

BENNINGTON COLLEGE

Procedures and Policies

GENERAL INFORMATION

Nondiscrimination Policy

Bennington College is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination as defined under applicable state and federal laws, including but not limited to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities. The College does not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity (perceived or actual), HIV test, or any other legally protected status.

The College maintains policies and procedures for reporting, investigating, and adjudicating different types of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and bullying.

Complaints that fall within the College's [Title IX Sexual Harassment, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, and Stalking Policy](#) or the College's [Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence and Stalking Policy](#) should be directed to the College's Title IX Coordinator, whose office is located in Bennington College's Barn 101 office, whose telephone number is (802) 440-4306 and whose email address is alfredomedina@bennington.edu.

Complaints that fall within the College's Standards of Ethical Conduct and Non-Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy should be directed to the Associate Vice President for Human Resources, whose office is located in Bennington College's Downtown Office (Putnam/Winslow Building), whose telephone number is (802) 440-4423 and whose email address is hroffice@bennington.edu.

Standards of Ethical Conduct and Non-Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy

Purpose of Policy

The Bennington College community aspires to live through intentional practices of inquiry, collaboration, empathy, and self-reflection. All community members, including faculty and staff, are expected to engage with thoughtfulness, integrity, generosity, honesty, and a commitment to non-discrimination. The Bennington College Standards of Ethical Conduct and Non-Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Policy (the "Policy") builds on the shared values of the community. This Policy and its associated procedures only apply to the categories of conduct described herein. Claims of discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex will be referred to the College's Title IX Coordinator for evaluation and processing under the College's Title IX Sexual Harassment, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, and Stalking or the College's Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence and Stalking Policy.

The procedures outlined in this policy are available to current Bennington College staff and faculty. Throughout this policy, conduct identified may be experienced between faculty or staff members whether or not a supervisory relationship exists.

No Retaliation Commitment

As discussed in more detail below, the College strictly prohibits retaliation against anyone who has filed a complaint under this policy, encouraged another person to make a complaint, or who has participated as a witness during an investigation of an alleged violation of this policy.

favorable treatment must negatively affect the individual's terms and conditions of employment. Examples of discriminatory disparate treatment include, but are not limited to:

- Failing or refusing to hire an individual because of their membership in a protected class.
- Imposing discipline of an employee in a manner that is more severe, when compared to a similarly situated employees, because of the employee's membership in a protected class.
- Taking some other adverse employment action (e.g., termination or suspension) against an individual because of the individual's membership in a protected class.

Discriminatory harassment: Is defined as unwelcome and offensive conduct that is directed at an individual based on the individual's actual or perceived membership in a protected class. This includes conduct that:

- Has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance;
- Creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment;
- Subjects an individual to inferior terms, conditions or privileges of employment; or
- Is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment.

Examples of conduct that may constitute prohibited harassment include, but are not limited to using innuendos, name-calling, epithets, derogatory comments or slurs, offensive jokes, derogatory drawings, or suggestive objects or pictures. This includes transmission of offensive material through the mail or use of an electronic means of communication (e.g., text message, email, social media).

Discriminatory harassment violates this policy when a reasonable person would consider the behavior to be more than a petty slight or trivial inconvenience. To determine whether discriminatory harassment violates this policy in either context, the following factors will be evaluated:

- The nature, scope, frequency, duration, and location of the conduct.
- The degree to which the conduct affected one or more individuals' employment.
- The severity or pervasiveness of the conduct.
- Whether the conduct is physically threatening.
- The degree to which the conduct interfered with an employee's work performance.
- The relationship between the alleged harasser and the subject(s) of the harassment;
- Whether the harasser makes accepting the conduct a condition of employment.

In evaluating whether a violation of this policy has occurred, the objective perspective of a "reasonable person" will be applied. Petty slights, annoyances, and isolated incidents (unless sufficiently severe) will generally not rise to the level of a violation but may be considered a violation if the conduct is part of an ongoing pattern of behavior.

Bullying

In addition to prohibiting discrimination and harassment based on membership in a protected class, this Policy also prohibits bullying. Although not protected or defined under federal or state law, for purposes of this Policy, bullying is defined as harmful interpersonal aggression or unprofessional behavior that is intended to humiliate, degrade, demean, intimidate, or threaten an individual. Examples of such behavior may include, but are not limited to:

- Abusive expression directed at an individual, such as derogatory remarks or insults directed toward or about an individual that are outside the range of commonly accepted expressions of disagreement, disapproval, or critique in an academic community and professional setting that respects free expression.
- Physical conduct that a reasonable person would perceive as threatening, intimidating or humiliating in nature.
- Intentional sabotage or undermining of an employee's job duties or work performance and/or threats to engage in such conduct.
- Unnecessary disclosure of personal, private or confidential information about another person that is disclosed for the purpose of threatening, intimidating or humiliating the other person.

