

## VCUHS POLICY SUMMARY

The following is a summary of VCU Health System policies and procedures pertinent to Housestaff employees. This list is not all-inclusive and where the summary and the actual policy differ, the policy takes precedent. You may view copies of the policies by accessing VCU Health Systems Policies and Procedures via the intranet ([vcuhsweb.mcvh-vcu.edu](http://vcuhsweb.mcvh-vcu.edu)).

### **Policy 2101, Employment**

Housestaff are considered benefit employees of the Health System. As such, housestaff must complete the pre-placement process required of all new staff to include, pre-placement drug testing, verification of eligibility to work in the United States, pre-placement health assessment, criminal record checks including fingerprints if assigned to work in psychiatry, and verification of licensure.

### **Policy 2102, Pre-placement Drug Testing for Applicants**

All housestaff must submit to drug testing before hire. If a housestaff officer is not moving to the Richmond area until shortly before he/she begins work, the test may be performed at an alternate testing site within 90 days of hire. The Employee Health Physician will discuss pending positive test results with applicants to determine if a valid prescription exists to explain the positive result. A confirmed positive test result will result in ineligibility to participate in the Graduate Medical Program (GME)

### **Policy 2103, Employment Categories**

You are considered full time if you work between 35-40 hours per week (87.5%-100% FTE) in benefit position and part time if you work between 20-34.9 hours per week (50%-87.4% FTE) in benefit position. Staff who do not receive benefits or who work less than 20 hours a week are considered PRN and used only as need to support staffing levels.

The workweek at VCUHS starts on Sunday at midnight and concludes on Saturday at 11:59. Staff who are eligible for overtime payment (non-exempt) will receive one-half time their salary for all hours worked in excess of 40 per week. Staff who are not eligible for overtime are called exempt staff and are paid a weekly salary based on their job duties; not the number of hours worked.

### **Policy 2104, Terms of Employment**

It is each individual's responsibility to keep his/her required license, certification and/or registration current.

All property provided by VCUHS belongs to VCUHS and as such can be inspected at any time and cannot be used for personal gain apart from assigned work activities. Property is to be maintained according to manufacture's requirements. Possession or storage of weapons is not permitted while at work.

Remember email is not a secure median for transmitting information. No confidential Private Health Information (PHI) should be sent by email without specific authorization of the patient to use that median. Computer access codes serve as your electronic signature. DO NOT SHARE them and be careful to always log out of a system after you finish. You will be held responsible for any unauthorized access of material that occurs under your access code.

You may be issued a long distance code. This code is for VCUHS business only and is not authorized for personal use. You will be held responsible for any calls made under your long distance code.

Most of what you see, hear and read will be considered confidential information when it relates to patient care or organizational function. Your authorization to access information is limited to your immediate job duties.

#### **Policy 2106, Hours of Work**

Refer to the Housestaff Policies (<http://www.medschool.vcu.edu/gme/policies/index.html>) regarding limitations in work hours, rest breaks, requesting time off, etc.

#### **Policy 2108, ID Badges**

All staff must display their VCUHS issued ID badge with the picture face forward while on VCUHS property. Security is a major concern for the organization and individuals without an appropriate ID may be denied access to units or buildings. Your ID badge is a prox card which can be waived in front of a scanner or the stripe on its back can be used as a swipe card to grant you access to worksites where you are assigned to work. If you need your access changed or if you lose your ID, contact the GME office for assistance.

#### **Policy 2109, Equal Opportunity, Non-Discrimination, Prohibition against Harassment**

It is the policy of the VCUHS to provide equal opportunities and services to all employees and patients. VCUHS supports the right of staff who have disabilities to work and participate in educational opportunities. If you have a disability and need assistance, contact the Director of GME and/or Cheryl Chesney-Walker, Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities, VCU Counseling Center (828-9782). If you have a concern related to discrimination or feel you are being harassed due to your gender, age, nationality, race, religion or disability, please contact the Director of GME, or VCUHS Office of Human Resources at 628-5705.

#### **Policy 2114, Solicitation**

VCUHS staff are not allowed to solicit donations or to sell goods and/or services that are not related to the promotion of VCUHS mission. For example, staff should not be selling Avon, Girl Scout cookies, jewelry, etc. unless a portion of the proceeds are being provided to VCUHS.

#### **Policy 2115, Dress Code**

Refer to the House staff Handbook regarding expectations for dress code and hygiene. As a representative of VCUHS, House staff are expected to present a professional appearance at all time.

