



**EMPLOYEE  
HANDBOOK  
2023 – 2024**

# Gulf Coast State College

## *Statement of Values*

Holding true to its vision and working continuously on mission, Gulf Coast State College affirms these values as essential to all the college is and does:

- ❖ Boldness of vision
- ❖ Responsiveness to the community
- ❖ Culture of honesty and trust
- ❖ Open expression of ideas
- ❖ Diversity of thought and culture
- ❖ Flexibility and agility
- ❖ Ease of access and affordability
- ❖ Outstanding teaching and service
- ❖ Creativity and innovation
- ❖ Purposeful work

## *Vision*

Gulf Coast State College will deliver life-changing learning opportunities and will join as a full partner in dynamic cultural and economic development of the region.

## *Mission*

Gulf Coast State College holds students and community of central importance. The college provides many opportunities for learning and offers a range of programs and services to help students become well-educated, productive citizens. The college is equally dedicated to collaborating with the community to help create or improve economic well-being and to offer the space of the college for social dialog, events of art and culture, and other moments that enhance our quality of life.

**The information contained in this handbook is intended to familiarize employees with college procedures and other information pertinent to their employment. The contents cannot be taken as a basis for contractual rights. The District Board of Trustees Manual of Policy, Florida Statutes, and State Board of Education Administrative Rules take precedence over this handbook and must be referred to when questions of legal interpretation arise. Information contained in this handbook is subject to change at any time. The Manual of Policy & Internal Management Memoranda is available on the campus intranet (GCSC NET) under GCSC Official Documents on the home page.**

*Gulf Coast State College is an equal access/equal opportunity institution.*

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***Administrative Officers***

The College President is charged with complete administrative responsibility for the operation of the college. The president is assisted by the administrative staff, faculty, support staff, and career professional. The college is organized internally through two closely related patterns: (1) individual positions of responsibility and (2) teams, task forces, standing committees, and Executive Council.

The following is a list of the administrative officers of Gulf Coast State College:

- Glen McDonald ..... President
- Dr. Cheryl Flax-Hyman ..... Executive Vice President, Institutional Effectiveness & Student Affairs
- Dr. Holly Kuehner ..... Vice President, Academic Affairs
- John Mercer ..... Vice President, Administration & Finance
- Leslie Hapner ..... Dean, Business Affairs

***Animals on Campus – Use of Service Animals***

The college acknowledges the right of students, staff, and visitors to a safe and healthy environment while on college property or while participating in college-sponsored functions. In the interest of maintaining such an environment, animals are not permitted on college property or at college-sponsored functions.

The college acknowledges the right of persons with disabilities to utilize service animals as appropriate. Animals certified to assist persons with disabilities are exempt from the college’s animal prohibition. The college maintains a list of service animal owner responsibilities related to grooming, sanitation, and control of service animals. This may be picked up from the college’s Coordinator of Student Accessibility Resources.

When the use of a certified service animal poses a documented danger or health hazard to others, the service animal will be removed and the college’s Coordinator of Student Accessibility Resources will mediate. Provisions will be made, as necessary, to ensure that the needs previously met by the use of a certified service animal are accommodated.

***Association of Florida Colleges (AFC)***

AFC is the only association that represents all employees of the 28 colleges in Florida. The purpose of the association is to promote the development and advancement of Florida public college education and to play an active role in promoting legislation beneficial to the college system and its employees. The association also provides informal opportunities to get to know colleagues at Gulf Coast State College and other colleges in the system. Membership is open to all college employees and retirees of the community college system. Dues may be paid at one time or by payroll deduction. Professional development activities are held throughout the year and an annual state convention is held each fall. Additional information may be obtained from the Human Resources Office.

***Building and Equipment Repairs***

Minor building/equipment repairs or additional services may be handled by Facilities Management. A building manager and assistant building manager have been assigned to each building as the contact person responsible for requesting necessary repairs and modifications. Report problems or issues to your assigned building manager and they will use the Facilities Management Computer Software System to submit a work order request.

## ***Calendar/Holidays***

A college calendar is published each year indicating designated holidays. Holidays and other student/faculty deadlines are listed on the college's website under the link "Academic Calendar".