It is important to note that not all disagreements or perceptions of hostility are considered to be prohibited by this Policy. This Policy is not intended to discourage or interfere with ordinary managerial

Standards of Ethical Conduct

Bennington College believes and supports that employees have inherent rights and responsibilities. These standards and expectations are shared by all members of our community. Bennington College believes that all employees have a right to:

- Enjoy a work culture based on camaraderie, collegiality, collaboration, and respect.
- Work in fair conditions that affirm their dignity and humanity and allow them to do their best work.
- Work in conditions that are conducive to equitable dialogue and participation that informs decision-making and problem-solving.
- Experience communication and feedback that is clear, transparent, honest, and respectful.
- Experience a workplace that is free from discrimination, harassment, or bullying behavior.
- Raise concerns about potential violations of this policy without fear of reprisal or retaliation.
- Give and receive direct and constructive feedback to achieve standards of thoughtfulness, integrity, generosity, and honesty.
- Access processes for resolution of conflict and grievances

All employees have a responsibility to work toward the goals of the College and to foster an environment that adheres to these rights by conducting themselves in a way that is consistent with this Policy, the shared values of the community, and to engage with thoughtfulness, integrity, generosity, honesty, and a commitment to non-discrimination. In support of our shared beliefs, employees have a responsibility to report suspected violations of this Policy.

As community members, we take our responsibilities to each other seriously through our shared commitment to these standards. These standards present an aspirational framework for how we guide the work of the College and are not necessarily exhaustive.

Non-Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying

The policy is hereafter divided into two sections: (1) discrimination and harassment that someone experiences because of their membership in a protected identity class, and (2) behavior that is *not* limited to discrimination based on protected characteristics but may be defined as bullying.

The College recognizes that an individual may experience conduct that falls under either or both of these categories; complaints are considered as a whole. We make this distinction to recognize where state and federal law provides a baseline for evaluating discrimination and harassment, while also seeking to address the range of conduct that falls outside of those bounds but compromises a healthy workplace environment. The conduct itself may be similar, but may be captured under different portions of this policy (or state or federal law) if it relates to an employee's membership in a protected class.

Discrimination: Discriminatory Treatment & Harassment

Bennington College is committed to providing an environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. The College strictly prohibits discrimination or harassment against an employee (faculty or staff) or an applicant for employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, citizenship, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, transgender status and/or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law. This Policy applies to conduct that occurs on College premises, in the course of College-sponsored programs or activities, or that occurs off campus but has continuing adverse effects and/or causes disruption on College premises.

The College will generally rely on principles of federal and state discrimination and harassment laws in determining whether specific conduct meets the definition and threshold of discrimination or harassment that is prohibited by this Policy.

For purposes of this Policy, discrimination is defined as adverse treatment of an individual because of the individual's membership in one or more of the protected classifications listed above. Discrimination can take the forms of discriminatory disparate treatment or discriminatory harassment.

Discriminatory disparate treatment: Is defined as singling out or targeting an individual for less favorable treatment because of their membership in a protected class. In the employment context, the less relationships, including the solicitation or delivery of constructive or critical feedback. Bullying is not the same as behavior which may be unpleasant or unsettling but necessary for carrying out employment-related responsibilities. The following list is intended to illustrate specific types of conduct that would not be considered a violation of this Policy. This list is not exhaustive.

- Critical feedback, coaching or counseling, including discussions about an employee's work product or expectations of work performance, or feedback about and/or correction of work performance such as a performance improvement plan and other performance-related goals.

- Classroom discussion of academic research or reasoned opinion on controversial topics.
- Work assignments related to the employee's position and modifications or additions to work assignments as determined by the College, including shift, post and overtime assignments.
- Day-to-day discussion with supervisors or colleagues regarding work performance, standards, progress toward achieving performance-related goals and related matters.
- Disciplinary action taken against an employee for violation of College policies or procedures.
- Individual differences in styles of personal expression or management style.
- Differences of opinion on work-related concerns or matters.
- Non-abusive exercise of managerial prerogative.
- Activity that is protected by federal or state law.

This Policy should not be construed to limit the College's commitment to academic freedom and inquiry. Notwithstanding the foregoing criteria, the College reserves the right to determine whether any conduct is inconsistent with this policy or the shared values of the community that may require remedial measures.

Addressing and Resolving Concerns

Building and maintaining a healthy work environment requires the participation of all community members. The College recognizes that the most important tool in upholding a healthy work environment is the **prevention** of behavior that violates our standards. Employees are expected to share a commitment to addressing behavior early and often before it escalates into conduct that violates this Policy. When possible and comfortable, employees experiencing conflict should seek to resolve issues by engaging in open and honest dialogue with each other. This approach is not a prerequisite for filing a formal report and may not always be appropriate, particularly in certain situations involving discrimination and harassment.

If good-faith communication to resolve an issue is not possible or effective, an employee should contact their supervisor, Human Resources, the Office for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion or the Office of the Provost (faculty only) to identify the best path for resolution.