#### **Policy 2118, Disaster Assistance by Non-VCUHS Staff**

When a Disaster has been declared as specified by the Virginia Commonwealth University Health System (VCUHS) Emergency Preparedness Plan and the immediate needs of the patients cannot be met without additional staff, VCUHS may implement a modified process for determining the qualifications and competency of health care volunteers offering their assistance. This policy does not apply to Licensed Independent Practitioners who are governed by the provisions of Medical Staff policies and procedures.

#### **Policy 2119, Employee Operation of Motor Vehicle**

Employees, who in the course of performing their required job duties, drive a vehicle that is owned, leased, rented or loaned to VCUHS, or who drive their personal automobile on company business, must possess and maintain a current and unrestricted Virginia State operator's license, be at least 18 years of age or older, exhibit an acceptable driving history and operate their vehicles in a safe manner. Employees who use their own vehicles for VCUHS business must provide proof of comprehensive motor vehicle insurance which includes liability protection that meets the minimum requirements as set forth by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

### **Policy 2120, Personnel Records**

There are two types of employee files. Each employee has a main file in Human Resources that contains employment information and a department file that maintains department specific information such as training, attendance, performance, and counseling records. Medical reports are maintained in a file separate from either of above. Employees can view and have a copy of either record upon request. If you wish to view your employment record, you must formally request such and request a time that is convenient to both you and the department (or HR). A representative from the department must be present during the viewing of the record. Copies of requested records may be requested and should be provided within 5 workdays.

Staff should not give external references. All references should be referred to Human Resources or the GME office.

### **Policy 2131, Standards of Conduct and Performance**

Refer to the Housestaff Policies (<http://www.medschool.vcu.edu/gme/policies/index.html>) regarding the disciplinary process for violations of policy or unacceptable performance.

### **Policy 2132, Customer Service Expectations**

Quality customer service is a strong emphasis at VCUHS. All staff are expected to treat each other and their patients, visitors, etc. courteously and with respect in all interactions. Complaints of unacceptable customer service behaviors should be directed to the GME office or the employee's supervisor. Professional boundaries are important in all interactions with patients. A personal relationship with patients outside of work is inappropriate.

### **Policy 2133, Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment**

VCUHS strictly prohibits acts of sexual harassment against or by any employee, student, patient, or visitor of the VCUHS. Acts of either verbal or physical sexual harassment will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and/or educational opportunities. If you feel you have been the victim of sexual harassment, contact the GME office or VCUHS Office of Human Resources (628-9434).

### **Policy 2134, Prohibition Against Workplace Harassment**

VCUHS strictly prohibits acts of harassment against any employee, patient, visitor or representative of the VCUHS. Acts of either verbal or physical harassment, including bullying behaviors, will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. In addition, such acts may also result in additional sanctions under federal and state laws. Harassment can take many forms, and the determination of what constitutes harassment will vary according to the particular circumstances. In general, harassment is described as behavior that a reasonable person would find offensive and that adversely affects the working environment. Behaviors may be verbal, non-verbal, physical or a combination. If you feel you have been the victim of harassment, contact the GME office or the VCUHS Office of Human Resources (628-5705).

### **Policy HR.SC.011 , Threat Management**

Threats and acts of violence are prohibited and if substantiated, will be grounds for termination of employment. Your first priority is safety. Call VCU police at 828-1234 if you feel you are in danger or 911 if you are outside the Medical Campus boundaries. Weapons are not allowed on VCUHS property or business locations at any time, including in personal vehicles. If you feel you are being threatened, contact a member of our Threat Management Team for assistance by calling VCUHS Department of Security (828-4300) and asking for a Threat Team member.

### **Policy 2137, Probable Cause Alcohol and Drug Testing**

Employees, who are suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while at work, will be required to submit to an alcohol or drug test. If they refuse, they will be subject to termination of employment and/or training

agreement. If a test for alcohol or drugs is determined to be positive, staff will usually be offered the option to participate in a rehabilitation program first. In all cases, individuals who have positive drug and/or alcohol tests or who are admitted for treatment related to substance abuse must be reported to the Virginia Department of Health Professions. Licensed staff is encouraged to contact the Health Practitioners Monitoring Program at 804-828-1551 for information regarding monitoring for successful return to work. All staff returning to work after substance abuse treatment must sign a return to work agreement.

### **Policy 2138, Employee Requests for Non-Participation in Patient Care/Treatment**

Employees whose ethical, religious, or cultural systems prohibit their participation in certain procedures, may request non-participation in writing to their Program Director. The Program Director will discuss the impact of accommodation for the request with the employee related both to patient care and training requirements and whether the request can be honored.

