



## **2023-2024 Employee Handbook**

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## About the College

- COM graduates with technical degrees earn the highest starting salaries of any new university or college graduate in the state - \$73,509 - according to a study by higher education research group College Measures.
- COM is an [Achieving the Dream Leader College](#). [Achieving the Dream](#) is a national initiative to help more community college students succeed, particularly low-income students and students of color.
- COM was ranked [number five](#) in the nation in the number of degrees awarded in 2016 in the science technologies/technicians category by a Community College Week study.
- The Fire Science Technology Program was ranked number 34 in the nation for [return on investment](#) by Fire Science Online.
- COM's chapter of the [international community college honor society](#) is ranked a Five Star Chapter, and [one of the top in the world](#).

## Contact

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## College Information

### Description of the College

*Policies AA, AB, AC series*

### Purpose, Role, Mission Statement, Goals, and Objectives

*Policy AD*

### Board of Trustees

*Policies BA series and BB series*

Consistent with Texas law and Southern Association of Colleges and School Commission on College standards, the board of trustees has the power to govern and oversee the management of the college. The board is the policy-making body for the college and has overall responsibility for the curriculum, taxes, annual budget, facilities, and appointment of the president or other chief executive, dean, faculty, and other employees. The board has complete and final control over college matters within limits established by state and federal laws and regulations.

The board of trustees is elected by the citizens of the college to represent the community's commitment to a strong educational program for students. Board members are elected, serve without compensation, must be qualified voters, and must reside in the college district.

Current board members include:

- Don Gartman, Board Chair
- Dawn King, Vice-Chair
- Melissa Skipworth, Secretary
- Dr. Verna Henson
- Kyle Dickson
- Alan Waters
- Dr. William (Bill) McGarvey

## **Board Meetings**

### *Policies BD series*

The board usually meets the fourth Monday of each month at 12:30 p.m. at the College of the Mainland Conference Center, unless otherwise provided by the Board. Special and emergency meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted on the college website at least 72 hours before the scheduled meeting time. The written notice will show the date, time, place, and subjects of each meeting. In emergencies, a meeting may be held or addition to the board agenda made with a one-hour notice.

The board meeting schedule, agendas, notices, and minutes are posted on the college website <https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicHome.aspx?ak=84503>.

All meetings are open to the public. In certain circumstances, Texas law permits the board to go into a closed session from which the public and others are excluded. Closed session may occur for such things as discussing prospective gifts or donations, real-property acquisition, certain personnel matters including employee complaints, security matters, student discipline, or consulting with attorneys regarding pending litigation.

## **Administration**

### *Policies BF series and BG series*

<https://www.com.edu/faculty-staff/organizational-charts.html>

## **College Calendar**

<https://www.com.edu/admissions/academic-calendar>

## **Helpful Contacts**

From time to time, employees have questions or concerns. If those questions or concerns cannot be answered by supervisors or at the campus or department level, the employee is encouraged to contact the appropriate department as listed in the college directory.

<https://www.com.edu/directory>



# Employment

## Equal Employment Opportunity

*Policies DAA series, DIAA, DIAB*

College of the Mainland does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), gender, national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, or on any other basis prohibited by law. Additionally, the college does not discriminate against an employee or applicant who acts to oppose such discrimination or participates in the investigation of a complaint related to a discriminatory employment practice. Employment decisions will be made on the basis of each applicant's job qualifications, experience, and abilities.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to discrimination for any of the reasons listed above should contact Human Resources.

## Job Vacancy Announcements

*Policy DC*

Announcements of job vacancies by position and location are posted on a regular basis to the college website, <https://jobs.com.edu/>. Current employees may apply for vacancies for which they have appropriate qualifications.

## Employment after Retirement

*Policy DC*

An individual receiving retirement benefits from the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) may be employed by the college if the board determines that the employment is in the best interests of the college and the person has been retired for at least one full calendar month before the effective date of employment. An individual who retired under the Texas Optional Retirement Program also may be rehired and is not subject to a waiting period. Failure to follow TRS rules may result in a reduction or loss of annuity.

## Contract and Noncontract Employment

*Policy DCA, DCB, DCC*

College employees are either issued a contract, receive tenure, or are considered employed at will.

**Term Contracts.** Select employees, including faculty and administrators, will be employed by contract for a term of up to two years. The terms and conditions of employment are detailed in the contract and employment policies. All contract employees will receive a copy of their contract. Employment policies can be accessed online, or copies will be provided upon request.

**At-Will Employment.** Employees not issued a contract are considered to be employed at will. Employment is not for any specified term and may be terminated at any time by the employee or the college.

## **Searches and Alcohol and Drug Testing**

### *Policy DHA*

Non-investigatory searches in the workplace including accessing an employee's desk, file cabinets, work area, or college-owned technology to obtain information needed for usual business purposes may occur when an employee is unavailable. Therefore, employees are hereby notified that they have no legitimate expectation of privacy in those places. In addition, the college reserves the right to conduct searches when there is reasonable cause to believe a search will uncover evidence of work-related misconduct. Such an investigatory search may include drug and alcohol testing if there is reasonable suspicion that an employee is under the influence of alcohol or drugs in violation of college district policy. The college may search the employee, the employee's personal items, and work areas including college-owned technology resources, lockers, and private vehicles parked on college premises or work sites or used in college business. Disciplinary action may result if an employee refuses to submit to testing or is found in violation of college district policy.

**Employees Required to Have a Commercial Driver's License.** Any employee whose duties require a commercial driver's license (CDL) is subject to drug and alcohol testing. This includes all drivers who operate a motor vehicle designed to transport 16 or more people counting the driver, drivers of large vehicles, or drivers of vehicles used in the transportation of hazardous materials. Faculty, coaches, or other employees who primarily perform duties other than driving are subject to testing requirements if their duties include driving a commercial motor vehicle.

Drug testing will be conducted before an individual assumes driving responsibilities. Alcohol and drug tests will be conducted when reasonable suspicion exists and at random. Return-to-duty and follow-up testing will be conducted if an employee who has violated the prohibited alcohol conduct standards or tested positive for alcohol or drugs is allowed to return to duty. Testing may be conducted following accidents.

All employees required to have a CDL or who otherwise are subject to alcohol and drug testing will receive a copy of the relevant policy, the testing requirements, and detailed information on alcohol and drug abuse and the availability of assistance programs.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to alcohol and drug policies and related educational material should contact Human Resources.

## **Workload and Work Schedules**

### *Policies DEA, DJ*

**Professional Employees.** Faculty, administrators, and other professionals are exempt from overtime pay and are employed according to the work schedules set by the college. Notice of work schedules including start and end dates and scheduled holidays will be distributed each academic year.