If a community member believes that this Policy has been violated, they may file a report with the Associate Vice President of Human Resources for review and processing. The College will endeavor to acknowledge receipt of a complaint and provide a copy of this policy to the Complainant within three (3) business days. In the event a report under this Policy involves the Associate Vice President of Human Resources, the report should be referred to the Vice President for Finance and Administration.

In those instances where a complainant does not wish to move forward with a formal report, the College reserves the right to still move forward with conducting an investigation in accordance with this Policy and take appropriate remedial measures if the alleged conduct is substantiated.

As an initial matter, the Associate Vice President for Human Resources, in consultation with others when appropriate, will review the report to determine whether the alleged conduct, if true, may constitute a violation of this Policy. If a determination is made that the alleged conduct, even if true, would not constitute a violation of this Policy, that outcome shall be communicated to the individual who made the report, and the matter shall be considered closed. If the reported conduct may constitute a violation of this Policy, an investigation will be conducted. The investigation may be conducted by an internal or external investigator as deemed appropriate by the College under the circumstances.

In the event a report under this Policy involves a member of the President's Cabinet, the Associate Vice President for Human Resources will work in collaboration with the College President to determine the appropriate manner for investigating and adjudicating the report.

If a report under this Policy involves the College President, the matter will be referred to the Vice President for Finance and Administration who will then refer the matter to the Chair of the Board of Trustees, who shall proceed in a manner deemed appropriate using the procedures that the Board may adopt from time to time.

At the outset of an investigation, the person who is alleged to have violated this Policy (the "respondent") will be provided with a copy of this Policy as well as written notice of the allegations that have been raised. The respondent will also be afforded the opportunity to fully participate in the investigation, including, but not limited to, an interview by the investigator and the opportunity to present evidence and identify witnesses on the respondent's behalf. As community members collectively responsible for upholding the tenants of this Policy, employees must commit to cooperating fully with any investigation.

The purpose of the investigation is to establish whether, based on a preponderance of the evidence standard, there is a reasonable basis for believing that the alleged violation of this Policy has occurred. Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator will prepare a written report of findings which will include a detailed summary of all evidence gathered during the investigation, including information reported by the complainant, the respondent, and other witnesses, as well as all documents or other evidence obtained by the investigator during the investigation. Both the complainant and the respondent will be notified, in writing, of the outcome of the investigation. In the interest of protecting the integrity of the investigation and the confidentiality of witnesses who may have participated, the parties are not entitled to a copy of the investigative report or materials gathered as part of the investigation. The adjudicator of the decision may decide, in their sole discretion, to provide the parties with a summary of the investigation and its outcome. Investigation determinations will be made as follows:

- The Provost and the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion will review and determine any formal actions in relation to findings against faculty members.
- The Associate Vice President for Human Resources and the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion will review and determine any formal actions in relation to findings against staff members, excepting Cabinet members or the President. If a matter involves the Associate Vice President for Human Resources, it will be referred to the Vice President for Finance & Administration for formal action.
- The College President will review and determine any formal actions in relation to findings involving members of the President's Cabinet.

At any time after a complaint has been made but before formal remedial action has been taken, the College may work with the complainant and the respondent to informally resolve the report. All informal resolutions must be agreed to by both the complainant and the respondent, as well as approved by the Associate Vice President of Human Resources and the Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and, in any case involving a faculty member, the Provost.

Engaging in conduct that is prohibited by this Policy may be considered misconduct and may result in appropriate disciplinary action. This Policy is not intended to supersede the rights that employees may have under applicable collective bargaining agreements that may require certain levels of progressive discipline or avenues for grieving a determination that an employee should receive a certain level of disciplinary action for violating this Policy.

Any reports of alleged violations of this Policy will be reviewed with consideration given to other policies and procedures, and if appropriate at the discretion of the College, redirected. Any complaint determined by the Title IX Coordinator to fall within the jurisdiction of the **Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Policies and Procedures** or the **Non-Title IX Sexual Misconduct, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence and Stalking Policy** must be brought pursuant to that policy.

Appeals

Either party may appeal the determination of a reported violation of this policy and/or the formal action taken as a result of the outcome of the case. The right to appeal is contingent upon participation in the investigation process. Appeals in faculty respondent cases must be filed with the President within 5 working days of the delivery of the written determination. Appeals in staff employee respondent cases must be filed with the Vice President for Finance and Administration within 5 working days of the delivery of the written determination.

The other party may be notified of any submitted appeal and will be provided with a copy of the appeal submission for the purpose of providing a response. The other party may submit a written response to the appeal within 5 working days of delivery of the appealing party's appeal. Any response to the initial appeal, shall also be shared with the other party. The President or Vice President for Finance and Administration may affirm, overturn, or modify the determination of responsibility and/or sanctions imposed and will simultaneously send their appeal decision letter to the parties. The decision of the President or Vice President for Finance and Administration is final in all cases.

