provide computing services to the University community and should be used in support of instruction, research, and other work-related activities.

Occasional personal use of computers is permitted but should not interfere with job duties and responsibilities. Employees should have no expectation of privacy when using the University's computing resources. Employees have a responsibility to use the University computing systems in an ethical, and legal manner and comply with the user agreements outlined in [PS 08.A.07](#), Computer Use Policy.

WORK HOURS (PS 02.A.01)

The UHD workweek for timekeeping purposes begins on Wednesday at 12:01 a.m. and extends through a seven-day period ending at midnight the following Tuesday. The University's normal working hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, for regular full-time staff employees.

Because of the nature of services rendered, some areas may begin earlier or end later.

In an effort to improve productivity and a positive attitude toward work, the University allows employees to participate in flextime. Department managers may approve flextime for personnel in those positions where business necessity does not require normal work hours.

Flextime considerations should be in the interest of departmental efficiency, business necessity, public safety, and the approved work related preferences of employees, as long as the department remains open and adequately staffed between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

BREAKS (PS 02.A.01)

Non-exempt employees may take periodic rest breaks, which are considered time worked and are not recorded on timesheets. The rest breaks for non-exempt employees are scheduled by department supervisors with appropriate regard for work load.

Full-time employees are provided meal breaks that typically occur near the middle of the work day and that are not considered time worked.

All full-time hourly employees are required to take a meal break each work day, as scheduled by their supervisors. During meal breaks, employees must be relieved of all duties; otherwise, they must be compensated for this time as "hours worked." Compensation may be made by either granting compensatory time or paying overtime.

Aside from rest and meal breaks, any other time spent by a non-exempt employee away from the work area (e. g., deliveries and office errands) must be approved by the supervisor.

Management may schedule meal and rest breaks to ensure efficient operations.

TARDINESS AND JOB ABANDONMENT (PS 02.A.01)

Tardiness is defined as being late to work, returning late from a lunch break, or returning late from any other absence from work. Tardiness generally applies only to non-exempt employees.

An employee is required to call his or her supervisor within the hour of the employee's scheduled start time to report absences or tardiness and give explanations. An employee who is unable to reach his or her supervisor directly must notify someone in the department of his or her late arrival or absence.

An employee who leaves work without authorization or who fails to report to work and notify his or her supervisor for more than three continuous work days may be considered to have abandoned the job and his or her position may be terminated.

SMOKING (PS 01.A.09)

The University of Houston-Downtown is a smoke-free campus. Smoking is not permitted within any building that is the property of the University. Smoking is allowed at designated outdoor areas and must be at least 25 feet from any doorway or building entrance.

ALCOHOL AND DRUG FREE WORKPLACE (PS 01.A.05)

It is the policy of the University of Houston-Downtown that the unlawful use, manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, or possession of any illegal drug in the workplace, on campus, or as part of any campus activities is prohibited. Alcohol is included in this policy unless it is formally approved for a specific activity at a designated time and location.

Any employee engaged in the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs or alcohol on campus or at campus-sponsored events held off-campus will be subject to disciplinary action and referral to a drug and alcohol rehabilitation program, if deemed necessary. Disciplinary measures may include written reprimand, suspension without pay, or termination, depending upon the severity of the infraction. Employees referred for assistance must satisfactorily participate in a drug and alcohol abuse rehabilitation program, as agreed upon between the employee, Employment Services and Operations, and the University's Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

The University is committed to the maintenance of a drug-free environment, the dissemination of drug awareness information to the members of the campus community, and the enforcement of the provisions of the [Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988](#) and the [Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989](#).

MOTOR VEHICLE RECORDS (PS 02.A.16)

No employee or potential employee is allowed to operate a university-owned or leased vehicle until a Motor Vehicle Report (MVR) has been completed and authorization has been granted.

The MVR is a record that contains information about a person's driving history and information about traffic violations, including convictions for driving-related incidents.

MVR checks are conducted annually on those employees whose jobs require driving a university-owned or leased vehicle as an essential part of their jobs, and on those employees who have used fleet vehicles during the previous year. MVRs may be requested more frequently on employees with accidents or moving violations reported on their MVRs.

NEPOTISM (PS 02.A.03)

Nepotism in employment is a violation of state law, University of Houston System Board of Regents policy, and University of Houston System policy.

The University strictly prohibits the employment of relatives within a supervisory chain. Relatives of University employees shall not be employed by the University in positions where an employee has the official authority to hire, recommend or approve the hiring, salary, or promotions of the relative. Relatives shall not be employed in the supervisory-subordinate relationship even if it results from marriage after the employment relationship was formed.

A relative is defined as anyone related to the employee within the second degree of kinship or the third degree of lineage and includes the employee's spouse, the employee or the spouse's natural and adopted children, parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, brothers, sisters, half brothers and sisters, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, first cousins, second cousins, and persons married to these.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT (PS 02.A.15)

UHD is committed to providing a professional, academic and working environment free from sexual harassment. Harassment on the basis of sex is discrimination in violation of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. §2000e, and Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, 20 U.S.C. Section 1681. Guidelines have been established for determining when such discrimination exists.

Harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of University policy and the law. Sexual harassment by a public official may also be a criminal offense. Any employee who sexually harasses another employee is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination under the University's Discipline and Dismissal policy, which governs the conduct of employees.

Any employee, student, or visitor who believes he or she has been the victim of sexual harassment or who is aware of instances of sexual harassment has the right, and is encouraged, to report such harassment to the Campus Relations/Affirmative Action Officer, Room 276-North, or to call 713-222-5318.

Retaliatory action taken against an individual as a result of that person's seeking remedy or participating under the applicable procedures dealing with sexual harassment is prohibited. Such retaliatory action shall be regarded as a separate and distinct cause for complaint. Malicious charges may result in sanctions being imposed against the complainant by the University or in charges being filed against the complainant by the respondent. Repeated filing of frivolous complaints will be considered a malicious action.

SEXUAL ASSAULT (PS 01.A.13)

Sexual assault is a non-consensual sexual act, which may involve force, manipulation, or coercion; it is often an act of aggression, violence, and power. The perpetrator can be a stranger, relative, acquaintance, or date. Sexual assault is an illegal criminal act and a serious and flagrant violation of the University rules of conduct for faculty, staff, and students and will not be tolerated. University officials, including UHD police, will investigate all allegations of sexual assault.

TITLE IX AND OTHER DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS (PS 02.B.09)

The University prohibits discrimination/harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation.

Any UHD student or employee who believes that s/he has been discriminated against or harassed based on any of the protected classes listed above, may file a grievance under [PS 02.B.09](#), Title IX and Other Discrimination and/or Harassment Complaints policy.

DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS (PS 02.B.10)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other federal and state disability laws address disabilities in the employment setting. These laws related to disabilities in employment ensure equal opportunity and access to qualified individuals throughout the employment application process; they provide reasonable accommodations to enable qualified individuals with a disability to perform the essential functions of a job; and they enable qualified individuals with a disability to enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment equal to all employees. Every reasonable accommodation request will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. In order for an accommodation to be considered, a University employee should inform his or her immediate supervisor or the Campus Relations/Affirmative Action Officer that he or she has a physical or mental condition that may necessitate a reasonable accommodation. For more information or questions, contact the ADA Coordinator in the [Campus Relations/Affirmative Action](#) Office at (713) 222-5366.

Insurance Programs

INSURANCE ELIGIBILITY

UHD offers a variety of insurance programs to benefits-eligible employees as part of its employment and compensation package. Employees have the ability to select benefits that may be individualized to meet their needs and those of their dependents.

To be eligible, employees must be:

- employed at least one-half time (50% full-time equivalent); and
- hired in a position that does not require student status as a condition of employment.

New employees have a 90-day waiting period for medical insurance. The 90-day waiting period is waived for employees transferring directly from another state agency.