**Support and Auxiliary Employees.** Support employees and some part-time professionals are considered nonexempt workers and receive notification of the required work schedule, hours of work, and holidays for their position on an annual basis. Nonexempt employees must be compensated for overtime and are not authorized to work in excess of their assigned schedule without prior approval from their supervisor.

**Required attendance at graduation and convocation.** All full-time faculty and professional employees shall be required to participate in the annual graduation ceremony, in addition to their regular scheduled workday. Also, all full-time faculty, professional and classified employees shall be required to attend convocation. A full-time faculty, professional, or classified employee who does not attend either of these events may be subject to disciplinary action.

**Exception.** An employee may be excused from graduation or convocation with prior approval from the College President or designee. An employee who is granted an exception to the attendance requirement shall use the appropriate leave.

## **Breaks for Expression of Breast Milk**

### *Policy DG*

The college supports the practice of expressing breast milk and makes reasonable accommodations for the needs of employees who express breast milk. A place, other than a multiple user bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from other employees and the public where the employee can express breast milk will be provided.

A reasonable amount of break time will be provided when the employee has a need to express milk. For nonexempt employees, these breaks are unpaid and are not counted as hours worked. Employees should meet with their supervisor to discuss their needs and arrange break times.

## **Outside Employment**

### *Policy DB*

Full-time employees shall be prohibited from having another full-time or part-time compensated job if that additional employment interferes with the execution of duties and responsibilities for the College District or when prohibited by law.

If the outside employment creates in any way a potential conflict of interest with the proper discharge of assigned duties and responsibilities, an employee shall disclose in writing to his or her immediate supervisor the outside employment. Each supervisor shall be responsible for monitoring employee compliance with the above-referenced criteria through the performance evaluation process.

## **Performance Evaluation**

### *Policy DLA*

Evaluation of an employee's job performance is a continuous process that focuses on improvement. Performance evaluation is based on an employee's assigned job duties and other job-related criteria including end-of-course evaluation of faculty. All employees will participate in the evaluation process with their assigned supervisor at least annually. Written evaluations will be completed on forms approved by the college. Reports, correspondence, and memoranda also can be used to document performance information. All employees will receive a copy of their written evaluation, participate in a performance conference with their supervisor, and have the opportunity to respond to the evaluation.

# Compensation and Benefits

## Salaries, Wages, and Stipends

*Policies DE, DEA*

Employees are paid in accordance with administrative guidelines and an established pay structure. The college's pay plans are reviewed by the administration each year and adjusted as needed. All college positions are classified as exempt or non-exempt according to federal law. Professional employees and academic administrators are generally classified as exempt and are paid monthly salaries. They are not entitled to overtime compensation. Other employees are generally classified as non-exempt and are paid an hourly wage or salary and receive compensatory time or overtime pay for each hour worked beyond 40 in a workweek.

Faculty who teach courses in addition to a regular course load and exempt employees who perform supplemental duties may be paid a stipend in addition to their salary according to the college's stipend schedule. Employees should contact Human Resources for more information about the college's pay schedules or their own pay.

## Paychecks

All employees are paid on a monthly basis. Manual paychecks, if required, will not be released to any person other than the college employee named on the check without the employee's written authorization.

An employee's payroll statement contains detailed information including deductions, withholding information, and the amount of leave accumulated. The schedule of pay dates are available on COMs weekly newsletter.

## Automatic Payroll Deposit

Employees can have their paychecks electronically deposited into a designated account. Contact Human Resources for more information about the automatic payroll deposit service.

## **Payroll Deductions**

### *Policy CDDA*

The college is required to make the following automatic payroll deductions:

- Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS)
- Federal income tax required for all full-time employees
- Medicare tax (applicable only to employees hired after March 31, 1986)
- Child support and spousal maintenance, if applicable
- Delinquent federal education loan payments, if applicable
- English proficiency course costs, if applicable

Other payroll deductions employees may elect include employee's share of premiums for health, dental, life, and vision insurance; annuities; higher education savings plans or prepaid tuition programs; and parking fees and permits. Employees also may request payroll deduction for payment of club or recreational fees and certain charitable contributions approved by the board. Salary deductions are automatically made for unauthorized or unpaid leave.

## **Overtime Compensation**

### *Policies DEA, DEC*

The college compensates overtime for nonexempt employees in accordance with federal wage and hour laws. Only nonexempt employees or hourly employees are entitled to overtime compensation. Nonexempt employees are not authorized to work beyond their normal work schedule without advance approval from their supervisor. A nonexempt employee who works overtime without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action

Overtime is legally defined as all hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek and is not measured by the day or by the employee's regular work schedule. Nonexempt employees that are paid on a salary basis are paid for a 40-hour workweek and do not earn additional pay unless they work more than 40 hours. For the purpose of calculating overtime, a workweek begins at 12:00 a.m. Monday and ends at 11:59 p.m. Sunday.

Employees may be compensated for overtime (i.e., hours beyond 40 in a workweek) at time-and-a-half rate with compensatory time off (comp time) or direct pay. The following applies to all nonexempt employees:

- Employees can accumulate up to 60 hours of comp time. Once the limit has been reached, the employee may be required to use the comp time or may receive overtime pay for additional hours.
- Comp time must be used in the duty year that it is earned.
- Use of comp time may be at the employee's request with supervisor approval, as workload permits, or at the supervisor's direction.
- An employee may be required to use comp time before using available paid leave (e.g., sick, personal, vacation).

## **Travel Expense Reimbursement**

### *Policy DEE*

Before any travel expenses are incurred by an employee, the employee's supervisor and Business Office must give approval. For approved travel, employees will be reimbursed for mileage and other travel expenditures according to the current rate schedule established by the college. Employees must submit receipts, to the extent possible, to be reimbursed for allowable expenses other than mileage. Expenses for meals associated with authorized travel not related to a state or federal grant will be paid on a per diem basis. No receipts are required for expenses paid on a per diem basis.

## **Health, Dental, and Life Insurance**

### *Policy CKD*

Group health insurance coverage is provided to eligible full-time and part-time employees through the Employee Retirement System (ERS) Texas Employee Group Benefits Program (GBP). Full- and part-time employees are defined according to ERS rules. Employees should contact Human Resources for more information.

## **Supplemental Insurance Benefits**

At their own expense, employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs. Premiums for these programs can be paid by payroll deduction. Employees should contact Human Resources for more information.

## **Workers' Compensation Insurance**

### *Policy CKE*

The college, in accordance with state law, provides workers' compensation benefits to employees who suffer a work-related illness or are injured on the job. The college has workers' compensation coverage from Texas Association for School Boards (TASB).