Appeals may be based only upon the following grounds:

1. That there is newly discovered evidence that could not have been discovered during the investigation and that would have had a significant effect on the outcome;
2. That there was a violation of the procedures under this Policy that had a significant effect on the outcome; and/or
3. That the sanction or sanctions imposed are not appropriate in light of the violation.

Absent extenuating circumstances, appeals will ordinarily be decided within 30 days of the appellate officer's receipt of the appeal.

Commitment to Non-Retaliation

In further support of our standards of conduct, the College strictly prohibits retaliation against any employee who makes a good faith report of an alleged violation of this Policy, encourages another employee to report an alleged violation of this Policy, or who participates as a witness in an investigation into an alleged violation of this Policy. This non-retaliation provision applies irrespective of whether the underlying allegations are ultimately found to have merit. The College may, however, pursue disciplinary action against anyone who makes a knowingly false report under this Policy with the intent to injure another.

Anyone who believes that they have been retaliated against in violation of this Policy, are encouraged to report the retaliatory conduct in accordance with this Policy. The College takes such reports seriously and will investigate and adjudicate an alleged violation of this commitment to non-retaliation in the same manner as other alleged violations of this Policy.

Amendments

The College reserves the right to amend this policy as needed.

Glossary

- **Adjudicating:** To make a formal decision about an alleged violation of this policy based on the evidence gathered during an investigation.
- **Bullying:** Harmful interpersonal aggression or unprofessional behavior that is intended to humiliate, degrade, demean, intimidate, or threaten an individual.
- **Complainant:** Someone who alleges that this policy has been violated.
- **Discrimination:** Adverse treatment of an individual because of the individual's membership in one or more of the classifications protected by law as outlined in this policy.
- **Discriminatory disparate treatment:** Singling out or targeting an individual for less favorable treatment because of their membership in a protected class. In the employment context, the less favorable treatment must negatively affect the individual's terms or conditions of employment.
- **Discriminatory harassment:** Unwelcome and offensive conduct that is directed at an individual based on the individual's actual or perceived membership in a protected class and that interferes with the employee's work or creates a work environment that is intimidating, hostile or offensive.
- **Gender identity:** A person's internal, deeply held knowledge of their own gender. Everyone has a gender identity. A person's gender identity may be the same as or different from their birth-assigned sex.
- **Gender expression:** How a person outwardly expresses or presents their gender through behavior, clothing, body, voice, etc. A person's name and pronoun are also common ways of expressing gender. Societies classify these external cues as masculine and feminine, although what is considered masculine or feminine changes over time and varies by culture.
- **Transgender:** An adjective to describe people whose gender identity differs from the sex they were assigned at birth.
- **Investigation:** The act of evaluating evidence to determine whether this policy was violated.
- **Investigator:** The person who carries out an investigation of an alleged violation of this policy.
- **Pervasiveness:** A legal term that focuses on how widespread, prevalent, continuously and openly practiced the alleged conduct is.
- **Preponderance of evidence:** A standard used to determine whether the greater weight of evidence supports a finding that the policy has been violated. Typically, this requires showing that it is more likely than not that the policy has been violated.
- **Respondent:** The person accused of violating this policy.
- **Sanctions:** A chosen penalty for violating this policy.
- **Witness:** A person who may have information about an alleged violation of this policy. That may be based on the individual's own observations or third-party hearsay.

Workplace Accommodations Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The College is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"), Vermont Fair Employment Practices Act ("VFEP"), and all applicable laws providing for nondiscrimination in employment against qualified individuals with disabilities and other protected characteristics. The College will work with employees who have

disabilities and other protected characteristics as necessary to develop reasonable accommodations that allow an individual the opportunity to perform the essential functions of their job in a safe and efficient manner. Employees in need of accommodation may contact Human Resources and suggest appropriate methods of reasonable accommodation. All information concerning disabilities will be considered confidential and will be released only in accordance with the requirements of the ADA and the VFEPA.

Background checks

Bennington College will conduct a background check as part of the hiring process. Candidates will be asked to authorize the background check as a condition of employment, at the time an offer is made. The offer of employment is contingent upon the successful completion and acceptable results of a background check. Background checks are conducted in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws.

Staff Identification Badge

Bennington College does not require staff of the College to wear identification badges. However, in order for staff to access certain facilities on campus (i.e., use of the Crossett Library, Meyer Recreation Barn) a Bennington ID Card is required. Bennington ID Cards are issued through Information Technology. Bennington Cards are processed by appointment. Contact helpdesk@bennington.edu.

Payroll Procedures

Employees are paid through [ADP](#), the College's integrated Human Resources, payroll, benefits, and time/attendance tracking system. Most staff are paid semi-monthly on the 15th and 30th of each month. Campus Safety staff and Non Exempt hourly part time or per diem employees are paid on a weekly basis and receive checks for hours worked each Thursday.