### **Policy 2139, Inclement Weather**

Housestaff are considered essential employees during periods of inclement weather and are therefore, expected to report to work as scheduled. Transportation assistance may be available but is not guaranteed. During inclement weather, the VCUHS moves to 12-hour shifts on in-patient units. Your Program Director will discuss with you expectations regarding transportation assistance and coverage for your work assignment.

### **Policy 2151, Orientation**

All housestaff must attend housestaff orientation within 30 days of hire.

### **Policy 2172, Leave Share**

VCU Health System has a leave share program that allows coworkers to donate accrued leave to other employees who are out of work due to medical issues and family crisis without leave available. Staff needing leave share must have exhausted their own leave balances and be without pay for 40 hours before being eligible. Leave share is only available for employees who are out due to their own illness/injury unless a request is approved by the Rainbow Society for a family crisis. Staff donations are limited to 40 hours per year. An employee who donates must have 40 hours remaining in his/her leave account after the donation. Recipients may only receive 360 hours per year. Donations are not accepted from outside VCUHS including VCU or other state agencies.

### **Policy 2173, Leave of Absence Types**

#### Jury duty

Staff who are called for jury duty must be given the time off. They will be paid administrative leave for time spent on jury duty. Pay received from the court does not have to be reimbursed. Staff who are subpoenaed to appear in court due to work related cases will be paid as work time. For subpoenas not related to work, the employee may use accrued leave or take the time off without pay.

#### Administrative Leave

Administrative leave is pay provided by VCUHS when the organization has requested the employee not to come to work. It may be used to provide pay if an employee has a contagious disease exposure but has not developed the condition yet and is considered to be in the incubation phase.

#### Leave of Absences

An employee is considered to be on a leave of absence if he/she is out of work 14 consecutive calendar days. An employee may request a personal leave of absence for up to three months. Personal leaves are contingent upon manager approval and if granted may affect your graduate training requirements for Board certification. A medical

leave of absence may be conditional or unconditionally approved. Employees placed on unconditional leave will have their job held for their return. This type of leave is always used for Family Medical Leave absences and military leave provided the requirements for these types of leave are met. If an employee fails to return to work after the last approved day of leave, he/she will be separated from employment.

### **Policy 2174, Worker's Compensation**

All employees are eligible for workers compensation coverage from their first day of employment. Work injuries or exposures of occupational diseases should be reported within 24 hours of occurrence using the "Accident Report of Worker's Compensation Claim" form and submitted to the Director of GME. Please take this seriously and report any injuries or exposures received as soon as possible! If treatment is needed, you must select a physician from a panel provided by VCUHS. Receiving treatment outside this panel, except for emergency care received within the first 24 hours, could jeopardize your workers' compensation benefits.

### **Policy 2175, Military Leave**

Employees may receive up to 15 workdays of paid military leave per federal fiscal year. If staff is called into active duty, the VCUHS supports the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act. Employees may be eligible for supplemental pay when called to active duty if their military pay plus allotments are less than their hourly rate of pay at VCUHS.

### **Policy 2176, FMLA Non-Military FMLA**

FMLA leave may be requested for: prenatal care, the birth of a child and/or the care of a newborn child; the placement of a child with an employee for foster care or adoption; care of the employee's spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition; and the employee's own a serious health condition (including medical appointments for on-going treatment of chronic conditions). To be eligible for FMLA leave, you must have been employed by VCU Health System for at least 12 months and must have worked at least 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately before requesting the FMLA leave. An eligible employee may take up to 12 workweeks (480 hours) of unpaid leave during a 365-day period. The 12 weeks are prorated for eligible employees working less than full time. Leave may be taken all at once or on an intermittent basis if medically necessary. If an intermittent or reduced schedule is needed, you are encouraged to plan your leave with the least disruption as possible to department operations. Only a total of 12 weeks of leave is available even if you experience more than one of the qualifying events per 365-day period. To request FMLA, contact the Director of GME to discuss the impact on your graduate training requirements. If you determine you need an FMLA absence, you are required to contact UNUM, our third party administrator, at 1-866-786-9321 to initiate the FMLA process.

**Note: Promotions and "make-up" time are contingent upon Board requirements.** If you have any questions regarding the impact of lost time on promotions, contact the Director of GME.