Benefits help pay for medical treatment and make up for part of the income lost while recovering. Specific benefits are prescribed by law depending on the circumstances of each case.

All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to College of the Mainland Police Department and Human Resources. Employees who are unable to work because of a work-related injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under the Texas Labor Code.

## **Unemployment Compensation Insurance**

### *Policy CKF*

Employees who have been laid off or terminated through no fault of their own may be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits. Employees are not eligible to collect unemployment benefits during regularly scheduled breaks in the school year, including the summer break, if they have employment contracts or reasonable assurance of returning to service. Employees with questions about unemployment benefits should contact Human Resources.

## **Retirement**

### *Policy DF*

All personnel employed on a regular basis for at least four and one-half months are members of the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS). Employees enrolled as students are not eligible for membership based on their student employment.

Full-time faculty may choose to opt out of TRS and enroll in an optional retirement program (ORP). The option to enroll in the ORP must be made no later than the 90th calendar day after the first day of employment. Failure to elect the ORP during the 90-day election period shall be a default election into TRS.

An employee who is eligible to elect the ORP shall only have one opportunity during his or her lifetime, including any future periods of employment in Texas public higher education, to elect the ORP in lieu of TRS. The election may never be revoked. Therefore, new employees are urged to make this decision carefully.

Employees who plan to retire should notify Human Resources as soon as possible. Information on the application procedures for TRS benefits is available from TRS at Teacher Retirement System of Texas, 1000 Red River Street, Austin, TX 78701-2698, or call 800-223-8778 or 512-542-6400. TRS information is also available on the web ([www.trs.texas.gov](http://www.trs.texas.gov)).

## **Other Benefit Programs**

### *Policy DEB*

**Free college course enrollment.** The College District shall allow each full-time benefits-eligible employee, or the employee's dependent as defined by IRS regulations, to enroll in one credit or noncredit course per semester at the College District, for a total of three courses per year, provided the course has sufficient enrollment of tuition-paying students and space is available on the last day of registration. Courses shall not be created only for the enrollment of employees or the employees' dependents.

**Academic regalia.** The College District shall help defray the cost of either the purchase or rental of academic regalia of up to \$75 per individual. Arrangements shall be made through the College District bookstore.



**Wellness activity scheduling.** Wellness activities should be scheduled in such a way that the time is split between the employee and employer in accordance with the following:

- Time off for participation in wellness activities shall be limited to one and one-half hours per week.
- Supervisors are responsible for approving time off to participate in wellness activities and for ensuring that the number of participants for a single work area at any given time will not limit workflow.
- Employees may participate in only one scheduled activity per day.
- Any activity sessions that cannot be scheduled to equally divide the time shall be submitted to the College President for approval.

**Employee Assistance Program.** *UTEAP provides an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for all full-time COM employees and their dependents. Through the EAP, you can access free, convenient, and confidential services. The services include short-term counseling, crisis management, legal and financial advice, identify theft services and assistance with work/life matters. You can contact UTEAP at (800) 346-3549 or [www.mylifevalues.com](http://www.mylifevalues.com).*

# Leaves and Absences

## *Policies DEC, DED*

The college offers employees paid and unpaid leaves of absence in times of personal need. This handbook describes the basic types of leave available and restrictions on leaves of absence. Employees who expect to be absent for an extended period of time should call Human Resources for information about applicable leave benefits, payment of insurance premiums, and requirements for communicating with the college.

Employees must follow college and department procedures to report or request any leave of absence and complete the appropriate form or certification.

**Medical Certification.** Any employee, who is absent more than three consecutive days because of a personal or family illness, must submit a medical certification from a qualified health care provider confirming the specific dates of the illness, appropriate medical facts about the illness, and—in the case of personal illness—the employee’s fitness to return to work.

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits covered employers from requesting or requiring genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically allowed by this law. To comply with this law, we ask that employees and health care providers do not provide any genetic information in any medical certification. *Genetic information*, as defined by GINA, includes an individual’s family medical history, the results of an individual’s or family member’s genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual’s family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual’s family member, or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

**Continuation of Health Insurance.** Health insurance benefits for employees on paid leave and leave designated under the Family and Medical Leave Act will be paid or supplemented by the college as they were prior to the leave.

Employees on an approved unpaid leave of absence, other than family and medical leave, may continue their insurance benefits at their own expense. Otherwise, the college does not pay any portion of insurance premiums for employees who are on unpaid leave. This includes absences due to a work-related injury or illness.

## **Vacation**

### *Policy DEC*

Full-time employees in positions normally requiring 12 months of service and employed after June 30, 2012, shall earn vacation leave at the rate of eight hours per calendar month. After completing seven years of continuous service with the College District, eligible employees shall earn vacation leave at the rate of ten hours per calendar month. Employees hired on or before June 30, 2012, shall continue to earn vacation leave in accordance with the following:

- Full-time employees in positions normally requiring 12 months of service shall accumulate vacation leave at the rate of one and two-thirds day (13.3 hours) per calendar month of service, which shall equal 20 working days of vacation leave per year.
- Other benefits-eligible employees who are not employed on a full-time basis shall earn vacation leave on a prorated basis.

All accrued vacation leave over 240 hours shall be forfeited if not used by the end of the fiscal year unless an employee is prevented from taking vacation leave for the convenience of the College District. Exceptions to the forfeiture of vacation leave shall only be granted by the College President upon recommendation by the appropriate vice president. The maximum payout for accrued vacation leave shall be limited to 240 hours. An employee terminated for cause shall not be eligible to receive a payout for accrued vacation leave.

## **Holidays**

### *Policy DED*

Official holidays of the College District are as follows:

- January 1 (one day);
- Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday (one day);
- Spring Holiday (one week);
- Memorial Day (one day);
- Juneteenth (one day);
- July 4 (one day);
- Labor Day (one day);
- Thanksgiving (two days); and
- Winter holidays (as determined by the administration).

Specific dates of holidays shall be detailed in the College District's calendar and shall be approved by the Board.

A full-time employee (FTE) who is unable to benefit from a College District holiday because his or her regular work schedule falls outside of a College District holiday shall be eligible to take another day off in lieu of the missed holiday. The employee shall seek prior approval from his or her supervisor regarding arrangements for the alternate day off.

## **Sick Leave**

Full-time employees shall earn paid sick leave in accordance with administrative regulations and based on the date of hire. In general, the following shall apply:

- Employees in positions normally requiring nine months of service shall earn 72 hours per academic year.
- Employees in positions normally requiring ten and one-half months of service shall earn 84 hours per academic year.
- Employees in positions normally requiring 12 months of service shall earn 96 hours per academic year.