HEALTH INSURANCE

A variety of insurance programs are available to University employees through the Texas Employees Group Benefits Program (GBP).

- **Full-time employees:** the State pays 100% of the employee's medical premium and 50% of their dependent(s)' premium(s).
- **Part-time employees:** the State pays 50% of the employee's medical premium and 25% of their dependent(s)' premium(s).

Optional coverage must be selected by new employees within the first **thirty (30) days after their hire dates** and becomes **effective the first day of the following month**. Medical insurance must be selected within the first **ninety (90) days** and becomes effective the **first day of the month following the 90-day waiting period**. A complete list of insurance rates may be found on the [Health Insurance](#) link on ESO's website.

Current employees can add or make changes to their insurance plans during **summer enrollment**, which is usually during July and August of each year.

The State Kids Insurance Program (SKIP) is available to help lower-income employees with the cost of their health care. To qualify for SKIP, the employee must cover at least one dependent child age 19 or younger.

The [Blue Extras](#) value-added program for Health Select participants and their covered dependents offers discounts on a variety of alternative and complementary health care services at no additional cost.

Services such as vision, hearing, and alternative medicine (massage, acupuncture, fitness/weight loss centers, etc.) are included.

For detailed information on [HealthSelect Blue Cross Blue Shield](#) medical plan, visit their website or click on the Employment Services and Operations [Benefits Summary](#) webpage.

DENTAL INSURANCE

Eligible employees have a choice of two dental plans:

- Dental Maintenance Plan-Aetna DMO
- Dental Choice Plan-GEHA

The Dental Maintenance Plan provides dental coverage to employees and their covered dependents through a network of participating dentists. A fee schedule and list of providers are available at [Aetna Dental DMO](#).

The Dental Choice Plan does not restrict the choice of dentists, but it does limit coverage based on the number of years of participation in the plan. Detailed information can be found at [GEHA Dental Choice](#).

LIFE INSURANCE

Employees enrolled in HealthSelect receive \$5,000 in term life insurance with \$5,000 in accidental death and dismemberment insurance. Optional term life insurance can be purchased by employees up to four times their annual salaries (up to a maximum of \$400,000). Employees have the option of purchasing dependent term life insurance and additional accident and dismemberment insurance. Details are provided on the [Benefits at a Glance](#) webpage.

ACCIDENTAL DEATH AND DISMEMBERMENT INSURANCE

Employees may purchase up to \$200,000 of Accidental Death and Dismemberment insurance. Family coverage is also available as a percentage of the total value of the employee's coverage. Accidental Death and Dismemberment insurance pays if the cause of death or dismemberment is a direct result of an accident.

Short and Long Term Disability Insurance

The Short and Long Term Disability benefit provides protection from loss of income due to disability resulting from illness or accident. This benefit pays 60% to 70% of gross salary.

- Short-Term Disability.....\$0.32/\$100 of monthly salary
- Long-Term Disability.....\$0.70/\$100 of monthly salary

Additional information on Short and Long Term Disability is provided in the [Benefits Summary](#) section of the ESO website.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION (PS 02.A.25)

UHD is committed to maintaining a safe working environment free of hazardous conditions for all faculty, staff, and students. However, when unavoidable incidents arise, it is important that employees suffering from a work-related occupational injury or illness receive proper medical attention. It is imperative for employees to submit the proper documentation of a work-related injury or illness to their immediate supervisors as soon as possible (see Texas Labor Code § 409.001). The required [Worker's Compensation Forms](#) will be forwarded to the State Office of Risk Management (SORM) for SORM to determine whether worker's compensation may be paid, should the employee be temporarily or permanently disabled.

Retirement Benefits

TEACHER RETIREMENT SYSTEM

Depending upon the employee's position, a new employee is required to contribute to the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) or Optional Retirement Program (ORP) effective with his or her date of hire in a benefits-eligible position. ORP-eligible employees will have **90 days** to enroll in an ORP plan **in lieu** of the TRS plan. For a complete overview of both programs, click [here](#).

The Teacher Retirement System of Texas is a defined-benefits plan. Employees contribute 6.4% of their pre-tax gross salary, and the State contributes 6.58% of the employee's gross salary to a state account to pay retirement benefits. Rights to benefits are vested upon completion of five (5) years of creditable service. Other benefits included in the TRS program for the active member are life insurance equal to twice an employee's annual salary to a maximum of \$80,000 and disability income benefits. For more information, log on to the [TRS](#) website.

OPTIONAL RETIREMENT PROGRAM

The Optional Retirement Program is a defined-contribution plan and is available to full-time (100% FTE) benefits-eligible faculty members and certain professional/administrative staff under the provisions of State laws. Employees contribute 6.65% of their pre-tax gross salary, and the State contributes 6.58% of the employee's gross salary to the ORP account. Contributions made by the University to the ORP are vested after one year and one day of participation in the program. Click here to view a list of [ORP carriers](#).

TAX DEFERRED ANNUITY

The Tax Deferred Annuity (TDA) or 403(b) program is offered to all benefits-eligible employees. Investments are through life insurance and mutual fund companies licensed to do business in the State of Texas. Employees may select from a traditional 403(b), in which all contributions are excluded from taxable income until distributed from the account to the employee, or a Roth 403(b), which is an after-tax investment program allowing tax-free benefits at retirement. The University does not contribute to the employee's TDA.

STATE OF TEXAS DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN (457 PLAN)

Employees may enroll in a deferred compensation plan, also known as the [Texa\\$aver 457 Plan](#). This plan is a supplemental retirement program that allows the employee to defer a portion of his or her income and deposit it with a company approved by the State of Texas. Benefits paid to the employee or beneficiary equal the value of the deferred compensation account. The State's liability will never exceed the value of that account, and the State will not be liable for any losses resulting from depreciation or a loss in value of the account.

MAXIMUM CONTRIBUTION LIMITS

Employees may contribute to both 403(b) and 457 plans. However, there are limits set each year by the IRS for voluntary contributions to the 403(b) tax-deferred annuity and the 457 deferred compensation.

For calendar year 2008, both plans have a maximum deferral amount of \$15,500. Employees age 50 and over who are trying to catch up may defer an additional \$5,000.

SOCIAL SECURITY

The University of Houston-Downtown complies with the relevant provisions of the Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA). All employees are required to participate in the federal [Social Security](#) program as a condition of employment. Under the current limits established by federal regulations, 7.65% of each employee's paycheck is withheld to pay for social security, and the State of Texas matches an additional 7.65%.

Vacation and Holidays

VACATION (SAM 02.D.01)

UHD benefits-eligible employees earn paid vacation each year. Vacation leave accrual rates are based on years of total state service and are the same for exempt and non-exempt employees. Part-time employees whose FTE is at least 50% are also eligible to accrue vacation time; the accrual rate is proportionate to the number of actual hours worked.

Although vacation hours are earned during the first six months of employment, employees are not eligible to take vacation until they have completed six months of continuous employment with the State of Texas. Staff employees with previous State of Texas service are entitled to receive previously earned vacation service credits. Prior state service must be confirmed by ESO staff.

A [vacation accrual schedule](#) is provided in the Benefits Summary section of the Employment Services and Operations website.

PAID HOLIDAYS (SAM 02.E.03)

An annual holiday schedule is established by the University of Houston System Board of Regents based on the recommendation from the component university presidents within the UH System. The state authorizes certain legal holidays but provides that educational institutions may adjust the actual observance of these holidays to permit the most efficient operation. A schedule of [paid holidays](#) can be found on the ESO website.

Benefits-eligible staff employees, regardless of length of service, are entitled to paid holidays as authorized by state law. Part-time (less than 50% FTE), temporary (less than 4.5 months), and student employees are not eligible for holiday pay.