### **Military leave FMLA**

Eligible employees may take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for spouses, children, parents or next of kin who are service members with serious illnesses or injuries incurred during active duty in the Armed Forces. Eligible employees may take up to 12-weeks of FMLA to address qualifying exigencies for immediate family members called to active duty from the Reserves, Guard, or retired military for a contingency operation.

### **Policy 2177, Educational Assistance**

House staff are eligible to participate in the VCUHS education assistance program. Full time staff may take up to 18-credit hours per academic year. Courses must be related to the employee's job or the mission of VCUHS. If a

course fills a prerequisite for a degree related to VCUHS mission, that course is also eligible. Degrees in art, education, history, etc. would typically not be covered. To apply, the employee must complete a VCUHS education assistance form online PRIOR to taking the class. This form is found by logging into Employee Self-Serve. The GME Director must approve requests. If you drop out of the class or do not make at least a "C" or better, you will be required to reimburse VCUHS for the cost of the course. All staff employed by VCUHS are eligible for in-state tuition rates at VCU regardless of their length of residency in the state. Education assistance does not extend to the cost of books. Classes outside VCU, which meet the eligibility requirements noted above, are also eligible for assistance. This benefit is for employees only and does not extend to family members.

### **Policy 2178, Adoption Assistance**

The VCU Health System will reimburse eligible employees for qualifying legal adoption related expenses up to a maximum of \$5,000 per child. There is a lifetime maximum benefit of \$10,000 per employee/couple. If adopting a special needs child, the maximum per child will be \$7,000 with a lifetime limit of \$14,000. Amounts of reimbursement are not currently subject to income tax withholding but are subject to Social Security, Medicare and unemployment taxes. Employees are eligible for this benefit upon hire.

### **Policy 2179, Computer Purchase Assistance Program**

The VCU Health System will provide Eligible Employees with a personal loan of up to \$2,600 for the purpose of purchasing computer related hardware, software and accessories from a VCUHS specified vendor. The computer loan must be repaid within 12-months through authorized payroll deduction or a one-time lump sum payment. Full or part-time employee are eligible for this benefit who have successfully completed one year of employment in a benefit eligible position, who are in good standing with VCUHS at the time the loan is provided and who have no current wage garnishment(s), state, county or federal tax liens or bankruptcy mandated payments. House staff are eligible upon hire. The loan application form is electronic and located in Employee Self Serve.

### **Policy 2180, Dependent Education Assistance**

Dependent Education Assistance is offered to eligible employees of VCUHS who (1) have been employed continuously in a full or part-time benefit-eligible position for three years with VCUHS, 2) who have received a proficient or better rating on their most recent performance evaluation, and (3) who have had no formal disciplinary action issued on a Disciplinary Action Form (DAF) within the immediate 12 months prior to the application for tuition assistance being submitted. Residents may request an exception to the three-year employment obligation by contacting the GME office who will coordinate the request with the VP of Human Resources. Assistance applies only to courses taken toward a degree program at VCU. Assistance is limited to six credit hours per semester and a total of twelve per academic year.

### **Policy 2181, Leave to Donate Bone Marrow or Organs**

All full-time and part-time benefit Eligible Employees of VCUHS are eligible to receive up to 30 days (240-hours) of paid Donation Leave at their current hourly base rate of pay to donate bone marrow or organs provided the employee is not currently on a leave of absence for any reason, excluding Family Medical Leave for an immediate family member. Employees receiving payments through workers compensation, short term disability, long term disability or similar benefits are not eligible to receive Donation Leave concurrent with these payments.

### **Policy 2301.02, Preventative Medicine Program for Employees, including guidelines for HIV infection**

All patients, regardless of their medical diagnosis, have a right to quality healthcare and respect. Staff are expected to treat all blood and body fluids as if they may be infectious. If a staff member is exposed to a patient's blood or body fluids, the patient may be tested for HIV. In the same manner, a patient may request testing of a staff member to whom he/she has had blood or body fluid exposure. Staff exposed must contact Employee Health M-F (8a-4p).

After hours exposure must be reported to the PEP team by paging 4508. Prophylaxis must be started within 2 hours of exposure. Staff diagnosed with HIV may continue to work. The Employee Health Physician will discuss proper precautions for both the employee and patient's protection.

## NON-HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES

### **Policy EC.FM.005, Tobacco Free Environment**

The use of any tobacco containing product is prohibited in and around any VCUHS facility, including all satellite locations and the prohibition applies to all persons, including, but not limited to: employees, contractors, vendors, patients and visitors. Staff will be permitted to use FDA approved nicotine replacement products while on duty, so long as it does not interfere with patient care. Staff may obtain tobacco cessation information from the VCUHS Office of Smoking Cessation and Education, 828-4162.