Sick leave shall accumulate to a maximum of 960 hours. Sick leave shall only be used for the following:

- Illness of the employee.
- Illness of a member of the employee's immediate family.
- Family emergency.
- Birth or placement of a child when taken within the first year after the child's birth, adoption, or foster placement.
- Contribution to the sick leave bank.

## **Personal Leave**

Full-time employees shall earn 24 hours of paid leave per academic year to conduct personal business in accordance with administrative regulations. Personal leave shall be noncumulative.

## **Bereavement Leave**

An employee shall be granted up to 24 hours of paid bereavement leave upon the death of a member of the employee's immediate family in accordance with administrative regulations. The employee shall provide appropriate documentation in accordance with administrative regulations. Bereavement leave shall be noncumulative.

## **Emergency Leave**

An employee shall be granted up to five days of paid emergency leave upon the occurrence of a disaster; as declared by a federal, state, or College President as authorized by the Board; on the employee's primary residence in accordance with administrative regulations. Emergency leave shall be noncumulative.

The employee shall submit a written request for use of emergency leave to the immediate supervisor or designee in accordance with administrative regulations.

## **Sick Leave Bank (SLB)**

The Sick Leave Bank is intended to help an employee who is suffering from a catastrophic illness or injury or who must be absent because an immediate family member is suffering from a catastrophic illness or injury. Leave contributed to the bank shall be solely for the use of participating employees.

In order to be eligible to participate in the College District's SLB, an employee must be employed in a benefit-eligible position and must contribute one day or eight hours of sick leave from his or her own available sick leave. The contribution will be prorated for an eligible employee who is not considered a 100 percent full-time employee (FTE).

New employees must enroll within the first 30 days of employment. If a new employee does not elect to enroll in the SLB program within this period, he or she must wait until the next open enrollment period, September 1 through September 30, in order to participate.

New enrollees must satisfy a 90-day waiting period prior to being eligible to withdraw leave from the SLB. Existing employees not currently participating in the SLB may enroll only during the open enrollment period

The SLB will consist of hours voluntarily contributed to the pool by College District employees each fiscal year. The SLB Voluntary Contribution Form is available from the Human Resources Department.

An eligible employee:

- May not withdraw time from the SLB except in the case of catastrophic illness or injury of the employee or the employee's immediate family;
- May request and be granted at least five days, up to a maximum of 20 days, equal to that of his or her employment status per fiscal year;
- Will be given a maximum number of five days equal to that of his or her employee status in order to attend to the affairs of a deceased member of his or her immediate family; and
- May receive no more than the lesser of a lifetime total maximum of 90 working days or one-third of the total time in the pool.

During the fiscal year, in the event eligible requests exceed the number of days in the pool, the SLB members may be requested to voluntarily contribute additional days. The SLB administrator will determine the amount of time that an employee may withdraw from the bank. Sick leave contributions to the SLB may not be designated for the use of a particular person.

If the employee is unable to request leave from the sick leave bank, a member of the employee's family or the employee's supervisor may submit the request.

SLB members may withdraw their SLB membership at any time. However, sick leave hours that were contributed to the pool will not be returned to an employee under any circumstances.

# **Family and Medical Leave (FML)—General Provisions**

## **Leave Entitlements**

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for the following reasons:

- The birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care;
- To bond with a child (leave must be taken within 1 year of the child’s birth or placement);
- To care for the employee’s spouse, child, or parent who has a qualifying serious health condition;
- For the employee’s own qualifying serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee’s job;
- For qualifying exigencies related to the foreign deployment of a military member who is the employee’s spouse, child, or parent.

An eligible employee who is a covered servicemember’s spouse, child, parent, or next of kin may also take up to 26 weeks of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for the servicemember with a serious injury or illness.

An employee does not need to use leave in one block. When it is medically necessary or otherwise permitted, employees may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule.

## **Eligibility Requirements**

In order to be eligible for FMLA leave, the employee must:

- Have worked for the employer for at least 12 months;
- Have at least 1,250 hours of service in the 12 months before taking leave; and
- Work at a location where the employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of the employee’s worksite.

## **Requesting Leave**

Generally, employees must give 30-days’ advance notice of the need for FMLA leave. If it is not possible to give 30-days’ notice, an employee must notify the employer as soon as possible and, generally, follow the employer’s usual procedures.

Employees do not have to share a medical diagnosis, but must provide enough information to the college so it can determine if the leave qualifies for FMLA protection.

Sufficient information could include informing the college that the employee is or will be unable to perform his or her job functions, that a family member cannot perform daily activities, or that hospitalization or continuing medical treatment is necessary. Employees must inform the college if the need for leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified.

The college can require a certification or periodic recertification supporting the need for leave. If the college determines that the certification is incomplete, it must provide a written notice indicating what additional information is required.

### **Employer Responsibilities**

Once the college becomes aware that an employee's need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, the college must notify the employee if he or she is eligible for FMLA leave and, if eligible, must also provide a notice of rights and responsibilities under the FMLA. If the employee is not eligible, the College must provide a reason for ineligibility.

The college must notify its employees if leave will be designated as FMLA leave, and if so, how much leave will be designated as FMLA leave.

## **Local Family and Medical Leave Provisions**

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in the 12-month period measured forward from the date an individual employee's first FML begins

**Combined Leave for Spouses.** Spouses who are employed by the college are limited to a combined total of 12 weeks of FML to care for a parent with a serious health condition; or for the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child. Military caregiver leave for spouses is limited to a combined total of 26 weeks.

**Intermittent Leave.** When medically necessary or in the case of a qualifying exigency, an employee may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule. The college does not permit the use of intermittent or reduced-schedule leave for the care of a newborn child or for adoption or placement of a child with the employee.

**Fitness for Duty.** If an employee takes FMLA leave due to the employee's own serious health condition, the employee shall provide, before resuming work, a fitness-for-duty certification. If the College District will require certification of the employee's ability to perform essential job functions, the College District shall provide a list of essential job functions to the employee with the FMLA designation notice.

**Reinstatement.** On return from FMLA leave, an employee is entitled to be returned to the same position the employee held when leave began, or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment. An employee is entitled to reinstatement even if the employee has been replaced or his or her position has been restructured to accommodate the employee's absence. However, an employee has no greater right to reinstatement or to other benefits and conditions of employment than if the employee had been continuously employed during the FMLA leave period.

**Failure to Return.** If, at the expiration of FMLA leave, the employee is able to return to work but chooses not to do so, the college may require reimbursement of premiums paid by the college during the leave. [See DECA(LEGAL), Recovery of Benefit Cost]

**College Contact.** Employees that require FML or have questions should contact Human Resources for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

## **Workers' Compensation Benefits**

An employee, absent from duty because of a job-related illness or injury, may be eligible for workers' compensation weekly income benefits, if the absence exceeds seven calendar days.