Paid holiday provisions include:

- Workdays before and after scheduled holidays. In order to qualify for holiday pay, an eligible employee must work the regularly scheduled workday immediately before a holiday period or be in a paid leave status for such scheduled workday.
- Work on a scheduled holiday. Eligible employees who are required to work on a scheduled holiday will be entitled to equivalent time off with pay to be taken during the 12-month period following the end of the workweek in which the holiday occurred or compensatory time pay in lieu of equivalent time off.
- Holiday entitlement for new hires. If an eligible employee begins work on the first workday of the month, the employee is entitled to be paid for a UHS-designated holiday that occurs before the first workday if the holiday occurs during the same month and does not fall on a Saturday or a Sunday.

- Holiday entitlements for terminating employees. An eligible employee who terminates employment on the last workday of the month is entitled to be paid for a UHS-designated holiday that occurs after the last workday if the holiday falls within that month and does not fall on a Saturday or Sunday.
- Holiday entitlements for employees working non-standard schedules. An eligible employee who normally works on a schedule other than 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, is entitled to paid holiday time off that is equivalent to the holiday time that employees who work normal schedules receive and that is proportionate to the percentage of full-time effort.
- Holiday entitlements for employees in approved leave status. When a UHS-designated holiday occurs during an eligible employee's approved vacation period or sick leave, the holiday is not counted as a day of vacation or sick leave. However, when a System-designated holiday occurs during an employee's approved unpaid leave of absence, the employee is not entitled to holiday pay.
- Optional holidays. A UHD employee is entitled to observe Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Good Friday and/or Cesar Chavez Day by using accrued vacation leave or leave without pay if all accrued vacation leave has been exhausted, or by working on a holiday in which a skeleton workforce is required by UHD. An employee who wishes to observe these optional holidays must provide reasonable advance written notice to his or her supervisor.
- Premium pay exclusions. Holiday pay is calculated at the straight rate and does not include shift differential or other premium pay.

Employee Benefits

COLLEGE RELEASE TIME (PS 02.B.12)

The State Employees Training Act (SETA) authorizes state employers to use public funds to provide training and education to their employees. The training or education must be related to the duties or prospective duties of the employees.

The College Release Program (CRP) at UHD is an educational benefit for full-time, benefits-eligible staff who have completed their initial probationary period. If eligible, staff may receive up to three (3) hours per week release time from normal duties to take credit-bearing courses toward a degree plan at an institution of higher learning. This release time may be treated as hours worked for overtime pay or shift differential where applicable. Supervisory approval is needed before registering for classes.

Participants in the program must reflect College Release Time on their timesheets.

STAFF EDUCATION REIMBURSEMENT (PS 02.B.12)

Full-time, benefits-eligible, non-probationary UHD staff may also be eligible to participate in the Staff Education Reimbursement program, provided they earn a “C” grade or better in credit-bearing classes at UHD, are employed at UHD through the official close of the term, and have no financial obligations to UHD. If these conditions are met, staff will be eligible to receive 100% of tuition and course-related fees for one class and 50% of tuition and course-related fees for a second class.

The Staff Education Reimbursement is a taxable benefit to the employee. The appropriate amount of tax will be deducted from the employee’s paycheck and the amount of the benefit will be included on the employee’s W-2 form.

FITNESS RELEASE TIME (PS 02.B.13)

Full-time, benefits-eligible staff who have completed their initial probationary period may be eligible to receive up to three (3) hours per week of Fitness Release Time (FRT) to participate in fitness activities offered at the University of Houston-Downtown’s Student Life Center (SLC).

FRT may not interfere with the employee’s duties or the department’s responsibilities. Supervisory approval is required before the employee may begin this program.

FRT must be reflected on the employee timesheet and cannot be requested in conjunction with the College Release Program. To request fitness relesetime, employees must complete the [FRT Application](#).

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

UHD partners with the University of Texas Employee Assistance Program (UTEAP) to provide employees possible solutions to complex problems affecting their work and personal lives.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a confidential counseling and referral program available to employees and their families. Whether employees want to resolve a stressful work situation, find legal resources, or get advice about a financial concern, EAP can help. This service is offered at no cost to employees. Visit the [UTEAP](#) website for more information, additional available resources, and other self-help tools.

TEX-FLEX REIMBURSEMENT ACCOUNTS

The [Tex-Flex Program](#) offers two types of reimbursement accounts; the Health Care Reimbursement Account (HCRA) and the Dependent Care Reimbursement Account (DCRA). A reimbursement account allows the employee to set aside tax-free money to cover certain eligible expenses. Money set aside in these accounts can only be spent on eligible expenses incurred during the plan year (September through August). Any money not used by the end of the fiscal year is forfeited. Money that is not reimbursed through properly filed claims for eligible expenses will not be returned to the employee.

Paid and Unpaid Leave

SICK LEAVE

UHD full-time employees earn eight hours of sick leave per month of employment. Part-time employees earn pro-rated sick leave hours based on the percentage of time worked. There is no maximum sick leave accrual; however, there is no payment for unused sick leave upon termination of employment.

After a period of more than three consecutive days of sick leave, a doctor's release to return to regular duty must be submitted by the employee to the supervisor before s/he may return to work. Additional information on sick leave may be found in the [Benefits Summary](#) section of the ESO website and in [SAM 02.D.01](#).

In the unfortunate event that an employee dies, the beneficiary or estate of the deceased employee is entitled to payment of one-half of unused accrued sick leave, or 336 hours of sick leave, whichever is less, provided the employee had continuous state employment for at least six months at the time of death.

EXTENDED SICK LEAVE (SAM 02.D.01)

Long service employees in good standing who have become disabled may apply for extended sick leave to provide continued income during the waiting period before long-term disability benefits begin. An employee is eligible to apply for extended sick leave even if s/he is not enrolled in the group long-term disability program. However, extended sick leave cannot exceed 90 calendar days and is subject to approval by the University president.

SICK LEAVE POOL (SAM 02.D.01)

Any benefits-eligible employee who has exhausted all earned leave may apply for benefits from the sick leave pool in the event of a catastrophic illness or injury to the employee or employee's immediate family. The illness/injury must require the services of a licensed physician for a prolonged period of time and last in excess of thirty (30) days.

The maximum amount of sick leave pool pay that may be granted is ninety (90) days. Employees who meet these criteria may request time from the pool by completing a [Sick Leave Pool Withdrawal Request](#) and submitting it to the Benefits Coordinator in Suite 910-S.

Hours in the sick leave pool are donated by employees from their own personal sick leave balance. All benefits-eligible employees may voluntarily transfer sick leave hours from their accrued balance to the sick leave pool. There is no limit on the number of hours an employee may donate to the sick leave pool. Employees who are retiring or have resigned are encouraged to donate their sick leave balance to the sick leave pool.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE (PS 02.A.11)

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 requires that an employer grant up to 12 weeks (26 weeks for military caregiver leave) of job-protected leave to eligible employees for certain qualified medical conditions. The amount of leave granted is based on what is verified as medically necessary on the required physician statement.

Family and Medical Leave is provided to eligible employees for any of the following qualifying events or conditions:

- The birth or care of a child;
- The placement of a child for adoption or foster care of the child by the employee;
- The serious health condition of a child, parent, or
- Spouse of the employee; and,
- A serious health condition of the employee.

An eligible employee is defined as having at least 12 calendar months of service with the State of Texas prior to the date of leave and having worked at least 1,250 hours for the State of Texas in the 12 months immediately preceding commencement of the leave. Employees must use all applicable accrued paid leave balances at the beginning of the leave, including sick and vacation leave, before taking unpaid family and medical leave. During an approved leave, the employee is eligible to receive the state contribution toward the cost of medical insurance.