Non-exempt, hourly part -time or per diem employees submit hours worked by [entering time](#) into ADP Enhanced time and submitting it for Manager/Supervisors approval.

Payroll checks can be deposited directly into individual checking and/or savings accounts.

Campus Directory

Employees can access Bennington College's campus directory [online](#). The directory is updated regularly, and includes contact information for all faculty and staff. If you have any questions or concerns about the campus directory, please contact the Information Technology Office through helpdesk@bennington.edu.

Bennington Bulletin

The *Bennington Bulletin* is a weekly e-newsletter for staff and faculty. The *Bennington Bulletin* was established as a vehicle to get the word out on a variety of subjects in a cohesive and timely manner, so as not to overwhelm recipients with continual communiques from various offices.

To submit an announcement for inclusion in the Bennington Bulletin, please reference this [form](#).

Personnel Files

The Human Resources Office has responsibility for maintaining employee personnel files. The Business Office maintains payroll files. [ADP](#), the College's integrated Human Resources, payroll, benefits, and time/attendance tracking system, allows employees to view their personal, employment, and pay information. Employees are able to update select personal information - home address, phone number and tax withholdings, for example - directly through the system.

Inclement Weather

At times, the College may find it necessary to alter campus operations due to inclement weather. Because Bennington College is a residential campus and must provide services and meals for students and continue essential operations, the College is never officially closed. As such, staff should make every effort to come to work during inclement weather, but should not jeopardize their safety in doing so.

However, due to the fact that individual employees are affected differently during inclement weather by virtue of their residence location or transportation requirements, the College recognizes that certain employees may be delayed in their arrival or unable to travel to work during such situations.

In accordance with the College's [Emergency Response Policy](#), the College will activate the Emergency Notification System, Rave, to announce a change in operations. Notifications will be sent to employees via work email and, if applicable, personal cell phone. Notifications will also be placed on the College's website, the internal employee communications hotline (802) 440-4747, and local television/radio stations.

An employee should notify his/her/their supervisor if he/she/they expects to be delayed in arrival at work. If an employee wishes to leave early due to inclement weather, he/she is required to notify his/her/their direct supervisor prior to leaving. For non-exempt support/hourly staff, the loss of time due to the weather, or emergent conditions, will be made up as mutually agreed to by the employee and his/her/their supervisor or taken as vacation time. For exempt professional staff, the loss of a full day due to the weather, or other emergent condition, will be taken as vacation time.

In any situation where telephone systems are inoperable and an employee is unable to make initial contact with the College, the employee is expected to continue to attempt such contact until successful.

Select 'essential staff' may be required to work during inclement weather or emergent situations. Staff working in Campus Safety are considered 'essential staff' at all times. Staff working in Dining Services, Buildings and Grounds, and Student Life may, at times, be considered 'essential staff;' individuals working in these offices should consult their supervisor about their 'essential staff' status.

If the College is closed or employees are sent home due to weather conditions, employees will be paid for the day. Those employees required to work will get compensatory time off, if applicable, or may be entitled to overtime pay, depending on the situation.

Workers' Compensation

Workers' Compensation is an insurance program that provides medical and disability benefits for certain work-related injuries and illnesses arising out of and in the course of employment. Employees injured on the job will be compensated according to the Vermont Workers' Compensation Act. The Human Resources Office, the College's workers' compensation carrier, and the Department of Labor will monitor these cases to ensure effective management.

Medical treatment for work-related injuries and return to work planning will be coordinated by the College in conjunction with the Occupational Health Department (OHD) of the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center (SVMC) in Bennington, VT. Employees are required to follow the steps outlined below in the event of a work-related injury:

- Any employee requiring ambulance transportation from the work site due to a life- or limb-threatening accident should be taken directly to the Emergency Department at Southwestern Vermont Medical Center in Bennington, VT, or the nearest emergency care unit.

Employees should always notify Campus Safety (x210) regarding any emergency situation.

- All work-related injuries should be reported to Human Resources within 24 hours. In the event that the office is not open, the report should be made on the first business day that it is open. Employees must file a First Report of Injury form and related Department of Labor forms provided by the Human Resources Office. Employees must contact Human Resources regarding their return-to-work status and other case details.
- Any employee who has a non-life-threatening injury should contact the Occupational Health Department (OHD) of SVMC at 802-447-5317. The OHD nurse can advise the employee on the appropriate course of action and will make necessary appointments for treatment and/or referrals. The OHD will determine the need for additional visits for specialist evaluation and treatment, file claims, and will keep the employer updated with restrictions and return-to-work notices. The contact information is as noted:

Southwestern Vermont Medical Center
Occupational Health Department
100 Hospital Drive
Bennington, Vermont 05201

- The final decision as to whether compensation shall or shall not be payable in any particular instance rests with the Vermont Department of Labor.

Accumulated sick time and vacation time may be used by an employee to supplement any workers' compensation received, up to the amount of the employee's regular salary. Vacation and sick time are not earned while collecting workers' compensation.