An employee eligible for workers' compensation income benefits may elect in writing to use available partial-day increments of paid leave to make up the difference between the employee's income benefits and the pre-injury wage. The employee may choose to discontinue use of the available paid leave in partial-day increments at any time. [See CKE]

## **Court Appearances**

Absences due to compliance with a valid subpoena or for jury duty shall be fully compensated by the College District and shall not be deducted from the employee's pay or leave balance.

## **Religious Observance**

An employee may request to be absent for a religious holiday or observance. Accommodations such as changes to work schedules or approving a day of absence will be made unless they pose an undue hardship to the college. Employees who have exhausted applicable paid leave may be granted an unpaid day of absence.

**Faculty Members.** Faculty members are required to provide written notice of a list of religious holy days to be observed during the semester to the chairperson of the department. The notice may be delivered personally or by certified mail return receipt requested. Faculty are also required to provide advance notice to all students whose class would be canceled.



## Development Leaves of Absence

A faculty member [see definition at DEC(Local) Development Leaves of Absence] may be granted faculty development leave for study, research, writing, field observations, or other suitable purpose. The leave shall be for one academic year at one-half of the faculty member's regular salary or for one-half academic year at full regular salary, unless the faculty member has held an administrative position at the College District for more than four years. In that case, the Board may grant development leave at the faculty member's full, regular salary for one year.

To qualify for development leave, a faculty member must serve at least three consecutive academic years performing full-time academic duty as an instructor or as an assistant, associate, or full professor, or an equivalent rank. The work need not include teaching. The applicant must also agree to return to the College District following the conclusion of the development leave to serve for a period of time equal to the amount of time the faculty member received for development leave and if not, to repay the College District for any benefits paid to or on behalf of the faculty member during the leave period.

## Military Leave

### *Policy DECB*

**Paid Leave for Military Service.** Any employee who is a member of the Texas National Guard, Texas State Guard, reserve component of the United States Armed Forces, or a member of a state or federally authorized Urban Search and Rescue Team is entitled to paid leave when engaged in authorized training or duty orders by proper authority. Paid military leave is limited to 15 days each fiscal year.

**Reemployment after Military Leave.** Employees who leave the college to enter into the United States uniformed services or who are ordered to active duty as a member of the military force of any state (e.g., National or State Guard) may return to employment if they are honorably discharged. Employees who wish to return to the college will be reemployed provided they can be qualified to perform the required duties. Employees returning to work following military leave should contact Human Resources within the period of time specified by law. In most cases, the length of federal military service cannot exceed five years.

**Continuation of Health Insurance.** Employees who perform service in the uniformed services may elect to continue their health plan coverage at their own cost for a period not to exceed 24 months. Employees should contact Human Resources for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

# **Employee Relations and Communications**

## **Employee Recognition and Appreciation**

Continuous efforts are made throughout the year to recognize employees who make an extra effort to contribute to the success of the college. Employees are recognized at board meetings, in the college newsletter, and through special events and activities. Recognition and appreciation activities also include Employee of the Month and Employee of the Year.

## **College Communications**

Throughout the academic year, the Marketing Department publishes newsletters, brochures, fliers, calendars, news releases, and other communication materials. These publications offer employees and the community information pertaining to school activities and achievements.

# Complaints and Grievances

## *Policy DGBA*

In an effort to hear and resolve employee concerns or complaints in a timely manner and at the lowest administrative level possible, the board has adopted an orderly grievance process. Employees are encouraged to discuss their concerns or complaints with their supervisors or an appropriate administrator at any time.

The formal process provides all employees with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of management if they are dissatisfied with an administrative response. Once all administrative procedures are exhausted, employees can bring concerns or complaints to the board of trustees.

# Employee Conduct and Welfare

## Standards of Conduct

### *Policy DH*

College District employees shall affirm the inherent worth and dignity of all persons and the right of all persons to learn. Learning best occurs in an environment devoted to the pursuit of truth, excellence, and liberty, which flourish where both freedom and responsibility are esteemed. In order to more adequately express the affirmation of personal professional responsibilities, College District employees shall hold themselves and each other accountable to the following Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics:

- We shall treat all persons with respect, dignity, and justice, discriminating against no one on any arbitrary basis such as ethnicity, creed, gender, disability, social station, or age.
- We shall strive to help each student realize his or her full potential as a learner, scholar, and human being.
- We shall, by example and action, encourage and defend the unfettered pursuit of truth by both colleagues and the students supporting the free exchange of ideas, observing the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity, and seeking always an attitude of scholarly objectivity and tolerance of other viewpoints.
- We, recognizing the necessity of many roles in the educational enterprise, shall work in such a manner so as to enhance cooperation and collegiality among students, faculty, administrators, and nonacademic personnel.
- We shall recognize and preserve the confidential nature of professional relationships, neither disclosing nor encouraging the disclosure of information or rumor that might damage, embarrass, or violate the privacy of any other person.
- We shall maintain competence through continued professional development, demonstrate that competence through consistently adequate preparation and performance, and seek to enhance that competence by accepting and appropriating constructive criticism and evaluation.
- We shall exercise the highest professional standards and make the most judicious and effective use of the College District's time and resources.
- We, recognizing the needs and rights of others as embodied in the institution, shall fulfill the employment agreement both in spirit and in fact, give reasonable notice upon resignation, and neither accept tasks for which we are not qualified nor assign tasks to unqualified persons.
- We shall support the goals and ideals of the institution and act in public and private affairs in such a manner as to bring credit to the institution.
- We shall not engage in sexual harassment of students or colleagues and shall adhere to the College District's policies that prohibit sexual misconduct.

- We shall observe the stated policies and procedures of the College District, reserving the right to seek revision in a judicious and appropriate manner.
- We shall participate in the governance of the College District by accepting a fair share of committee and institutional responsibilities.
- We shall support the right of all to academic freedom and due process and shall defend and assist any individual accused of wrongdoing, incompetence, or other serious offense so long as the individual's innocence may be reasonably maintained.
- We shall not support a colleague or an individual who is known to be persistently unethical or professionally incompetent.
- We shall accept all the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, including participation in the formulation of public policy, always avoiding use of the privileges of one's public position for private or partisan advantage.

All employees should perform their duties in accordance with state and federal law, college policies and procedures, and ethical standards. Violation of policies, regulations, or guidelines including intentionally making a false claim, offering false statements, or refusing to cooperate with a college investigation may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment.