Also, there are two Military Leaves that fall under FMLA. These are:

- **Active Duty Leave:** Up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave may be granted because of any qualifying exigency for a spouse, child, or parent of a service member who is on active duty, or notified of an impending call or order to active duty in the Armed Forces (including the Reserves and National Guard, in support of a contingency operation); and,
- **Military Caregiver Leave:** Up to 26 weeks of unpaid leave during a 12-month period may be granted to an employee who is the spouse, child, parent or next of kin of a service member undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, who is otherwise in outpatient status, or who is otherwise on the temporary disability retired list for a serious illness.

PARENTAL LEAVE (PS 02.A.27)

Employees with less than twelve (12) months of state service or who have worked less than 1,250 hours in the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of leave are eligible to take a parental leave of absence, not to exceed 12 weeks, provided that the employee utilizes all available paid vacation and sick leave. If no paid leave is available, then the parental leave will be designated as unpaid leave.

Parental leave is limited to and begins with the date of the birth of a natural child or the adoption or foster care placement of a child under 3 years of age.

FOSTER PARENT LEAVE (PS 02.A.09)

An employee who is a foster parent to a child is entitled to a paid leave of absence to attend staff meetings held by the Department of Family and Protective Services regarding the foster child. In addition, the employee may use this leave to attend meetings held by a school district regarding the foster child.

MILITARY LEAVE (PS 02.A.09)

Military Leave may be granted to employees who are members of the reserve component of a state or federal military force. Reservists are entitled to a military leave of absence from their respective duties not to exceed 15 days in any one federal fiscal year.

Military leave will be granted without loss of time or salary only when the employee is ordered by the proper authority to report for active military duty. Requests for military leave must be submitted in writing to the employee's supervisor as far in advance as possible. A copy of the official military orders must accompany the request. Refer to the [Miscellaneous Leave](#) policy for additional information.

VOLUNTARY FIREFIGHTER, EMT LEAVE (PS 02.A.09)

An employee attending volunteer firefighter and emergency medical services training is entitled to paid leave not to exceed five working days each fiscal year. This leave must be coded as 991, Miscellaneous Compensation, on the timesheet.

JURY AND WITNESS DUTY LEAVE (PS 02.A.09)

Employees called to jury duty should submit appropriate documentation of the jury/court duty to their supervisors in advance. No deduction shall be made from the salary or wages of a UHD regular staff employee for jury duty. The employee is not required to account to the University for any fee or compensation received for jury duty. Upon return to work, the employee must submit a letter or certificate from the court showing the length of service as juror to his or her supervisor.

An employee who is asked to serve as an uncompensated witness, but who is not appearing in an official capacity on behalf of the University, must request paid or unpaid leave to perform this service. The employee shall provide the supervisor with a copy of the subpoena or summons and shall promptly and accurately record the use of leave. However, time away for this type of service must be with the supervisor's prior approval, and normal request procedures for use of compensatory time, leave without pay, or vacation apply.

VOTING LEAVE

The University does not observe as a holiday any day on which an election is held throughout the state. However, employees shall be allowed a maximum of two hours at the beginning or end of the workday to vote in federal, state, and local elections without deduction from pay or leave time.

BEREAVEMENT / EMERGENCY LEAVE (PS 02.A.09)

Emergency leave may be granted by the immediate supervisor in the event of the death of an employee's spouse, or the employee's or employee's spouse's children, grandchildren, parents, brothers, sisters, or grandparents.

Leave may also be granted for the employee to take care of personal responsibilities surrounding a death. The amount of time allowed will depend on the circumstances and is at the discretion of the supervisor. The President may authorize emergency leave in other circumstances when the employee shows good cause for such leave.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE LEAVE (PS 02.A.09)

An employee may use up to eight hours of sick leave each fiscal year to attend parent-teacher conference sessions for the employee's children who are in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade.

The employee must give reasonable notice of the intention to use this leave. Part-time employees receive leave on a proportionate basis.

ASSISTANCE DOG TRAINING LEAVE (PS 02.A.09)

An employee with a disability as defined by Texas Human Resources Code, Section 121.002, will be granted paid leave not to exceed ten (10) days in a fiscal year to attend training necessary to provide the employee with an assistance dog to be used by the employee.

BONE MARROW AND ORGAN DONATION LEAVE (PS 02.A.09)

UHD employees are entitled to a leave of absence with pay for the time necessary to serve as bone marrow or organ donor. Bone marrow donors are allowed five (5) working days in a fiscal year, and organ donors are provided with thirty (30) working days in a fiscal year.

CERTIFIED AMERICAN RED CROSS ACTIVITIES LEAVE (SAM 02.D.04)

Employees who are certified disaster service volunteers of the American Red Cross or who are in training to become volunteers may be granted paid leave, not to exceed 10 days each fiscal year, to participate in specialized disaster relief services for the American Red Cross.

LEAVE WITHOUT PAY (PS 02.A.13)

Extended leave of absence without pay may be granted to benefits-eligible UHD employees for purposes of education or research and writing, in order to enhance the employee's contribution to the institution.

Also, benefits-eligible employees requesting leave for personal reasons may qualify depending upon the circumstances.

Approval also will be contingent upon the department's ability to reschedule the workload satisfactorily. Such leaves are the prerogative of the University and are not an inherent right of employment.

Leaves without pay shall be limited in duration to twelve months and shall have specific effective dates. As required by State law, all accrued paid leave entitlements must be exhausted prior to taking leave without pay. Group insurance may be continued by advance monthly payment of full premiums by the employee. Funds cannot be withdrawn from Teacher Retirement or Optional Retirement programs during the leave. Seniority is not interrupted, but pay increases and associated benefits are. Additional information on leave without pay is provided in more detail in [PS 02.A.13](#).

TIME AND EFFORT REPORTING – TIMESHEETS

All employees are required to prepare time and effort reports. These reports should detail time to be deducted for vacation, sick leave, or other periods not at work during regularly scheduled workdays. Time and effort reports must be signed and dated by the employee and the employee's supervisor. Signing another employee's time and effort report or falsifying one's own report is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Time and effort reports must be submitted to the payroll office within the proper time frame to ensure that employees are paid. An [Application for Leave](#) must be attached to the timesheet that documents the time to be deducted for vacation, sick leave, or other periods not worked during the pay period. Refer to [PS 02.A.02](#), Employee Time and Effort Reporting, for additional information. If deductions from the paycheck appear to be incorrect or if there are other discrepancies, employees should contact ESO immediately in order for the payroll staff to take the appropriate steps to rectify any error(s).

PEOPLE ADVANTAGE SELF SERVICE (PASS)

People Advantage Self Service (PASS) allows employees access to manage personal information online, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in real time. Employees can make changes or updates to personal information or W-4s, and view/print pay history, earning statements, and benefits information. Employees can request changes in name, marital status, and educational level online, but appropriate documentation is required before these changes are approved. To learn more about PASS advantages and how it works, click the [PASS](#) webpage.

W-2 TAX FORMS

The University offers employees options for receiving W-2 tax forms. An employee may choose to receive his/her W-2 form in the mail or electronically through PASS.

Electronic W-2 consent applies only for the January 31 immediately following the date of the consent. Employees who choose to print their W-2 through PASS, should complete the electronic W-2 Consent Agreement in PASS each year. Employees will automatically receive a copy of the current W-2 form in the mail if the consent is not submitted.

Additional information on W-2 electronic printouts and withdrawal of consent is provided at the PASS webpage.

PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

By law, UHD is required to make certain deductions from an employee's pay. These include the following:

- Federal Income Tax (FIT);
- Social Security (FICA);
- Medicare Tax;
- TRS or ORP retirement program (if required, based on employment status); and,
- Court-ordered garnishments (child support and IRS levy).

Employees have the option of requesting additional deductions, such as:

- Health insurance;
- Voluntary life, accident, and disability insurance;
- Dental insurance;
- State Employee Charitable Campaign; and,
- Annuities.

PAY DAYS

UHD employees are paid either biweekly or monthly depending on their job classifications. Employees in exempt positions are paid monthly on the first working day of the month. Employees in non-exempt positions are paid biweekly on alternate Fridays. If a Friday falls on a holiday, the pay day will be the last workday immediately preceding the holiday. Special provisions may apply during Christmas holidays.