### **2023-2024 Calendar**

#### **Fall 2023**

August 14 - 18	22 <sup>nd</sup> Annual GCSC Fall Conference
August 16	Welcome Back (College Closed for in-service day)
August 21	Fall Term Classes Begin
September 4	Labor Day (College Closed 09/02 - 09/04*)
November 10	Veterans' Day (College Closed 11/10 - 11/12*)
November 23 – 26	Faculty and Staff Thanksgiving Break (College Closed 11/23 – 11/26*) No classes for students on November 22
December 18 - January 1	<i>Faculty</i> – Winter Break (College Closed 12/22 - 01/01*)
December 22 - January 1	<i>Staff</i> - Winter Break (College Closed 12/22 - 01/01*)

#### **Spring 2024**

January 2	Faculty & Staff Return No classes for students January 2- 4
January 5	Spring Term Classes Begin
January 15-16	Martin Luther King Day/In-Service Training (College Closed 01/13 - 01/16*)
March 18 - 22	Spring Break Faculty, Staff, & Students (College Closed 03/16 – 03/22*)
April 26	Honors Convocation Faculty Night Duty
May 3	Spring Term Classes End
May 3	Graduation – Faculty Night Duty

#### **Summer 2024**

May 8	Summer Term Classes Begin
May 27	Memorial Day (College Closed 05/25 - 05/27*)

July 4

Independence Day (College Closed 07/04\*)

August 2

Summer Term Classes End

**\*Indicates services for students will be unavailable, although special classes or activities may take place.**

### ***Children on Campus***

Unaccompanied children are not allowed on college property unless the child is enrolled in a course or program at the college. In accordance with this, students are not allowed to bring children into the classroom and employees are not permitted to bring their children to work without prior approval. A student who brings a child to a class meeting will be asked to leave the class and an absence will be recorded. Campus personnel will immediately contact the appropriate local authorities for any unaccompanied children on campus.

### ***College Councils and Committees***

The six basic groups of the college organizational structure include Academic Council, Administrative Services Council, Executive Council, Faculty Senate, Professional Employee Council, and Student Affairs Council. Each of the major councils may utilize committees, calling on various members of the faculty and staff for services as needed. Faculty and staff members are expected to serve on councils or committees when requested. In addition, the following committees or action teams meet regularly and serve a vital function on the college campus: Appeals Committee, Health/Wellness Committee, Information Technology Committee, Instructional Divisions, Professional Development Committee, Safety Committee, Scholarship Committee, Student Government, Student Life Committee, Tri-College Roundtable, and general employee meetings. For specific information on the listed councils and other college groups and committees, please consult the Manual of Policy.

#### **Faculty Senate**

The Faculty Senate serves as the representative of the faculty, acting in liaison among faculty groups, individual faculty members, divisions, and the college administration. Those serving on the council must be members who have been selected as outlined in the Articles of the Faculty Senate. Meetings are held semi-monthly, as needed, during the fall and spring semesters.

Officers are chair, chair-elect, and recorder and are elected by Faculty Senate constituents at large. The Vice President of Academic Affairs serves as an ex officio member of the council. The council agenda is constructed primarily from items submitted through the four standing committees and from the division representatives and at-large members of the council; however, agenda items may also originate from individual faculty members, the administration, committees, or organizations.

#### **Professional Employee Council**

The Professional Employee Council serves as a means of professional growth and action for its membership and constituents. The council acts as a communication channel and promotes networking among the employees it represents, other campus representative bodies, and the administration. It promotes student and college interests. The agenda is comprised of submitted items of interest or concern from council constituents. This is accomplished through surveys and discussion within campus divisions and departments.

Officers are the chair and chair-elect. The council members are elected from the represented areas/divisions and serve two-year terms. The President of the College and the immediate past chair serve as ex officio members. The Professional Employee Council meets on call or on a regularly scheduled basis, as requested by the chair.

### ***Commencement***

All faculty and contractual staff holding the rank of director, its equivalent or above are required to participate in commencement exercises and Honors Convocation, as well as other graduation activities, and are to dress in academic regalia for special academic programs when requested. These employees are expected to buy or rent their own regalia.



## ***Disciplinary Process***

Employees who violate College policies and procedures or who exhibit undesirable conduct, shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. The severity of the disciplinary action is determined by the severity of the offense or behavior.

Supervisors are required to seek prompt guidance from an authorized Human Resources staff member prior to proceeding with disciplinary action of any kind. Exception: Supervisors are authorized to immediately send an employee home (with pay) following a serious performance or behavioral incident which caused potential physical or financial jeopardy to the employee, to others or the College. Immediately following such an incident, the supervisor is required to contact authorized Human Resources staff for consultation and guidance.

Typically, and under the guidance and pre-approval of authorized Human Resources staff, Gulf Coast State College utilizes a progressive discipline procedure containing the following steps:

- Coaching/counseling, which normally is appropriate to redirect minor performance adjustment efforts toward meeting job expectations (e.g., attendance issues).
- Verbal warning, which normally is appropriate to address an infringement of office protocol, behavior or performance expectations (e.g., continued attendance issues, failing to meet minimum work/policy standards).
- Written warning, which normally is appropriate to address a serious infringement or continuing infringements of office protocol, behavior or performance expectations (e.g., rude behavior, use of improper/profane language or gestures, or other inappropriate conduct deemed a violation of the conduct policy). All written warnings must be pre-approved by authorized Human Resources staff prior to distribution to the employee.
- Suspension, which is generally only used for investigatory purposes for serious allegations requiring investigation and not as a punitive action.
- Discharge, which normally is appropriate after going through the other disciplinary steps, unless the behavioral issue is egregious (e.g., assault, theft, drug use, etc.).