Both VCUHS ChoiceCARE and COVACare health insurance programs currently provide coverage for nicotine replacement products as well as tobacco cessation counseling and programs.

### **Policy 1502.01, Computing Ethics**

Staff may only access records and information systems (both VCUHS and VCU) to which they are authorized. Your access code serves as your electronic signature. **Access codes must not be shared with others, including medical students.** Staff must take measures to maintain the confidentiality of all information to which they are entrusted. Confidential information must not be sent by email or discussed over cell phones. Computers may not be used for personal gain or to transmit or access offensive or disruptive communications. All staff must abide by software license restrictions.

### **Policy 4100, Patient Bill of Rights and Responsibilities**

Patient care is provided in an environment in which the values, beliefs and rights of all Virginia Commonwealth University Health System (VCUHS) patients are respected and affirmed as important to their total care. All staff and patients are expected to support and respect the principles set forth in the [Patient Bill of Rights and Responsibilities](#).

### **Policy 4107, Patient/Family Education**

All professional disciplines are responsible for helping patients and their families learn about their medical condition and plan of care. All teaching provided must be documented in the electronic medical record and must include what was taught and the response to teaching. Discharge instructions must be documented on the Patient Discharge Information Form.

### **Policy 4701.02, Confidentiality and Release of Patient Information**

Access to patient health information is limited to those having a job related need-to-know and to those having written authorization from the patient. Housestaff must sign a confidentiality agreement upon hire. All patient information to be discussed in meetings or conferences must be in a closed forum and whenever possible, altered to protect patient identification. Confidential documents must be shredded or placed in orange bags identified for shredding of materials. Patient information must not be left unattended at any time. Messages left on answering machines, sent by email, or left with individuals other than the patient must not identify the patient's potential diagnosis or health information. Cell phones, fax machines, social media platforms and email should not be used to transmit confidential information. If used, extreme care must be taken not to disclose patient identifying information.

Communication with patients through Facebook, MySpace, Tweeter or other external social networking means is prohibited. All staff are responsible for reminding each other of confidentiality guidelines as needed.

Access codes cannot be loaned to others. **You do not have a right to access a patient's medical record unless you are assigned to their care. Do not access medical records of friends, family, colleagues, "interesting cases not under your care" etc.** In the course of your employment and training, coworkers, colleagues or others may share personal information with you. Such information is considered private and should not be shared with others. In addition, you have a right to your own privacy and the sharing of personal information, unrelated to your employment/education, with others is by your choice. VCUHS maintains employee records as confidential and the details of records will not be shared with others except as required in the performance of job duties. Special precautions are taken to maintain records as confidential for employees who receive care at VCUHS.

You may review patient information found in their own medical record with the patient unless the attending has entered a statement in the record that to do so would cause them potential harm. Staff or patients after discharge who want to review their own medical records must request to do so from the Dept. of Health Information Management and/or their healthcare provider. No one else may review or receive a copy of the medical record without the patient's written authorization or unless it is related to a VCUHS staff member's job responsibilities. Third parties must have written authorization to view or receive patient health information. The Institutional Research Board must approve research, including review of medical records. Subpoenas for medical records of any type **cannot** be accepted by staff but must be referred to the Office of General Counsel for acceptance. Questions regarding access of the medical record should be directed to the Director of Health Information Management.

#### **Policy 5101, Receipt and Handling of Legal Notice or Inquiry**

All legal notices, subpoenas, or inquiries must be directed immediately to the Office of General Counsel. Notices are usually time sensitive and must be hand delivered. **Never talk to an attorney without consulting with General Counsel first.** All information related to such matters is confidential.

#### **Policy 8000 Medical Staff Standard of Conduct**

As outlined in the Medical Staff Bylaws, The Code of Medical Ethics of the American Medical Association shall govern the professional conduct of the Medical Staff of the VCU Health System. Further, the Medical Staff will strive to uphold the Standards of Professional Behavior adopted by the VCU School of Medicine. Medical Staff Members will conduct themselves at all times in a professional manner demonstrating courtesy and respect to peers, co-workers, patients and guests with whom they interact, and will perform their duties in compliance with all VCU Health System policies and procedures as well as state and federal laws and regulations. Complaints related to unprofessional conduct are reviewed by the Department Chair.