DIRECT PAYROLL DEPOSIT

In order to reduce the cost of processing paper checks and making progress in efforts to achieve a paperless environment, UHD will discontinue printing paychecks for both hourly and salaried employees, not currently on direct deposit, by early 2009. Employees may sign up for direct deposit by logging on to P.A.S.S. at www.uhd.edu/pass or completing a Direct Deposit Authorization Form by clicking on www.uhd.edu/about/hr/forms/deposit.pdf and submitting it to the Payroll Department, located in 910-S.

There is no cost to employees for direct deposit and many banks offer free checking services to individuals who are paid via direct deposit. Direct deposit assures the employee will receive their pay timely, especially in the event of a disaster such as a hurricane, and payments can be divided automatically among designated employee accounts.

Employees who do not want to enroll in direct deposit may be transitioned to the UHS [PayCard](#) program, sponsored by Bank of America. This is a Visa-branded card that will be issued in the employee's name. The PayCard will be loaded by electronic funds transfer with the amount of the employee's pay due on a standard pay day.

Compensation/Performance Appraisals

PAY PLAN

UHD's fundamental goal is to create a compensation program that attracts, employs, and retains a talented and qualified workforce. The basic compensation objectives of the University's Pay Plan are to ensure equal work and to provide rates of pay that:

- are internally equitable;
- are competitive;
- are efficiently and fairly administered;
- are in compliance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations;
- provide career incentives and motivate top performance; and,
- are within the University of Houston-Downtown's ability to pay.

OVERTIME

UHD managers should organize and schedule departmental activities so that overtime work is only assigned when it is absolutely necessary. The University complies with all the provisions of the [Fair Labor Standards Act](#).

In certain circumstances, such as emergencies or peak load periods, non-exempt employees may be asked to work overtime and will be compensated for overtime work in accordance with the provisions of [PS 02.A.01](#), Policy on Working Hours and [SAM 02.B.02](#), Overtime and Compensatory Time. Exempt employees are paid a monthly salary for all hours worked during the month in performance of normal duties, as opposed to being paid for each hour that is worked per week. It is commonplace for an exempt employee to exceed 40 hours in a normal workweek, and in such cases, the exempt employee is not entitled to overtime.

All overtime work must be authorized in advance by heads of departments and/or unit managers. Employees may not make unauthorized decisions to work overtime.

No professional or administrative employee is eligible for additional compensation for work that is part of normal job responsibilities. See [PS 02.A.05](#), Additional Compensation for Faculty and Professional and Administrative Employees, for more information.

NEW EMPLOYEES

Individuals new to UHD and whose knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience meet the minimum requirements of the job should be hired at the minimum of the grade for the job for which they are being hired. An employee may be hired at a higher starting salary based on years of related and documented work experience and/or additional education that may be "value added" to the job.

However, the starting salary may not exceed the midpoint for the expected position or exceed that of an incumbent in the same position within the same department.

Any exception for a new employee's salary must be based on the recommendation of the hiring manager, and department head and approval by the Vice President for Employment Services and Operations. The [UHD Compensation Manual](#) and [Pay Grade Structure](#) are available on the ESO website.

PROMOTION

A promotion is a change in duty assignment of an employee from one pay grade to a higher pay grade within the same pay grade structure. When an employee moves to a different pay grade structure (i.e., from staff pay structure to IT pay structure), the move will be considered a promotion when the new grade has a higher midpoint. To be considered for a promotion, an employee must meet the minimum qualifications for the higher classification.

Any UHD employee appointed to a new position in a job at a higher grade may receive a pay increase within the new position's hiring range, relevant to the employee's qualifications and internal equity.

Pay increases are subject to availability of resources to pay such increases.

DEMOTION

A demotion is a reassignment to a position classification that has a lesser level of duties and responsibilities and a lower minimum and/or maximum salary range. The employee's salary may be reduced to an appropriate amount in the new range as agreed upon by the supervisor and the Vice President for Employment Services and Operations. Demotions can be voluntary or involuntary.

Voluntary demotion:

- If an employee volunteers to take a job at a lower level for which the salary is less than the employee is currently receiving, a salary adjustment may occur to ensure compliance with UHD's compensation plan. In no case will the employee's salary rate be reduced to a rate below the minimum salary for the level of the job to which the employee is being transferred.

Involuntary demotion:

- Involuntary demotions would normally follow the same procedure as outlined above for "voluntary". However, because of the variety of possible circumstances that might surround an "involuntary" demotion, each situation will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Each circumstance must be reviewed and approved by the Vice President for Employment Services and Operations. These reviews will be conducted carefully to ensure equity and consistency. Complete documentation on each case of voluntary or involuntary demotion will be maintained in ESO.

TRANSFER

A transfer is a change in position to a new position that may have similar duties and responsibilities within the same department unit or in another department within the University of Houston-Downtown.

Employees who wish to transfer must apply online for a position that has been posted. The application will be processed through the normal employment process. Staff employees who have successfully completed their probationary periods are eligible to apply for promotion or transfer to other positions within the University.

Typically, there is no change in pay associated with a lateral transfer. Hiring managers who believe circumstances warrant additional compensation above that which is outlined may seek review and approval for an exception to the policy from the Vice President for Employment Services and Operations.

RECLASSIFICATION

A reclassification occurs when a job is placed in a different pay grade because a job evaluation indicates the major duties and responsibilities have increased significantly. In order to request that a position be reclassified, a [Job Analysis Questionnaire](#) (JAQ) and a Position Request (PR) should be completed and submitted to ESO for evaluation and review. The job title and/or pay grade may change as a result of a reclassification. If a reclassification is approved, ESO will determine the proper classification, rate of pay, and effective date.

ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION FOR NON-FACULTY EXEMPT EMPLOYEES (PS 02.A.05)

The respective dean or director and the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost must approve in advance extra compensation to professional or administrative employees assigned to teach credit courses not included in their job descriptions. Professional or administrative employees approved to teach credit courses outside their normal working hours will be compensated at the rate for adjunct lecturers but may not receive additional compensation for any teaching done during their normal working hours. Other University activities performed outside the normal work day may be compensated if the activities are clearly outside the employee's job description. No professional or administrative employee is eligible for additional compensation for work that is part of his or her normal job responsibility.

HAZARDOUS DUTY PAY

All commissioned peace officers of the University of Houston-Downtown who are certified as law enforcement officers are entitled to hazardous duty pay upon completion of one year of State of Texas service. Commissioned peace officers include the Police Chief, Assistant Police Chief, Lieutenants, Sergeants, and Police Officers.

Hazardous duty pay is computed at the rate of \$10.00 per month for each year of service as an employee of the State of Texas in a position that requires the performance of hazardous duty, up to and including thirty (30) years of service, and not to exceed \$300.00 per month. Questions about hazardous duty pay should be directed to ESO at 713-221-8060.

LONGEVITY PAY

All regular full-time, non-academic employees who have a minimum of three years of service with the State of Texas are entitled to longevity pay at a rate of \$20.00 per month for every two years of service up to and including 40 years of service. Longevity pay commences the month following the third year of service anniversary date unless the anniversary date falls on the first day of the month. If the anniversary date occurs on the first day of the month, then longevity pay commences that month.

The present schedule for [longevity pay](#) is located on the ESO website.

ON-CALL, CALL-OUT-TIME, OFF-THE-CLOCK

The time an employee is required to be on-call by telephone, beeper, or other electronic device and available to return to the work site may be compensable. On-call duty restricts the employee from traveling outside the range of the electronic device, provided the range includes the location of the employee's residence and surrounding area. The employee must be provided a reasonable amount of time to respond to the call depending on the distance between the employee's residence and the work site.