Notwithstanding the above, Gulf Coast State College may begin the disciplinary sequence at any step, including proceeding directly to discharge. Gulf Coast State College will use its discretion in fixing the appropriate discipline based upon all of the surrounding circumstances, including, without limitation, the nature and severity of the offense and the employee's work history.

When counseling employees, supervisors are expected to:

- Treat employees equally for similar circumstances.
- Ensure that disciplinary actions are appropriate to the situation.
- Consider the employee's general work record and whether there are any special circumstances.
- Ensure situations are addressed promptly.
- Treat all employees respectfully.

## ***INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT/BEHAVIOR***

The following non-exhaustive list identifies behaviors that may result in disciplinary action up to and potentially including suspension and/or immediate termination of employment:

- Engaging in inappropriate conduct or a prohibited relationship with a Gulf Coast State College student;
- Lying, or falsifying work documents, including but not limited to employment application information, time and attendance records, or other work-related documents or records;
- Theft from the College, from students, or from co-workers;
- Unauthorized access or use of systems or property belonging to Gulf Coast State College or another employee;
- Bullying or discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment, of a student, another employee, a College vendor, or any other individual through a work-related association;

- Accessing and/or distributing pornographic emails or websites on work time or using College equipment;
- Threats or assaults toward any person in a work-related association;
- Dangerous or destructive acts, including willful damage to Gulf Coast State College property, the property of co-workers, or the property of others in a work-related association;
- Serious violation of a health and safety rule;
- Possession or use of alcohol (except while attending a GCSC-sanctioned event where alcohol is provided), narcotics, illegal drugs, and/or prescription drugs (without a valid prescription) on the premises, or being under the influence of such substances while on the campus, attending a College event, or on the job;
- Possession or use of unauthorized firearms or other weapons while on the campus, attending a College event, or on the job;
- Highly unprofessional or disruptive behavior while on the campus, attending a College event, or on the job, including using profanity, speaking disrespectfully to co-workers, vendors, students or supervisors;
- Seriously illegal, unethical or immoral behavior at any time which, by the employee's association to the College, could bring the College into disrepute or under serious liability;
- Willful negligence or refusal to perform assigned duties;
- Working overtime without prior approval from department VP; taking leave without prior documented approval;
- Failure to follow reasonable instructions (insubordination); this includes failure to adhere to Florida Statute 553.865, "Safety in Private Spaces Act," including willfully entering for an unauthorized purpose, a restroom or changing facility designated for the opposite sex, and refusing to depart be asked to do so by a faculty member, administrator or other duly authorized college personnel;
- Abandonment of position – considered to be not reporting for duty, no call/no show, or being away without approved leave for more than three days, without a legitimately acceptable reason.

As noted above, this list is not all-inclusive. Engaging in conduct that violates common sense or engaging in behavior that is inconsistent with Gulf Coast State College's best interests also will result in discipline, up to and including discharge.

### ***Dress Code***

College personnel are expected to maintain high standards of dress and personal appearance throughout the year. Such dress should be that normally found in businesses and professional addresses in the community (refer to IMM 6.088). Questions and concerns should be addressed by your supervisor.

### ***Drug-Free Workplace***

Gulf Coast State College recognizes the importance of prohibiting alcohol and illicit drugs on its campuses. To this end, the District Board of Trustees and administration of Gulf Coast State College concur the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, sale, or use of alcohol and illicit drugs on its campuses is strictly prohibited. Any employee of the college involved in such activities will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and referral for prosecution. The college's policy is not intended to ban the use of drugs or alcohol in providing instruction in the Public Safety training programs, nor is it intended to ban the use of alcohol in Culinary programs.

Any instances involving alcohol or controlled substances, whether by students, employees, or other persons, must be reported to campus authorities immediately. This includes any individuals under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances. It is the intent of Gulf Coast State College to assist its employees in every way possible. In order to attain this goal, it is important that alcohol and illicit drug dependence be identified so that appropriate referral and assistance can be made. We encourage all of our employees to self-identify should the need arise. EAP services are provided to employees to assist with any drug or alcohol dependency issues. Contact Human Resources for EAP information.

### ***Emergency/Accident/Incident Reporting***

It is the duty and responsibility of all college employees to report any accidents or incidents, no matter how minor.