For questions or concerns regarding work-related injuries or illnesses, please contact Human Resources.

[Drug-Free Workplace Policy](#)

In compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 enacted by Congress all employees are advised that: the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or alcohol is prohibited in the workplace. Any employee who engages in this activity will face sanctions which may include suspension or termination of employment. Furthermore, as an employee, you must notify the College of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after such conviction. Any employee so convicted must satisfactorily participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program, at the employee's expense, or face sanctions including suspension or termination.

The College is committed to providing a drug-free workplace and to this end, from time to time, will provide information about the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace. The College's policy regarding alcohol is designed to be consistent with the laws of Vermont; it stresses moderation, safety, and individual responsibility. In addition, the Human Resources Office maintains a list of local agencies equipped to deal with problems associated with drug and alcohol abuse.

[Smoking Policy](#)

In accordance with Vermont state law the College is required to provide employees, students, and visitors with clearly stated guidelines on when and where they may smoke. The State policy restricts smoking in all places of public access. The policy has been formulated in recognition of the Surgeon General's conclusion that :

- a. smoking is injurious to health; and

- b. involuntary (or second-hand) smoking is a cause of disease in non-smokers

The College has designated all of its administrative, academic, and other public buildings **SMOKE-FREE**. Smoking is not permitted inside any of these buildings or within 30' of entryways and exits of all buildings.

Pet Policy

Bennington College appreciates the special nature of the owner-pet relationship. However, the College is a workplace and residence for many, and, as such, the welfare of the entire community must be considered paramount. The College's pet policy recognizes that animals have the potential to impose on the safety, health, personal well being, and comfort of College employees and residents, as well as the sanitation, housekeeping, and physical condition of the campus. The College's pet policy consists of two components: (1) Dogs in the Workplace, and (2) Other Pets in the Workplace.

1. Dogs in the Workplace

The College has established a pet policy that allows opportunities for employees to bring a dog into the workplace. Faculty and staff with private offices or faculty and staff who share an office may bring a dog to work during business hours so long as they comply with all requirements set forth in this policy. There will be select days during the academic year when dogs will not be permitted in the workplace; days include, but are not limited to, Plan Days, BenningtonWorks, Board meetings, Convocation, Fall/Alumni Weekend, Commencement Weekend, days when Buildings & Grounds must access an office for maintenance repairs and specific dates set at the discretion of a department manager. If additional College-wide days are added, employees will be notified of these days as far in advance as possible. This policy solely applies to the College's main campus; it does not apply to any other campus facility.

Bringing a dog to the workplace is a privilege and respect for other community members is paramount. When a dog in the workplace interferes with the working or living/learning environment of the employee or another community member, the dog will no longer be allowed in the workplace. Dog owners must agree to take full responsibility and liability for their dog, must ensure that the dog does not interfere with the use of the grounds by others, and ensure that the dog remains under the control and custody of the owner or the owner's designee at all times. Dog owners who fail to comply with all facets of this policy will lose their privilege of bringing their dog into the workplace and may incur fines/costs for select violations or damages. Policy compliance is managed by Bennington College Campus Safety.

With the exception of service animals, dogs will not be allowed in public spaces, administrative or academic areas of the College including, among others, classrooms, libraries, studios, theatres, labs, food service areas or conference/meeting rooms. Additionally, dogs will not be allowed in the following public-facing offices/buildings:

- Buildings & Grounds
- Campus Safety
- Commons
- Crossett Library
- Dining Services (includes anywhere food is handled/served)
- Health Services
- Human Resources
- Office of Admissions
- Psychological Services
- Student Life

Dog owners must exercise good judgment when bringing a dog to campus and must agree to the following:

- Approval by the employee's immediate supervisor. The employee's supervisor will be responsible for vetting the initial request to have a dog in the workplace with the department members.
- The dog must be registered with [Campus Safety](#). Registration requirements consists of a valid dog license and proof of current shots/vaccinations. *Please do not bring your dog to campus until you have been granted approval by Campus Safety.*
- The dog must not present any health or safety concern to others in the office/building. If colleagues are uncomfortable with dogs in their general work area, or have some type of allergic/medical reaction, then the dog will not be allowed.
- Dogs must be on leashes at all times when not in their owner's office.
- Dogs may not be allowed to wander outside of the owner's office into public areas.
- Dogs that show any aggressive tendencies (or have a past history of biting or aggressive behavior) will not be allowed on campus;
- Select dog breeds are prohibited by the College's insurance carrier; contact Campus Safety for detailed information.
- Dog owners must post a sign on their office door notifying students and co-workers and visitors that a dog is present. Signage will be available through Campus Safety.
- In advance, dog owners must alert meeting participants that a dog will be present in their office; must provide an alternate meeting location to an individual who is uncomfortable meeting in an office with a dog present or must leave their dog home on a particular day.
- Employees who bring their dogs to work are wholly responsible for cleaning their offices and removing the trash; cleanliness must meet regular College standards. Buildings & Grounds staff will not perform any cleaning or trash removal regardless of whether or not the dog is in the office at the time of service. If offices are not routinely and adequately cleaned by the occupant, then the dog will no longer be allowed. If an office must be entered for maintenance or other required work, the dog owner must make arrangements to ensure the animal will not be present during the duration of work. Employees will be notified as far in advance as possible, but may receive as little as one days' notice so owners must be prepared for alternate pet accommodations at all times.
- Immediately clean up after the dog, both indoors and out. Dog owners should be mindful of campus grounds, paying particular attention to ensure that the dog does not eliminate on any paved area, common grounds, walkways and the like. The dog owner is required to properly dispose of dog waste.
- The dog owner will bear all related costs for damages attributable to the dog that require maintenance/repairs/replacements of College property/facilities and understand that the dog will not be allowed back on campus.
- Dogs are not permitted in any college-owned vehicle.
- The presence of the dog does not, in the supervisor's view, interfere with the owner's ability to perform their work duties.
- Policy violations, owner negligence, and/or mistreatment of a pet will not be tolerated.