Call-out time occurs when an employee is called out to the work site after normal working hours or on a non-workday. The time the employee is at the work site is compensable time. The employee will be paid for a minimum of three hours if the actual hours worked are less than three. Travel time to the work site is not compensable.

Employees are considered off-the-clock for periods of time that are over thirty (30) minutes when the employee is relieved from all duties and free to leave the University's premises. Such time is not compensable.

TRAVEL TIME

Time spent traveling during the employee's normal working hours, regardless of whether travel is during a workday or non-workday, is compensable. Time spent traveling outside of normal working hours is generally considered non-compensable time, provided the employee is not required to perform work while traveling.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

As mandated by [PS 02.B.06](#), UHD staff shall participate in the annual performance appraisal process. Staff performance appraisals provide a periodic opportunity for communication between supervisors and employees to discuss expectations, goals, and objectives of job performance and how well these are

being met. They serve to highlight employees' strengths and areas that require improvement. They also provide the tools for establishing appropriate goals and objectives to achieve job gratification, personal growth, and satisfactory job performance. Performance appraisal documents may be a factor in making personnel decisions including, but not limited to, continued employment, training needs, merit pay increases, promotions, transfers, initiation of a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), or terminations.

PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Employees with a performance appraisal overall rating of "Needs Improvement" or those with significant performance deficiencies or overall conduct problems may be placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).

- ESO shall be responsible for initiating the PIP process in collaboration with the employee's manager once these employees have been identified at the completion of the performance appraisal cycle or have been identified by the manager.
- This process requires a commitment to improvement. Failure to achieve the expected improvements will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- Once the plan has been implemented, supervisors should have ongoing dialogues (weekly or biweekly) with the employee until expectations are at an acceptable level of performance.
- The Performance Improvement Plan shall last for six months from the effective date of implementation.

Discipline, Dismissal, and Grievance Process

DISCIPLINE AND DISMISSAL

It is UHD policy to formulate, publish, and enforce rules and regulations that are essential to the safe and efficient conduct of institutional operations. Supervisory personnel are responsible for informing employees of rules to be followed, standards of conduct to be met, and work performance to be achieved. Employees are responsible for learning and abiding by the policies, procedures, and standards of UHD and its departments and constituents. Employees who fail to abide by such rules, regulations, and standards may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Adherence to regulations and procedures provided in the Discipline and Dismissal policy, [PS.02.B.03](#), will ensure a progressive system of discipline designed to remedy deficiencies when possible and practicable to the mutual advantage of the University and the employee; an orderly routine for fair, consistent, and impartial treatment of disciplinary matters; and a mechanism for ensuring that consideration is given to employee concerns in disciplinary matters.

Responsibilities in Imposing Discipline

The University is responsible for explaining why an employee should be disciplined. Since the purpose of the disciplinary process is to provide remedial action whenever possible, no disciplinary measures will be undertaken without the employee's knowledge. Employees will be given the opportunity to respond, in writing, to any disciplinary action taken against them.

When possible and practical, disciplinary action will follow a progressive sequence, including verbal counseling, written reprimand, suspension without pay, and dismissal from employment.

Disciplinary measures and employee conferences shall at a minimum:

- Identify the problem to be corrected or the standard to be met and the rule, policy, or procedure that has been violated;
- Recommend a course of action to correct the problem;
- Provide a statement of the consequences in the absence of improvement; and
- Provide notification that further disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment, may occur if immediate improvement in the employee's work performance or noted deficiencies does not occur and/or if new performance deficiencies surface.

All documents pertaining to the disciplinary action will be signed both by the supervisory authority and the employee. The employee's signature will acknowledge receipt of the disciplinary notice but may not

necessarily indicate agreement with the action. If the employee refuses to sign the notice, that fact should be noted on the documents.

Dismissal of Probationary Employees

Heads of departments may authorize dismissal of probationary employees after obtaining approval from the Vice President for Employment Services and Operations. The department head will then give the employee written notice of dismissal and its effective date. A dismissed probationary employee is not entitled to invoke the grievance policy to contest dismissal unless s/he claims and presents evidence to indicate that the claim merits inquiry and that s/he would not have been dismissed but for his/her race, gender, age, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, or exercising rights of free speech and association protected by the constitutions of the United States and the State of Texas.

The availability of the grievance process in such cases will be determined by the Assistant Vice President for Employment, Training and Campus Relations/Affirmative Action Officer.

GRIEVANCE PROCESS

UHD is committed to establishing and maintaining a constructive problem-solving mechanism for the resolution of staff grievances. A staff member is defined as an employee employed on a regular basis for a period of at least four and one-half months, excluding students employed in positions that require student status as a condition for employment and those holding teaching and/or research positions, classified as faculty.

For the purposes of the Staff Grievance policy, [PS 02.B.01](#), a grievance is defined as a disagreement between an employee and management on the terms or conditions of employment. A grievance may be filed as a result of one of the following adverse employment actions: written reprimand, suspension without pay, demotion, involuntary transfer to a different job classification, denial of promotion, or termination. The assignment of duties, performance evaluations/appraisals, scheduling of work hours, rate of pay, and other management decisions are reserved as management rights and cannot be appealed through the grievance process. Complaints involving allegations of discrimination/harassment are administered as outlined in [PS 02.B.09](#), Title IX and Other Discrimination Complaints, or [PS 02.A.15](#), Sexual Harassment Policy.

Employees on probationary status are ineligible to file formal grievances related to disciplinary or discharge actions unless the employee believes that unlawful discrimination/harassment was a factor in the personnel action(s).

Staff Grievance Procedures—The Staff Grievance process consists of three steps: the preliminary appeal, the administrative appeal, and the formal appeal.

Preliminary Appeal—Any staff employee who wishes to grieve/appeal any of the actions described above may do so by providing a written request to his or her second-level supervisor setting forth the

issues the employee (grievant) believes need to be addressed, as well as the proposed resolution, no later than ten (10) working days following the grievant's notification of the act, event, decision, or condition that is the basis of the appeal.

Administrative Appeal—If the grievant's petition to the second-level supervisor does not resolve the grievance, s/he may proceed to the administrative appeal by submitting a written administrative appeal to the respective vice president or division head, by no later than ten (10) working days after receiving notice from the second-level supervisor on the grievant's appeal.

Formal Appeal—If the grievant is not satisfied with the decision resulting from the administrative appeal process, the grievant may seek resolution of the grievance through the formal appeal process. This will result in a hearing and is the final step in the grievance process.

To initiate the formal appeal process, the grievant shall complete the Grievance Complaint Form, stating the details of the grievance, the names of any witnesses who the grievant believes may have knowledge of the nature of the grievance, and the relief sought.

The Grievance Complaint Form must be submitted by the grievant to the Campus Relations/Affirmative Action Officer (CR/AAO) within ten (10) working days of the grievant's receipt of the decision on the grievant's administrative appeal.

Failure to submit the Grievance Complaint Form to the CR/AAO within ten (10) working days from receipt of the decision from the administrative appeal as established in the Staff Grievance policy will be deemed a waiver of the right to pursue a formal grievance.

The Hearing

A hearing to review the issues surrounding the grievant's complaint will be scheduled by the CR/AAO and the Staff Hearing Panel appointed no later than thirty (30) working days, absent extenuating circumstances, of the CR/AAO's receipt of the Grievance Complaint Form. The CR/AAO or his/her designee will identify five (5) members of the Staff Grievance Committee to serve as the hearing panel and hear the grievance. An alternate member will be selected to replace a regular member of the hearing panel if a regular member is unable to serve or when a potential conflict of interest exists.

The following restrictions will apply:

- No member of the hearing panel may be involved in any of the events surrounding the grievance.
- Neither the grievant's nor the respondent's department may be represented on the hearing panel.
- The hearing panel must represent a broad cross section of University staff.
- No more than one member of any department may serve on the hearing panel.