## Accident or Injury Involving College Personnel

All Gulf Coast State College employees are covered by workers' compensation insurance provided by the college for injuries or illnesses arising out of, or in the course of, employment. To protect yourself and your co-workers, follow all safety rules and regulations. Workers' compensation was designed to cover medical expenses and a portion of any earnings lost due to injury on the job. The amount of compensation is based on the employee's salary, among other factors. Workers' compensation laws prohibit reimbursement beyond normal weekly compensation. For further details, contact the Human Resources Office.

All employee illnesses-in-the-line-of-duty or on-the-job accidents or injuries, no matter how minor, must be reported *immediately* to the Human Resources Office. If medical attention is necessary, Human Resources staff will advise you of physicians authorized by GCSC and the Florida College System Risk Management Consortium to treat employees. It is imperative that accidents be reported to the Human Resources Office before seeking medical attention, unless the accident is life threatening, in order to receive workers' compensation benefits. Using appropriate professional judgment during hours when the Human Resources Office is closed, employees are to use the emergency rooms of local hospitals for medical attention relating to an on-the-job injury.

An *Accident-Incident Report* must be completed and forwarded to the office of the Vice President of Administration and Finance by the close of the next business day. Failure to do so may result in a monetary fine imposed on the college. Contact Human Resources on how to properly complete an Incident Report.

## Accident or Injury Involving Student or Visitor

A detailed report of any accident involving personal injury or damage to property should be made immediately to the office of the Vice President of Administration & Finance by any college employee engaged in or witnessing the accident or incident. In addition to the *Accident-Incident Report*, an *A-G Administrators' Claim Form* must be completed immediately for an accident involving a student in Culinary Arts, Health Sciences programs, Natural Science disciplines, Public Safety, Technology, or Theatre programs for whom the college provides accident insurance when injury occurs during clinical or classes.

In cases of emergency, the guidelines for handling an emergency shall be followed at once. If a student needs or requests medical attention, an ambulance will be called. The college assumes no liability for medical or ambulance expenses.

## Emergency Procedures

In case of emergency, call the following in the order presented until the problem is addressed or resolved.

1. Call 911 directly, if a *life-threatening emergency* is involved. From a campus phone, dial "9-911"; from a personal phone, dial "911".

and

2. Call the FSU-PC police: From a campus phone dial "3111"; from a personal phone, dial "850-774-2705".

and

3. Call the GCSC switchboard operator: From a campus phone, dial "0"; from a personal phone, dial "850-769-1551".

The county's Emergency Management Center verifies all 911 calls by calling our switchboard operator; therefore, **it is important that you inform the operator of the nature of the problem and the location.** In the event you are faced with an emergency, the following steps should be taken. After the emergency is over, a college *Accident-Incident Report* must be completed and forwarded to the office of the Vice President of Administration & Finance by the close of the next business day.

### ***Basic Rules***

1. If medical attention is necessary or requested by the injured person, call 911 and request an ambulance. It is always better to have an ambulance in route and not need one than to have one sitting in the station when you need it. Give your name and the location of the person in distress.
2. Call FSU-PC Police (850-774-2705) and the college switchboard operator (850-769-1551) and report the medical emergency. Give your name and the location of the person in distress. (Note: If 911 call is made from a GCSC phone, the switchboard operator will be automatically notified.)
3. Have someone stay with the person in distress, if possible, when you make these phone calls.
4. Do not attempt to assist the victim beyond this protocol unless you are trained in first aid.
5. Always protect yourself. Make sure it is safe to approach the victim. Do not become a victim yourself.
6. Always use Personal Protective Equipment when dealing with a victim's bodily fluids.
7. The hardest thing to remember in a medical emergency is that most of the time the correct procedure is simply to monitor and reassure the victim until EMS arrives.
8. After the response is complete – an *Accident-Incident Report* must be completed and forwarded to the office of the Vice President of Administration & Finance by the close of the next business day.

### ***Unconscious Victim***

1. Follow “Basic Rules” listed above.
2. If victim is not breathing, begin rescue breathing and/or CPR if trained.
3. If CPR is required, utilize one of the Automated External Defibrillator (AED) units to assist until EMS arrives on the scene. Location of the AED units can be found on the intranet. Familiarize yourself with the campus map locations before an actual emergency occurs.
4. If victim is breathing, monitor the victim until EMS arrives.
5. Maintain body temperature (cover with a blanket if it is cool).

### ***Conscious Victim (Physical Injury or Illness)***

1. Follow “Basic Rules” listed above.
2. DO NOT MOVE VICTIM UNLESS THERE IS A LIFE-THREATENING PROBLEM (FIRE, NATURAL DISASTER, SHOOTER, ETC.).
3. Maintain body temperature (cover with a blanket if it is cool).
4. Do not attempt to apply a splint to a suspected fracture.
5. Treat any sprain or similar injury as if it were a fracture.
6. Reassure the victim.