## **Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation including Sexual Harassment and Assault, Dating Violence, and Stalking**

*Policies DAA, DAAA, DH, DHC, DIAA, DIAB, FA, FFDA, FFDB*

Employees shall not engage in prohibited discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking against other employees, prospective employees, former employees, unpaid interns, or students. Employees may not engage in prohibited discrimination, harassment, or retaliation against other persons including board members, vendors, contractors, volunteers, or parents. A substantiated charge of harassment will result in disciplinary action. Processes for reporting prohibited conduct are described below:

**Employees Who Witness Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Dating Violence, or Stalking.** All employees, excluding designated confidential employees, who witness or receive information reasonably believed to constitute prohibited sexual harassment or assault, dating violence, or stalking against or by another employee or student must promptly report such incidents to the college's Title IX coordinator or deputy coordinator. An employee may report such incidents electronically through the college district's website at <https://www.com.edu/titleix/incident-report.html>. An employee is not required to report information they received as a result of a disclosure made at a college sponsored public awareness event. An employee commits an offense if he or she makes a false report or knowingly fails to report such incidents with the intent to harm, deceive, or conceal the incidents. An employee found by the college to have committed one of these offenses will be terminated.

**Victims of Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Dating Violence, or Stalking.** An employee is not required to report incidents in which they are a victim. An employee is also not required to report the conduct to the person alleged to have committed it. Allegations of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking may be reported electronically through the college district’s website at <https://www.com.edu/titleix/incident-report.html>. An electronic report may be submitted anonymously.

The college’s policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating discrimination, harassment, and retaliation is reprinted below:

[https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/497?filename=DIAA\(LOCAL\).pdf](https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/497?filename=DIAA(LOCAL).pdf)  
[https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/497?filename=DIAB\(LOCAL\).pdf](https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/497?filename=DIAB(LOCAL).pdf)

The college’s policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating harassment of students is reprinted below:

[https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/497?filename=FFDA\(LOCAL\).pdf](https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/497?filename=FFDA(LOCAL).pdf)  
<https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Code/497?filter=FFDB>

## **Reporting Suspected Child Abuse**

*Policies DH, DHB*

All employees are required by state law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect, as defined by Texas Family Code §26.001, to a local or state law enforcement agency, Department of Family and Protective Services, or appropriate state agency (e.g., state agency operating, licensing, certifying, or registering a facility in which the abuse occurred) within 48 hours of the event that led to the suspicion. Alleged abuse or neglect involving a person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child (including a teacher) must be reported to Child Protective Services (CPS).

Employees are also required to make a report if they have cause to believe that an adult was a victim of abuse or neglect as a child and they determine in good faith that the disclosure of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of another child, elderly person, or disabled person.

Reports to the Department of Family and Protective Services can be made to the Texas Abuse Hotline at 800-252-5400 or, if not urgent, on the web at [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org). An employee’s failure to make the required report may result in prosecution as a Class A misdemeanor. The offense of failure to report by a professional may be a state jail felony if it is shown the individual intended to conceal the abuse or neglect. An employee may not delegate to or rely on another person or administrator to make the report.

Under state law, any person reporting or assisting in the investigation of reported child abuse or neglect is immune from liability unless the report is made in bad faith or with malicious intent. The college will not take any adverse action in response to good faith reports of child abuse or neglect or participation in an investigation regarding an allegation of child abuse or neglect.

Employees who suspect that a child has been or may be abused or neglected should also report their concerns to COM Police Department. This includes students with disabilities who are no longer minors. Employees are not required to report their concern to COM Police before making a report to the appropriate agency.

Reporting the concern to COM Police Department does not relieve the employee of the requirement to report it to the appropriate state agency. In addition, employees must cooperate with investigators of child abuse and neglect. Interference with a child abuse investigation is prohibited.

## **Reporting Crime**

### *Policy DG*

The Texas Whistleblower Act protects college employees who make good faith reports of violations of law by the college to an appropriate law enforcement authority. The college is prohibited from suspending, terminating the employment of, or taking other adverse personnel action against, an employee who makes a report under the Act. An *appropriate law enforcement authority* is part of a federal, state, or local governmental entity that the employee in good faith believes is authorized to regulate under or enforce the law alleged to be violated or to investigate or prosecute a crime.

## **Technology Resources**

### *Policy CR*

The college's technology resources, including its networks, computer systems, e-mail accounts, devices connected to its networks, and all college-owned devices used on or off college property, are primarily for administrative and instructional purposes. Limited personal use is permitted if the use:

- Imposes no tangible cost to the college.
- Does not unduly burden the college's technology resources.
- Has no adverse effect on job performance or on a student's academic performance.

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of college technology resources are not confidential and can be monitored at any time to ensure appropriate use.

Employees are required to abide by the provisions of the acceptable use agreement and administrative procedures. Failure to do so can result in suspension of access or termination of privileges and may lead to disciplinary and legal action. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact the Information Technology Helpdesk at (409)-933-8302.

## **Personal Use of Electronic Media**

*Policy CR, DH*

Employees are responsible for their public conduct even when they are not acting as college employees. Employees will be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic media as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic media interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. If an employee wishes to use a social network site or similar media for personal purposes, the employee is responsible for the content on the employee's page, including content added by the employee, the employee's friends, or members of the public who can access the employee's page, and for web links on the employee's page. The employee is also responsible for maintaining privacy settings appropriate to the content.

An employee who uses electronic media for personal purposes shall observe the following:

- The employee shall not use the college's logo or other copyrighted material of the college without express, written consent.
- An employee may not share or post, in any format, information, videos, or pictures obtained while on duty or on college business unless the employee first obtains written approval from the employee's immediate supervisor. Employees should be cognizant that they have access to information and images that, if transmitted to the public, could violate privacy concerns.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, and administrative regulations, even when communicating regarding personal and private matters, regardless of whether the employee is using private or public equipment, on or off campus. These restrictions include:
  - Confidentiality of student records [See Policy FJ]
  - Confidentiality of health or personnel information concerning colleagues, unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law [See Policy DBA]
  - Confidentiality of college records, including private e-mail addresses. [See Policy GCA]
  - Intellectual property [See Policy CT]
  - Prohibition on the disclosure of information or rumor which might damage or embarrass or violate the privacy of any other person. [See Policy DH]



## **Records Retention**

### *Policy CIA*

Employees must retain local government records for the appropriate retention period, which varies depending on the category of record (i.e., the content contained in that individual e-mail message) described in the college's records retention schedule. *Local government record* means any document, paper, letter, book, map, photograph, sound or video recording, microfilm, magnetic tape, electronic medium, or other information recording medium, regardless of physical form or characteristic and regardless of whether public access to it is open or restricted under the laws of the state, created or received by a local government or any of its officers or employees pursuant to law, including an ordinance, or in the transaction of public business. The determination of which category of record applies must be made on a case-by-case basis. If the contents of the record fall in more than one category in the records retention schedule and are not severable, the combined record must be retained for the length of time of the component with the longest retention period.