After all the evidence has been presented at the hearing and the hearing panel members have no further questions of either party or any of the witnesses, the hearing panel chair will adjourn the hearing, ensuring that the tape recording has ceased. After meeting with the CR/AAO or his/her designee, who will address policy/procedural questions, the hearing panel members will proceed to closed session deliberations.

No later than three (3) working days following the conclusion of the hearing, the panel will make a recommended finding to the President as to whether or not University policy was violated and forward it to the CR/AAO, who will forward it to the President within three (3) working days from receipt.

No later than ten (10) working days after receipt of the hearing panel's recommended finding, the President or designee will take one of the following actions and communicate his/her decision in writing to the grievant, the respondent, both parties' attorneys (as appropriate), and the CR/AAO:

- Accept the panel's recommended finding;
- Reject the panel's recommended finding; or
- Remand the case to the panel with instructions to reopen the hearing, conduct further deliberations, or answer specific questions posed by the President.

The President's decision is **final** and binding to all parties.

Safety and Emergency Preparedness

SAFETY PROCESSES

The University of Houston-Downtown's Safety and Health programs, processes, and procedures are detailed in the [Safety and Health Program Handbook](#).

The safety process is organized around a three-tiered plan:

Tier 1—UHD's Environmental Health and Safety Officer. The Safety Officer is responsible for evacuation processes; safety enforcement; safety-training coordination; site safety inspection evaluation; safety process record keeping; fire safety; coordination and involvement of managers, directors and deans in the safety process; and compliance coordination.

Tier 2—UHD's Safety Committee. The Safety Committee, appointed by the President, promotes and maintains the University community's interest in safety by identifying safety issues on campus, promoting education, and supporting safety projects.

Tier 3—UHD's President and Vice President for Administration and Finance. These individuals provide executive support for the safety process by including safety considerations in the planning process and by supporting the internal enforcement of safety standards.

Preparedness plans include creating a contingency plan for major emergencies, defining types of emergencies, and describing the sequence of notification, roles (e.g., system broadcasts) and processes for:

- Evacuation and Shelter-In-Place Procedures
- Bomb Threats
- Chemical and/or Radiation Spills
- Death on Campus
- Aircraft Explosion
- Fire/Gas Leaks
- Illness and Injury
- Power Failures

WEATHER RELATED EMERGENCIES

As part of the University's Disaster Preparedness Plan, UHD receives information regarding storm movement from the media and the U.S. Weather Service. When the possibility of a storm hit is predicted within 96 hours, UHD's Emergency Management Team is placed on Emergency Alert to monitor the situation. When a hurricane or tropical storm is expected to impact the Houston area within

36 to 48 hours, the President or his/her designee will decide whether the University will close so that faculty, staff, and students may leave to prepare for the storm.

An [Emergency Preparedness Checklist](#), published by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the American Red Cross, provides information on how to protect yourself and cope with disaster by planning ahead. The checklist may be printed for use at home and in the office.

Additional information on Safety and Emergency Preparedness for employees, families, and pets is provided on various local websites.

EMERGENCY CLOSING

While every effort will be made to maintain normal operations at all times, there may be instances when emergencies warrant closure of UHD. Emergency situations include, but are not limited to hurricanes, flooding, fire, tornadoes, ice storms, chemical releases, explosions, violence, and other situations that affect the overall operation of the University. In the event of an emergency situation that has the potential to subject all or part of the University community to danger, the primary concern will be the safety of all members of the University community.

Assessing the Emergency—When an emergency or a potential emergency affecting UHD develops, UHD will activate its Emergency Management Team.

The Emergency Management Team is composed of the following staff:

- President
- Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
- Vice President for Administration and Finance
- Vice President for Employment Services and Operations
- Vice President for Student Services and Enrollment Management
- Executive Director for Public Affairs
- Executive Director for University Advancement
- Executive Director for the President's Office
- Chief of Police
- Associate Vice President for Information Technology
- Assistant Vice President for Facilities Management

The President or designee shall have the sole authority to close the University or to order its evacuation. Decisions regarding the evacuation and/or closing of the University will be made by the President (or the President's authorized designee) in consultation with top executive staff.

In the event that an emergency requires campus closure, the Division of Public Affairs will notify the University community by way of:

- The University's Home Page—A message will be posted as soon as possible at www.uhd.edu.
- DT_ALL_USERS and Gator Mail—A broadcast e-mail message will be sent to Outlook accounts and Gator Mail explaining the nature of the emergency.
- Broadcast Phone Message—A phone message will be sent to all office extension numbers, which may be retrieved by dialing 713-221-8438.
- UHD's Main Switchboard—An outgoing message will be left on the University's main telephone line, 713-221-8000.
- Flash Message—An emergency message will be posted on internal television message screens on campus.
- External Media—Television stations, radio stations, and the Houston Chronicle online will be alerted.

Please check these sites for information:

- [KPRC NBC 2](#)
- [KHOU CBS 11](#)
- [KTRK ABC 13](#)
- [KRIV FOX 26](#)
- [KXLN Univision 45/Telefutura 67](#)
- [KTMD Telemundo 47](#)
- [KUHF 88.7 FM](#)
- [KTRH 740 AM](#)
- [KIKK CNN 650 AM](#)
- [Houston Chronicle](#)

If an emergency occurs after regular work hours but while classes are in session, the Division of Public Affairs will notify the UHD Police Department, which will notify all individuals still on campus of any decision regarding closure or evacuation.

During emergency situations, employees will be paid at their regular rate during the period of closure, and timesheets should reflect such time as emergency leave. Employees may, at their option, elect to leave their posts prior to the official closing and/or remain absent beyond the official reopening. Payment for such absences will be charged to vacation accrual. If there is no vacation balance, the absence will be considered leave without pay.

MySafeCampus

MySafeCampus is an anonymous reporting system that provides a way for students and employees to report anonymously and confidentially issues such as harassment, theft, hazing, rape, and substance abuse. Through a secure system, MySafeCampus transmits information to the appropriate campus personnel while protecting the identity of the person reporting the incident. For more information, visit the [MySafeCampus](#) website.

CRIME REPORTS

The personal safety and security of students, employees, and the campus community are of vital concern and importance to UHD.

In compliance with applicable federal laws, including the [Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act](#) (Clery Act), UHD collects and reports specific statistical information on crimes committed on campus or in areas immediately adjacent to campus which involve murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, and motor vehicle theft.

Timely reports will be made to the University community on crimes considered to be a threat to students and employees and reported to local police agencies.

This report includes statistics for the most recent three-year period concerning reported crimes that have occurred on campus, on certain off-campus property owned or controlled by UHD, and on public property within or immediately adjacent to and accessible from the campus. The report includes information regarding the law enforcement authority of the UHD police, policies concerning campus security, such as crime prevention, alcohol and drug use, sexual assault, and crimes reported on campus.

Employee Resources

POLICE DEPARTMENT

The mission of the [University Police Department](#) is to provide a safe environment for people and property on the campus. University police services are available 24 hours a day; services include escorting staff to their cars upon request, providing vehicle assistance services to the UH-Downtown community, and publishing a report of crimes committed on campus.

Police officers are available to conduct safety programs and seminars to inform members of the University community about safety and security practices and procedures.

Police call boxes are located in all elevators and near all entrances and exits to the One Main Building, the Academic Building, the Commerce Street Building, the Shea Street Building, and the Student Life Building. Call boxes are also located at the entrances to and exits of the parking garages and all student parking lots. By activating a call box, one may obtain immediate police assistance.

Employees and students should report suspicious persons, activities, and criminal offenses to the Police Department, by calling 713-221-8911 for emergency assistance or 713-221-8065 for non-emergency situations.

LOST AND FOUND

The Police Department Records Division, Suite 118-North, provides lost and found services for the University. All lost and found items received by the Records Division are stored for a period of 30 calendar days. After 30 days, unclaimed items are destroyed, auctioned, or donated to a charitable organization.