### ***Bleeding***

1. Follow “Basic Rules” listed above.
2. If the victim is conscious, demonstrate to victim how to apply a compress. If the victim is unconscious, apply a compress to the wound and press hard. If blood soaks through, do not remove the compress. Apply another compress on top of the original one. DO NOT APPLY HARD PRESSURE TO WOUNDS OF THE EYES, EARS, OR SKULL.
3. If the wound is to the leg or arm, elevate the wound so it is higher than the heart.
4. If there are no other injuries such as fractures, have the person lie down and maintain body temperature (cover with a blanket if cool).
5. Use tourniquets as a LAST RESORT only, but not for injuries to the head or neck.
6. Reassure the victim.

### ***Seizures***

1. Follow “Basic Rules” listed above.
2. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO RESTRAIN THE VICTIM.
3. DO NOT PUT ANYTHING IN THE VICTIM'S MOUTH.
4. Place some sort of padding under victim's head if possible.

5. Expect the victim to be very sleepy after the seizure.
6. After the seizure maintain body temperature (cover with a blanket if cool).
7. Reassure the victim.

### ***Employee Responsibility***

As an employee of Gulf Coast State College, you are hereby advised that it is not only your right but also your responsibility to be aware of all rules governing employees set forth in this handbook or enacted by the District Board of Trustees. In addition, employees arrested or convicted of a crime are required to notify the Executive Director of Human Resources. If proper notification is not received by Human Resources, employees may be subject to discipline that could include termination of employment. Please see Manual of Policy 6.030 for more information.

### ***Employment- Advertising New Positions***

Normally, when an employment position becomes available, it is advertised both on and off campus. The size and expectation of an adequate applicant pool will determine the scope and nature of advertising. Positions may be advertised on internet job sites such as Indeed/Monster/CareerBuilder, Higher Ed Jobs, and a variety of other local, state, and national publications deemed appropriate for the position being posted. Applicants must apply through the Gulf Coast State College Employment Portal hosted by the Human Resources Office.

### ***Employment-at-Will***

Employment-at-will means all employees, part-time and full-time, without employment contracts or with annual employment contracts, are employed by and may be terminated at the will of the president as authorized by the District Board of Trustees. It is not necessary that reasons be given for such termination or contract non-renewal. An employee without a contract may also resign without stating a reason. Notice of the intent to resign from GCSC requires proper notice per Manual of Policy 6.070 in order to be eligible for payment of accrued vacation leave. Terminal pay shall be paid only if the employee leaves under favorable circumstances, not if the employee is being dismissed by action of the board. Similarly, employees under annual contract should not expect automatic renewal of annual contracts, and if offered an additional annual contract, the employee may refuse such a contract.

### ***Equity Officer***

Gulf Coast State College is an equal access/equal opportunity institution which does not discriminate against any person in its programs, activities, policies or procedures on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, national origin, marital status, religion, age, gender, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, disability, or veteran status. All questions or should be directed to the Executive Director of Human Resources/Title II/504/Title IX Coordinator and Employment Equity Officer.

### ***Evaluations***

All personnel shall be evaluated annually, and the written evaluation instrument shall become part of the employee's personnel record. All performance evaluations are required to be turned into the Human Resources Office once discussed with the employee and appropriate signatures have been acquired.

### ***Fingerprinting/Criminal Background Checks***

The fingerprinting of college (at this stage, not an employee yet) personnel shall be required by the college as a condition of employment, Manual of Policy 6.096. The college shall conduct Level 2 (state and national) criminal background checks on college personnel as necessary and appropriate to implement all applicable state and federal laws, rules, and regulations.

## ***Fringe Benefits***

### **Admission to Athletic and Cultural Events**

All Gulf Coast State College employees are eligible to receive free admission to college productions and all sporting events. Employees must show their GCSC employee ID badge/electronic key for admission to these events.

### **Campus Dental Clinic**

The Campus Dental Clinic is a clinical training facility with students in the Dental Assisting and Hygiene programs assigned to the clinic. Services are available to all employees for a nominal fee. Services provided include radiographs, cleanings, fluoride treatments, sealants, soft tissue exams, treatment plans, and fillings. The clinic is located in the George G. Tapper Health Sciences building, and appointments can be made by calling 850-872-3833.

### **Check Cashing**

Depending upon the availability of cash, employees may cash personal checks up to \$20 at the cashier's window in the Business Office. A charge of \$25 will be assessed for returned checks (NSF) and repeats of this problem will result in the loss of this privilege.