An employee in possession of public information that is stored on a personal device must preserve the information in accordance with the college's records retention schedule or transfer the records to the college upon request.

## **Criminal History Background Checks**

### *Policy DC*

Employees may be subject to a review of their criminal history record information at any time during employment. National criminal history checks based on an individual's fingerprints, photo, and other identification will be conducted on certain employees and entered into the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Clearinghouse. This database provides the college with access to an employee's current national criminal history and updates to the employee's subsequent criminal history.

## **Employee Arrests and Convictions**

### *Policy DH*

An employee must notify his or her immediate supervisor within three calendar days of any arrest, indictment, conviction, no contest or guilty plea, or other adjudication of any felony or offense involving moral turpitude.

Moral turpitude includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Dishonesty
- Fraud
- Deceit
- Theft

- Misrepresentation
- Deliberate violence
- Base, vile, or depraved acts that are intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the actor
- Crimes involving any felony possession, transfers, sale, distribution, or conspiracy to transfer, sell, or distribute any controlled substance
- Acts constituting public intoxication, operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, or disorderly conduct, if any two or more acts are committed within any 12-month period
- Acts constituting abuse under the Texas Family Code

## **Alcohol- and Drug-Abuse Prevention**

*Policies DH, DI*

College of the Mainland is committed to maintaining an alcohol- and drug-free environment and will not tolerate the use of alcohol and illegal drugs in the workplace and at college-related or college-sanctioned activities on or off college property. Employees, who use or are under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs as defined by the Texas Controlled Substances Act during working hours, may be dismissed. The college's policy regarding employee drug use follows:

[https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/497?filename=DH\(LOCAL\).pdf](https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/497?filename=DH(LOCAL).pdf)

[https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/497?filename=DI\(LOCAL\).pdf](https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/497?filename=DI(LOCAL).pdf)

[https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/497?filename=DI\(XHIBIT\).pdf](https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/497?filename=DI(XHIBIT).pdf)

## **Tobacco Products and E-Cigarette Use**

*Policies DH, GDA*

The college prohibits smoking, using tobacco products, or e-cigarettes on all college-owned property, in college vehicles, and at college-related activities. This includes all buildings, parking facilities, and facilities used for athletics and other activities. *E-cigarette* means an electronic cigarette or any other device that simulates smoking by using a mechanical heating element, battery, or electronic circuit to deliver nicotine or other substances to the individual inhaling from the device. The term does not include a prescription medical device unrelated to the cessation of smoking but does include a component, part, or accessory for the device.

## **Fraud and Financial Impropriety**

### *Policy CDE*

The College District prohibits fraud and financial impropriety, as defined below, in the actions of its Board members, employees, vendors, contractors, agents, consultants, volunteers, and others seeking or maintaining a business relationship with the College District. Fraud and financial impropriety shall include but not be limited to:

- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of any document or account belonging to the College District.
- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of a check, bank draft, or any other financial document.
- Misappropriation of funds, securities, supplies, or other college assets including employee time.
- Impropriety in the handling of money or reporting of college financial transactions.
- Profiteering as a result of insider knowledge of college information or activities.
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or proprietary information to outside parties.
- Unauthorized disclosure of investment activities engaged in or contemplated by the college.
- Accepting or seeking anything of material value from contractors, vendors, or other persons providing services or materials to the college, except as otherwise permitted by law or college policy.
- Inappropriately destroying, removing, or using records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment.
- Failing to provide financial records required by federal, state, or local entities.
- Failure to disclose conflicts of interest as required by law or college policy.
- Any other dishonest act regarding the finances of the college.
- Failure to comply with requirements imposed by law, the awarding agency, or a pass-through entity for state and federal awards.

## **Conflict of Interest**

### *Policies CAA, DBD, DBF*

Employees are required to disclose in writing to the college any situation that creates a potential conflict of interest with proper discharge of assigned duties and responsibilities or creates a potential conflict of interest with the best interests of the college. This includes the following:

- A personal financial interest
- A business interest
- Any other obligation or relationship
- Outside employment

Employees should contact their supervisor for additional information.

## **Gifts and Favors**

*Policies CAA, DBD*

Employees may not accept gifts, favors, services, or other benefits that could influence, or be construed to influence, the employee's discharge of assigned duties. In addition, acceptance of any single item with a value at or above \$50 or items from a single contractor or subcontractor that have an aggregate value exceeding \$100 in a 12-month period is prohibited.

## **Intellectual Property**

*Policy CT*

**Copyrighted Materials.** Employees are expected to comply with the provisions of federal copyright law relating to the unauthorized use, reproduction, distribution, performance, or display of copyrighted materials (i.e., printed material, videos, computer data and programs, etc.). Electronic media, including motion pictures and other audiovisual works, are to be used for instructional purposes only. Duplication or backup of computer programs and data must be made within the provisions of the purchase agreement.

**Trademarked Materials.** The College District protects all College District and campus trademarks, including names, logos, mascots, and symbols, from unauthorized use.

**Patents.** Federal law protects the invention or discovery of a process, machine, manufacture, or improvement. Only the patent holder may use, make, or sell the invention or discovery or a material component of that invention or discovery.

**Work Product.** As an agent of the college, an employee, including a student employee, does not have rights to the work he or she creates on college time or using college technology resources. The college will own any work or work product created by a college employee in the course and scope of his or her employment, including the right to obtain copyrights.

If the employee obtains a patent for such work, the employee is required to grant a non-exclusive, non-transferable, perpetual, royalty-free, college-wide license to the college for use of the patented work. A college employee shall own any work or work product produced on his or her own time, away from his or her job and with personal equipment and materials, including the right to obtain patents or copyrights.

A college employee may apply to the college president or designee to use college materials and equipment in his or her creative projects, provided the employee agrees either to grant to the college a non-exclusive, non-transferable, perpetual, royalty-free, college-wide license to use the work, or permits the college to be listed as co-author or co-inventor if the college contribution to the work is substantial.

## **Associations and Political Activities**

### *Policy DGA*

The college will not directly or indirectly discourage employees from participating in political affairs or require any employee to join any group, club, committee, organization, or association.

An individual's employment will not be affected by membership or a decision not to be a member of any employee organization that exists for the purpose of dealing with employers concerning grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment, or conditions of work. Use of college resources including work time for political activities is prohibited.