If any community member experiences a problem with another community member's dog, the community member may contact the employee's supervisor or Human Resources (staff) or Office of the Provost/Dean of the College (faculty) who will work with the employee to resolve the conflict.

The College reserves the right to revoke privileges of any employee who fails to comply with any tenants of this policy or whose dog, in the sole discretion of the College, presents as a concern to the campus community. The College reserves the right to revise this policy at any time, with or without notice.

2. Other Pets on Campus

With exception of the 'Dogs in the Workplace policy', small fish and service animals, the College prohibits any person from bringing or keeping pets in residences or any administrative or academic buildings. Pets, including dogs, are not allowed in such facilities as classrooms, libraries, studios, food service areas, administrative or meeting spaces, or public access areas. When on campus grounds, a dog must be on a leash at all times. Employees occupying College housing may keep common domestic pets in their residence subject to certain conditions.

Weapons Policy

Possession of dangerous, potentially dangerous, or unauthorized materials such as explosives, firearms, or other weapons (whether or not loaded with ammunition) on College property is strictly prohibited. Employees may not carry such materials on to College property in their vehicles or by other means. The Dean of the College may authorize in writing specific exceptions for job-related activities for faculty and technical staff. The Director of Campus Safety may authorize in writing specific exceptions for job-related activities for other personnel. Violation of this policy will be considered grounds for immediate discharge.

Use of College Communication Resources

The College provides or contracts for the communications services and equipment necessary to promote the efficient conduct of its business.

Staff should not use College communications services and equipment for personal use when doing so incurs costs borne by the College or has an adverse impact on job performance or the College's electronic infrastructure. College communications property or equipment may not be removed from the premises without authorization from supervisors.

All College communications services and equipment including the messages transmitted or stored by them, are the sole property of the College. The College may access and monitor employee communications and files as it considers appropriate. Communications equipment and services include mail, electronic mail ("e-mail"), courier services, facsimile, telephone systems, personal computers, computer networks, online services, Internet connections, computer files, telex systems, video equipment and tapes, audio and video recording equipment, pagers, cellular phones, bulletin boards, and newly developed communications technology as it is introduced into the College.

Staff should ensure that no personal correspondence appears to be an official communication of the College. All outgoing messages, whether by mail, facsimile, e-mail, Internet transmission, or any other means, should be accurate, appropriate, and professional. Staff should not use the College's address for receiving personal mail (unless they live on campus) or use College stationary or postage for personal letters.

Improper use of College communication services and equipment may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Improper use includes any misuse as described in this policy as well as any harassing, offensive, demeaning, fraudulent, insulting, defaming, intimidating, or sexually suggestive written, recorded, or electronically transmitted messages. Specific rules for commonly used equipment follow:

Email

Email is available for all staff members who currently have a Bennington-issued username and password. The site address is www.gmail.com; you will then login using your Bennington email address and password. The site provides access to your Gmail inbox, contacts, tasks, calendar, and Google Drive. You may access this site from any major web browser such as Chrome, Firefox or Safari. If you have problems or questions, please contact the Information Technology Office through helpdesk@bennington.edu.

Your Bennington email should be used primarily for business directly related to your work at Bennington College. You may choose to execute some amount of personal correspondence through your work email; however, no business unrelated to your work with the College should be conducted using your Bennington assigned email or Google Drive. You should be clear that any personal correspondence conducted through your Bennington gmail does not reflect an official position of, representation of, or work for the College, and all communications, whether for personal or work-related reasons, are considered the property of the College and may be monitored.

Web browsing should be conducted judiciously and is primarily for business use. Do not download and install software from the Web unless it specifically relates to your work for the College. Be cautious when clicking on attachments in emails; this is a common means of executing viruses. Please mark all spam emails as such using the gmail "Report spam" feature. Please contact the Help Desk at x4476 with any questions.