### **Direct Deposit**

Employees must have their payroll checks directly deposited into a savings or checking account of the credit union or financial institution of their choice. Multiple accounts and amounts are permissible.

### **Flexible Benefits Plan (Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA))**

The Flexible Benefits Plan shelters health insurance costs, child care costs, medical and dental expenses, etc., from income and social security tax liability. There is no fee to the employee to use FSA. For more information, contact the Human Resources Office.

### **Library Privileges**

The Gulf Coast State College Library is available to employees and to the community for their use. Presentation of proper identification will allow the checkout of materials.

### **Parking and Traffic Privileges**

Reserved parking areas are not established for employees, and employees may park in any open space other than Handicapped, unless authorized with a valid Handicapped tag or license plate. Employees must obtain and display an updated annual parking decal (obtained at Orientation upon hire, and also available at the Cashier's window in the business office at no cost). Security personnel monitor the parking lots Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. until 11 p.m., Saturday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m., and Sunday from 1 p.m. until 6 p.m. If security personnel see an automobile parked in a space without a displayed parking decal, the automobile will be ticketed. The college shall assume no responsibility for damage occurring to motor vehicles or other forms of transportation and other privately-owned property while on campus. Accidents occurring on campus shall be reported to the Florida State University-Panama City Police in accordance with state and local laws. Any questions should be referred to the Vice President of Administration & Finance.

### **Retirement**

Qualifying Gulf Coast State College employees participate in the Florida Retirement System (FRS). The Director of HRIS and Employment Services serves as the college's retirement officer. If you were retired under the FRS system prior to employment at Gulf Coast State College, contact the Human Resources Office.

Requirements for full retirement have changed for new employees effective July 1, 2011. If you were employed prior to this date you may receive full retirement after 6 years vested service and age 62. New hires employed after July 1, 2011, the years of service have changed to 8 years vested service and age 65. Employees may retire after vesting and before age 62/65 respectfully, but take substantial penalties for early retirement. Further information is available by contacting the Human Resources Office.

The Florida Retirement System (FRS) employer contribution rates are established each year by section 121.71, FL Statutes. You as an employee will contribute a designated amount and GCSC will contribute a

designated amount into your retirement account per the established rates which may change from year to year. If you are in CCORP, your employee and employer contribution rates are also established each year. This retirement is only for people eligible to participate in this account... management and instructional personnel.

If, after retiring under a State of Florida administered retirement system, you are employed in any type of position with an FRS employer (temporary, part-time, or regularly established) during the first month of retirement, your retirement is void and all retirement benefits will be canceled.

If you are reemployed during the second through the twelfth months after retirement, your monthly retirement benefit must be suspended during these months of retirement. The only exception to employment is as an adjunct instructor; the employee is eligible for a 780-hour exemption as provided by law. If you are eligible for the exemption, your benefits must be suspended after your employment reaches 780 hours during the limitation period.

Effective July 1, 2017, if you are retired from FRS and are drawing a retirement check, or have taken a cash contribution from your investment account, you are not eligible for renewed membership in FRS. You may return to work, within the guidelines but will not receive a contribution to a retirement account.

On July 1, 1998, FRS began administering the Deferred Retirement Options Program (DROP). Individuals meeting the minimal retirement requirements outlined above may elect to participate in DROP for a maximum of 96 months. During the DROP period, participating employees will draw retirement benefits from FRS (placed in an interest-bearing trust fund account) while continuing to draw a salary as a regular college employee, with no interruption in college-provided benefits. A variety of limitation and restrictions exist. Please contact the Human Resources Office for additional information.

Eligible instructional personnel and specified (by FRS) instructional and institutional management personnel may elect to participate in the Community College Optional Retirement System (CCORP) in lieu of participation in the regular FRS program. Benefits under this program are placed into an employee's 403(b) tax deferred annuity account with designated vendors. Selection of this option must be made within 30 days of employment and is irrevocable during employment at Gulf Coast. A variety of limitations and restrictions exist. Please contact the Human Resources Office for additional information.

On June 1, 2002, FRS began offering an investment plan option to all public employees of the State of Florida. Originally referred to as the Public Employees Optional Retirement Plan (PEORP), the plan offers participants the option of having their FRS benefits placed into a 401(a) tax deferred annuity account with designated vendors. Selection of this option must be made within 30 days of employment. There is a one-time option to switch between the pension and investment plans after the initial selection. A variety of limitations and restrictions exist. Please contact the Human Resources Office for additional information.

#### **Sick Leave Pool**

A sick leave pool has been established for the optional participation for all full-time employees. Eligible employees must have been employed at the college for at least one year and must have accrued a minimum of six sick leave days. Eligible employees may join the pool only upon the first anniversary of their employment and during the regular enrollment period conducted each October. Additional limitations and restrictions apply. For additional information consult [Manual of Policy 6.084](#) or contact the Human Resources Office.