The college encourages personal participation in the political process, including voting. Employees who need to be absent from work to vote during the early voting period or on election day must communicate with their immediate supervisor prior to the absence.

## **Safety**

### *Policy CG series*

The college has developed and promotes a comprehensive program to ensure the safety of its employees, students, and visitors. The safety program includes guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies and activities to help reduce the frequency of accidents and injuries. To prevent or minimize injuries to employees, coworkers, and students and to protect and conserve college equipment, employees must comply with the following requirements:

- Observe all safety rules.
- Keep work areas clean and orderly at all times.
- Immediately report all accidents to their supervisor.
- Operate only equipment or machines for which they have training and authorization.

While driving on college business, employees are required to abide by all state and local traffic laws. Employees driving on college district business are prohibited from texting and using other electronic devices that require both visual and manual attention while the vehicle is in motion. Employees will exercise care and sound judgement on whether to use hands-free technology while the vehicle is in motion.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues can contact the COM Police Department at (409) 933-8403.

## **Annual Security Report**

### *Policy GCC*

The college collects information about campus crime statistics and the college's security policies as required by the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act. The college's annual security report issued under the Clery Act is distributed to employees via email notification to all users, COM website, and signage in the COM Police Department.

## **Possession of Firearms and Weapons**

### *Policies CHF*

Information pertaining to Concealed Carry, Gun-Free Zones and prohibited weapons can be found online at:

[https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/497?filename=CHF\(LOCAL\).pdf](https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/497?filename=CHF(LOCAL).pdf)

# General Procedures

## Severe Weather Closing

The college may close campuses because of severe weather or emergency conditions. When it becomes necessary to delay or cancel classes, a notice will be posted on the college's website and an every user notification will be sent via email and text message.

## Emergencies

### *Policies CGC*

All employees should be familiar with the safety procedures for responding to emergencies, including a medical emergency. Employees should locate evacuation diagrams posted in their work areas and be familiar with shelter in place, lockout, and lockdown procedures. Emergency drills will be conducted to familiarize employees and students with safety and evacuation procedures. Each campus is equipped with an automatic external defibrillator. Fire extinguishers are located throughout all college buildings. Employees should know the location of these devices and procedures for their use.

## Parking

### *Policy CHC*

Any vehicle parked on college property must be registered with the police department and a valid parking permit displayed on the vehicle. Parking permit applications must be submitted to COM Police Department. Employees must provide a license plate number for the vehicle being registered along with a valid driver's license number.

Employees are required to park in the areas designated by the college issued parking permit. Restricted parking areas are clearly marked, and employees are prohibited from parking in areas reserved for visitors, no parking areas, marked fire lanes, areas reserved for the disabled, or any area not specifically designed for vehicle parking.

All questions regarding parking should be directed to campus police department.

## Purchasing Procedures

### *Policy CF*

All requests for purchases must be submitted to the Purchasing department on an official college purchase order (PO) form with the appropriate approval signatures. No purchases, charges, or commitments to buy goods or services for the college can be made without a PO number. The college will not reimburse employees or assume responsibility for purchases made without authorization. Employees are not permitted to purchase supplies or equipment for personal use through the college's business office. Contact the Purchasing department for additional information on purchasing procedures.

## **Name and Address Changes**

It is important that employment records be kept up to date. Employees must notify the Human Resources office if there are any changes or corrections to their name, home address, contact telephone number, marital status, emergency contact, or beneficiary.

## **Personnel Records**

*Policy DBA, GCA*

Most college records, including personnel records, are public information and must be released upon request. Employees may choose to have the following personal information withheld:

- Home Address
- Phone number, including personal cell phone number
- Emergency contact information
- Information that reveals whether they have family members

The choice to not allow public access to this information or change to an existing choice may be made at any time by submitting a written request to Human Resources. New or terminated employees have 14 days after hire or termination to submit a request. Otherwise, personal information may be released to the public until a request to withhold the information is submitted or another exception for release of information under law applies. An employee is responsible for notifying the college if he or she is subject to any exception for disclosure of personal or confidential information.

In most cases, an employee's personal e-mail is confidential and may not be released without the employee's permission.

## **Facilities Use**

*Policies DGD, GD, GDA*

The grounds and facilities of the College District may be made available to employees, when such use does not conflict with use by, or any of the policies and procedures of, the College District. The requesting employees may be required to pay all expenses incurred by their use of the facilities in accordance with a fee schedule developed by the Board.

The college's policy regarding employee use of college facilities follows:

[https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/497?filename=DGD\(LOCAL\).pdf](https://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/497?filename=DGD(LOCAL).pdf)



# Termination of Employment

## Resignations

### *Policy DMD*

All resignations shall be submitted in writing to the College President or designee at least ten days prior to separating from service with the College District. Employees should include the reasons for leaving in the letter of resignation.

## Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Contract Employees

### *Policies DM series*

An employee on an annual contract may be nonrenewed by the Board at the end of the employee's contract term, or nonextended at the end of the first year of a two-year contract on the recommendation of the College President. The employee may be nonrenewed or nonextended for any reason or no reason provided that the decision shall not be based on an employee's exercise of rights guaranteed by law or be based unlawfully on an employee's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or age. The College District shall provide 45 calendar days' notice of nonrenewal before the term of an annual contract ends.

A tenured faculty member shall not be eligible for nonrenewal. However, a tenured faculty member shall be subject to revocation of tenure and/or dismissal for cause under applicable College District policy.

An employee may be terminated mid-contract for good cause as determined by the Board following a hearing held for that purpose in accordance with law.

## Dismissal of Noncontract Employees

### *Policy DM*

All College District employees who do not hold written employment contracts authorized by the Board are employed at-will and have no entitlement to continued employment. At-will employees may be dismissed at any time for any reason or no reason provided that the decision shall not be based on an employee's exercise of rights guaranteed by law or be based unlawfully on an employee's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, or age. Exit Interviews and Procedures

## **Exit Interviews and Procedures**

### *Policy DM*

Exit interviews will be scheduled for all employees leaving the college. Information on the continuation of benefits, release of information, and procedures for requesting references will be provided at this time. Separating employees are asked to provide the college with a forwarding address and phone number and complete a questionnaire that provides the college with feedback on his or her employment experience. All college keys, books, property, including intellectual property, and equipment must be returned upon separation from employment.

## **Reports Concerning Court-Ordered Withholding**

The college is required to report the termination of employees that are under court order or writ of withholding for child support or spousal maintenance to the court and the individual receiving the support. Notice of the following must be sent to the support recipient and the court or, in the case of child support, the Texas Attorney General Child Support Division:

- Termination of employment not later than the seventh day after the date of termination
- Employee's last known address
- Name and address of the employee's new employer, if known

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