The W. I. Dykes Library, Academic Computing Lab, and some other departments operate separate lost and found services. At the end of the semester, these departments turn items over to the Police Department's lost and found. Since these items have been kept for an extended time period, they are immediately destroyed, auctioned or donated to a charitable organization.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Facilities Management services include work requests, issuance of keys and access codes, housekeeping, electrical and mechanical maintenance, building construction and renovations, and mail services. It is also responsible for the campus recycling program.

To initiate a [work request](#) or report issues requiring an immediate response, such as spills, broken glass, or power outages, call 713-221-8026 or visit the department in the One Main Building, Room S-101.

The [shipping/receiving mail services](#) unit is responsible for the distribution of packages, inter-office, express courier, and U.S. mail to all departmental offices. Mail services is open from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Call 713-221-8049 for rates and other information.

PARKING

UHD-designated [parking garages and lots](#) are accessible to University employees by purchasing a parking permit. Permits and information about parking on campus may be obtained from the Parking and Transportation Services Office, Room N-354, or by calling 713-221-8127.

All parking at the University of Houston-Downtown is by permit. Employees must present vehicle information (make, model, year, and license plate number), driver's license, and payment for the parking fee in order to obtain a permit.

Employee parking is available at the One Main Parking Garage, the Shea Street Building Parking Garage, and auxiliary lots at the Washington Street and Wood Street lots.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Information Technology (IT) department plays an integral role in identifying opportunities for the University to meet its goals through the strategic use of technology.

The Technology Partnership Initiatives facilitate sharing of technology on campus and across the System components.

The IT department provides the University with hardware/software support, user training, staff productivity administrative applications, and a centralized help desk for all technology support requests.

For additional information about the help desk, multimedia services, computer discounts available to staff, training/seminars, and other IT topics of interest, visit the [Information Technology](#) website.

STAFF COUNCIL

The Staff Council at the University of Houston-Downtown acts as an advisory body to the President of the University. The Staff Council's purpose is to promote a positive and meaningful exchange among staff, faculty, and students, and to formulate and recommend policies that affect staff.

The Staff Council coordinates the annual staff awards ceremony and sponsors the Edge award, a grant available to full-time staff members interested in attending seminars, training and other professional development courses. The Staff Council meets once a month and meetings are open to all staff. For more information, visit the [Staff Council](#) website.

HEALTH SERVICES

Student Health Services provides medical information and limited healthcare services at no or low cost to faculty and staff. Advanced practice nurse practitioners and registered nurses staff the health facility. For further information, call 713-221-8137, visit N-320, or visit the [Student Health Services](#) website for information on hours of operation and services provided.

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON OPTOMETRY CLINIC

The University of Houston Eye Institute provides a variety of optical services to employees of UHS and its component institutions, such as UHD, at reduced fees. Employees and their families can schedule complete vision exams, fill contact lens and eyeglass prescriptions, and seek medical and surgical help with eye disorders. The clinic accepts Medicare, Medicaid, major credit cards, and most insurance plans. To take advantage of this great opportunity, visit the [University of Houston Eye Institute](#).

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON SPEECH, LANGUAGE, AND HEARING CLINIC

The University of Houston Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic, offers services to infants, children, and adults with speech, language, and/or hearing impairments. These services include testing and treatment. The clinic also offers assistance with the fitting and sales of hearing aids.

This agency is partially funded by the United Way of Greater Houston and is staffed by professionals certified in the fields of audiology and speech-language pathology. Visit the [University of Houston Speech, Language, and Hearing Clinic](#) website or call 713-743-2898 for additional information or to schedule an appointment.

SPORTS AND FITNESS

The Jesse H. Jones Student Life Center is a three-level, 30,000- square-foot, fitness center that includes facilities for basketball, volleyball, badminton, aerobics, martial arts, and dance, as well as weight equipment and cardiovascular units. Personal trainers and a variety of fitness and sports programs are offered throughout the year. Lockers and showers are provided to employees and students. For more information visit the [Sports and Fitness](#) website.

Full-time, benefits-eligible staff are encouraged to take advantage of the Fitness Release Time provided through the Employee Wellness Program.

Employees can participate in an exercise program or fitness activity at the Student Life Center. See the **Fitness Release** section of this handbook for additional information.

FOOD SERVICES

The University Food Court provides students and employees with a wide selection of healthy food choices at reasonable rates.

The Food Court is located on the third floor of the Academic Building and features Starbucks, Salad Garden, Montague's Deli, and Taco Bell, among other vendors. The Shea Street Cafe Express is located in the Shea Street Building, Room 135. It offers gourmet coffees, grab and go items, quick meals and a variety of beverages, snacks, and ice cream. For more information on the complete dining experience, visit the [Dining Services](#) website.

CHECK-CASHING SERVICES

The Cashier's Office provides check-cashing services to benefits-eligible employees at no cost. Employees may cash personal checks up to \$50 per day at the check-cashing window located in the One Main Building, Room S-310. A valid driver's license and UHD identification card are required at the time of service. For more information, contact the Cashier's Office at 713-221-8196.

CONTINUING EDUCATION

Continuing Education provides employees with professional and personal development opportunities through the [English Language Institute](#) (ELI) and the Applied Business and Technology Center.

The English Language Institute is designed to support staff members working on writing and/or grammar improvement, reading and vocabulary building, and/or an overall understanding of the English language. The institute offers special one-on-one classes for business employees and managers who need to improve their English language skills for their professions.

The [Applied Business and Technology Center](#) is a self-sustaining, non-credit granting center of the University of Houston-Downtown. The center offers courses at various levels, from entry to advanced. Courses include Computer Aided Design, Microsoft Desktop Applications, and Project Management, just to name a few. For those seeking a more self-directed, flexible schedule, eLearning classes are also provided; however, in addition to eLearning, many courses are available in the traditional classroom setting.

UHD BOOKSTORE

The [University of Houston-Downtown Bookstore](#), located in the One Main Building, Room N-351, is home to exclusive UHD clothing, new/used textbooks, school supplies, graduation regalia, magazines, snacks, and souvenirs. UHD employees receive discounts on some purchases made at the bookstore upon presentation of a valid UHD identification card.

O'KANE GALLERY

The O'Kane Gallery is the University's conduit for the visual arts and contemporary culture. The gallery's innovative, challenging exhibitions, programs, and publications bring artists, the University community, and the people of Houston into closer engagement with each other and with the important cultural issues of our time. Exhibits and hours of operation may be found on the [O'Kane Gallery](#) website.

O'KANE THEATRE

The O'Kane Theatre is part of the Department of Arts and Humanities and has been part of the University for over thirty years. The theatre is located in the One Main Building and provides its patrons with an intimate environment suitable for an involving theatre experience. For information on performances and times, visit the [O'Kane Theatre](#) website or call 713-221-8118.

AUTOMATIC TELLER MACHINES

There are four Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) on campus for student and staff use. The ATM machines are conveniently located in the One Stop Student Service Center (near the Cashier's Office), one in the dining area of the Food Court, one in the Shea Street Building, and one in the Commerce Building.

W.I. DYKES LIBRARY

The W.I. Dykes Library is located on the fourth and fifth floors of the One Main Building. The library offers access to more than 240,000 books, CDs, videos, and special collections such as leisure reading, juvenile literature and a K-12 textbook collection. The staff ID is used as a library card to check out materials, and may be used at other UH System libraries at UH-Main and UH-Clear Lake. While on campus, staff may access databases with a wide variety of contents, as well as electronic books and online reference sources. Interlibrary Loan services are available to provide access to materials from outside the W.I. Dykes Library's collection. For more information, please visit the W.I. Dykes Library website (<http://www.uhd.edu/library>) or contact a librarian (<http://www.uhd.edu/library/ask.html>).

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