#### **Staff Development/Tuition Reimbursement**

It is expected that all personnel employed by the college will participate in activities to continually upgrade job capabilities. Development opportunities may routinely include in-house seminars, conferences, workshops, or approved advanced course work in the pursuit of professional development.

Employees of entities for whom the college only serves as a fiscal agent are not eligible for participation unless funding for participation is provided by the employing entity.

If reimbursement is partially available from some other source, the college will reimburse the employee the difference between the funds from the “other sources” and the actual amount of education expenses, provided that the other provisions of this policy are met. At no time should an employee be reimbursed for an amount that exceeds the actual cost of tuition or books.

For credit course reimbursement, employees are eligible after completing one year of full-time employment (provided funds are available), if the course is approved by the appropriate supervisors. Requests are to be made by completing a *Staff and Program Development Tuition Expense Application* (located on GCSC NET). The cost of tuition will be reimbursed at the rate charged by Gulf Coast State College for freshman and sophomore level courses or Florida State University in Panama City for junior, senior, and graduate level courses. The college will also reimburse up to 50 percent of the cost of required textbooks. Paid receipts and proof of successful completion of course work (a grade of “C” or better) must be submitted to the Business Office. A specific list of the requirements and limitations may be found in Manual of Policy 6.072.

#### **Tax Sheltered Annuities**

Tax sheltered annuities allow for saving of pretax dollars for retirement purposes. Several companies currently provide plans for full-time college employees. Contributions are made through payroll deduction. For more information, contact the Human Resources Office.

#### **Terminal Leave Benefits**

College policy and state statute allow, under certain conditions, for the payment of terminal benefits for accumulated annual and/or sick leave. Employees with the college longer than six years are required to have all terminal leave benefits channeled through the BENCOR Terminal Leave Program. Please see the relevant sections of Manual of Policy 6.064 or contact the Human Resources Office for more information.

#### **Wellness and Athletics**

The Wellness Center contains a weight room that is equipped with various state-of-the-art weight training and aerobic equipment. The Wellness Center will have hours of availability for staff members each semester. Please contact the Wellness & Athletics Division for a specific schedule. Fitness and aquatic classes are scheduled for college employees throughout the year. The natatorium offers open swim times for faculty and staff as determined by the Coordinator of Aquatics. Wellness, fitness, and aquatics classes are offered for employees through SPD funds. For facilities usage, schedules, and assistance, please contact the Operations Specialist for the Wellness & Athletics Division.

### ***Grievance Procedure***

The Gulf Coast State College Grievance Procedure is contained in the Board of Trustees Manual of Policy 6.097. For further details, contact the Executive Director of Human Resources.

### ***Gulf Coast State College Foundation, Inc.***

Based on principles of trust and integrity, the vision of the Gulf Coast State College Foundation, Inc. is to advance the causes of Gulf Coast State College. The Foundation’s mission is to create a scholarship program providing educational opportunities to deserving students. Further, the mission of the Foundation is to enhance the educational programs and student services available at Gulf Coast State College.

Through the active involvement and leadership of citizens united by these purposes, the Foundation serves as an effective liaison between GCSC and the community. The Foundation assists the college in enriching the community through cultural opportunities and in enhancing development of the community with educational programs.

### ***Handling of Confidential Student Information***

All student data, except for appropriate directory information, is confidential data protected by state and federal law. It is the responsibility of any employee who requires access to this data in the performance of his or her job duties to strictly adhere to Manual of Policy 7.015 and IMM 5.063. In addition, the following procedures shall be adhered to:



### **Electronic Security**

1. Under no circumstances will an employee share user codes and/or passwords.
2. User codes and passwords shall not be kept in written form. User codes and passwords shall never be displayed in a non-secure or publicly accessible location.
3. If an employee has reason to believe that his or her password may have been compromised in any way, that employee shall immediately change the password and notify ITS Technical Support.

### **Physical Security**

1. When working with confidential student information, college employees shall take measures to guarantee the safety of that information. Such documents will not be left unattended or in a publicly accessible location.
2. All documents that contain confidential student information shall be destroyed according to appropriate guidelines when no longer needed. No reports containing confidential student information can be disposed of in a wastebasket or other such container.
3. 20 U.S.C. S 1232g, The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), requires that Gulf Coast State College, with certain exceptions, obtain written consent from a student prior to disclosure of personally identifiable information from his or her educational records. The Dean of Enrollment Services is responsible for coordination of any release of student information.