All Bennington employees are bound by the CAN-SPAM laws and must behave appropriately with Bennington-issued email addresses. Specifically, employees must refrain from sending mass emails (more than 20 recipients) using the copy (CC) or blind copy (BCC) fields. All mass emails sent from Bennington email addresses must use a mass email system with an unsubscribe option, per U.S. federal law. For assistance, please contact the IT@Bennington Help Desk, x4476, helpdesk@bennington.edu.

Telephones

College telephones, including College-issued cell phones, are primarily for use for business purposes. We ask that you limit your use of these devices for personal use. The College assumes no responsibility for personal files stored on College devices.

Digital File Storage

Bennington College provides several forms of device- and cloud-based storage employees, including a personal computing device, a Bennington-issued Google Drive account, file storage in Amazon Web Services, and, in some cases, cell phones and tablets. These devices remain the property of the College and are subject to review of contents by the College at any time; no expectations of privacy of data is implied when a device or account is issued to an employee. Storage of personal files in College-supported digital storage systems is prohibited; the College will not return any personal files from any device or system upon employee separation.

Other

Equipment such as computers and fax machines should be used primarily for College business. Photocopiers should not be used for personal printing; however, digital scanning and sending to personal email is permitted, as the College incurs no cost for these services.

The College engages with a number of third-party, Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) and cloud-based vendors. Employees are expected to use these systems and services exclusively for business-related purposes. The use of any SaaS or cloud-based service that employees access with Bennington-issued credentials is strictly prohibited.

[Financial Whistleblower Policy and Procedure](#)

This policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns relating to the financial affairs or the financial recordkeeping ("Financial Affairs") of the College within the organization, for investigation and appropriate action. With this goal in mind, no employee who, in good faith, reports such a concern shall be threatened, discriminated against, or otherwise subject to retaliation or adverse employment consequences as a result of such report.

The following concerns are covered by and may be reported under this policy:

- providing false or misleading information on the College's financial documents, tax returns or other public financial document;
- providing false material financial information to, or withholding such information from, the auditors, accountants, lawyers, trustees or other parties responsible for ensuring the College's compliance with fiscal and associated legal responsibilities;
- violation of any law relating to the Financial Affairs of the College, including embezzlement, private benefit, or misappropriation of funds;
- material violation of the Board of Trustees' policy on conflict of interest.

Procedures to Report Concerns

An employee may report a concern covered by this policy directly to the President, the Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration, the Dean of the College, or the Director of Human Resources. However, if for any reason an employee is not comfortable reporting to any of these individuals or does not believe the issue is being properly addressed, the employee may report the matter to the Chair of the Board or any member of the Board of Trustees. A report must be in writing.

Handling of Reported Concerns

The College will investigate promptly any report made in accordance with this policy. A matter reported to any of the four staff members referenced above will be investigated to determine whether the allegation is true, whether the issue is material, and what actions, if any, are necessary and appropriate to correct the problem.

A matter reported directly to the Chair of the Board or any member of the Board of Trustees will be investigated by the Chair or her/his designee, unless the matter pertains to the Chair. The Chair or her/his designee will investigate to determine whether the allegation is true, whether the issue is material, and what, if any, corrective action is necessary and appropriate. If the report pertains to the Chair, the President will investigate to determine whether the allegation is true, whether the issue is material, and what, if any, corrective action is necessary and appropriate.

Acting in Good Faith

An employee reporting a concern must act in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the matter raised is a serious violation of law or policy relating to the Financial Affairs of the College, or a material accounting or auditing matter.

Confidentiality

Reports of concerns, and investigations pertaining thereto, shall be kept confidential to the extent practicable and permitted by law.

Guest Policy

Bennington College encourages all members of the community, including staff and faculty to enjoy all the public events and shows published on the college calendar designated as "Open to Public." Please check the calendar for event details including times and location.

The College also hosts private and internal events that are intended for a specified audience; these events are not open to the general College community or to the public. Requests for permission to attend an event that is published on the college calendar but not designated as "Open to Public" should be submitted to the Director of Campus Safety at least 24 hours in advance of the event.

All student residential housing, on and off campus, are considered private and staff/faculty attempting to visit as a guest is not permitted under any circumstances. Outside of those staff who, as required by their position, to officially conduct work in student housing during their regularly scheduled shift, permission to visit or be a guest in the

student housing will not be granted. Alumni staff and faculty are allowed to visit campus, excluding student housing, for unlimited day visits.

The College reserves the right to limit or deny guests and may revoke guest privileges for any reason, at any time for including, but not limited to violation of this guest policy, or any College regulation or policy, or of any law.

Campus Safety is responsible for enforcing all policies related to staff and faculty guest visitation. Please feel free to contact the Director of Campus Safety at extension 4420 or at (802) 440-4420 for any related questions.

Last update: May 2024