## ***History of the College***

Serving the community since 1957, Gulf Coast State College was the first public two-year institution to open after the 1957 Florida Legislature established a statewide network of community colleges. Located in Panama City on Florida's Emerald Coast, Gulf Coast is one of 28 public colleges in the state, all located within commuting distance of 96 percent of the population. Dr. Ted W. Booker was named the first president (1957-1960), followed by Dr. Richard E. Morley (1960-1976), Dr. Lawrence W. Tyree (1976-1988), Dr. Robert L. McSpadden (1988-2007), Dr. A. James Kerley (2007-2014), and Dr. John R. Holdnak (2014-present).

The College has gone through several name changes over the decades beginning with Gulf Coast Community College in 1957. In 1958, the name changed to Gulf Coast Junior College, prompted by a change in mission to restrict offerings to academic programs. In 1970, the College changed its name again back to Gulf Coast Community College as its mission expanded to include service to the community. In 2011, the name changed to Gulf Coast State College after receiving accreditation to award four-year degrees, better reflecting the expanding mission within the defined service district.

To serve the higher education needs of African-Americans in the community, Rosenwald Junior College opened in 1958 on the campus of Rosenwald High School, and Calvin Washington was named president. On May 18, 1966, Rosenwald Junior College merged into Gulf Coast Junior College.

The Panama City Campus opened on September 17, 1957, with 181 students, and through the spring of 1960, the College operated in temporary facilities at the Wainwright Shipyard (located across the street from the present location at 5230 West Highway 98). The City of Panama City provided 40 acres for the permanent campus overlooking St. Andrew Bay; the College purchased the remaining 40 acres. Construction of new buildings on the campus began in 1959, with the actual move to the new campus completed the next year.

Buildings comprising the current campus and other college sites and their dates of first occupancy are:

- **Natural Sciences Building**, including the Ken Sherman Science Center (1960; renovated 1978, 1993, 2003, and 2006)
- **Administration Building** (1960; renovated 1978 and 1989)
- **Enrollment Services Building** (originally the Admissions and Records Building; 1960; renovated 1970 and 1995; renovated and renamed in 2010)
- **James R. Asbell Business Building** (1960; renovated in 1978 and named for Mr. Asbell in 1979)
- **Russell C. Holley and Herbert P. Holley Language & Literature Building** (1962; former Library; renovated and renamed Language Arts Building in 1977; renovated and renamed in 2004; renamed in 2006)

- **Billy Harrison Health Building** (1965; demolished in 2003)
- **Human Resources** (1965; former Maintenance Building; renovated and renamed Wellness Center in 1995; renovated and renamed Professional Development Center in 2003; renamed 2012)
- **Rosenwald Junior College Classroom Building** (1965; originally the Student Center; renovated in 1978 and 1992 and renamed in 1994)
- **Amelia G. Tapper Center for the Arts** (1967; renovated and renamed for Mrs. Tapper in 1994)
- **Social Sciences Building** (1967; renovated in 2001)
- **Technology Building** (1969; renovated in 1985; demolished in 2014)
- **Library** (1976; originally named the Learning Resource Center)
- **WKGC-AM/FM Studios** (1981; renovated in 2005)
- **George G. Tapper Health Sciences Building** (1983; renovated 2009)
- **North Bay Center** (1990; originally the Criminal Justice Training Academy; renamed the Charles H. Abbott Criminal Justice Training Academy and expanded to include the **Abbott Classroom Building** in 2000)
- **Robert L. McSpadden Student Union, East and West Wings** (1991; west wing expanded to included two additional floors in 2004; renamed for Dr. McSpadden in 2016)
- **Natatorium** (1991)
- **Facilities Management Building** (1995)
- **Gulf/Franklin Center** (1998)
- **Wellness Complex** (2003; includes new gym named Billy Harrison Field House)
- **Workforce Development Building** (2004; formerly the Florida Highway Patrol Building)
- **Public Safety Complex/Emergency Operations Center** (2010)
- **Military Park** (2012)
- **Advanced Technology Center** (2013) – known now as the Charles Hilton Center (CHC - 2022)

For its first nine years, the College served primarily the residents of Bay County. In the summer of 1966, Gulf County became part of the College's service district, and Franklin County was added in 1984.

The College's mascot, the Commodore, was also chosen in 1966. A contest was held for students to submit their ideas of what the mascot should be and why. The Commodore, a title for a high-ranking naval officer, was chosen based on three unique factors that included: the College being founded on the soil of an old shipyard, the generous contributions the Navy Base made to the basketball team and that the Vanderbilt Commodores are geographically located exactly 500 miles away from the College.

Throughout its history, the College has been committed to providing a first-class education. This commitment is evidenced by the excellent performance of GCSC graduates who transfer to state universities as well as by consistently high GPAs and graduation rates that are higher than the Florida college system averages in most areas measured. The College currently serves more than 12,000 credit, non-credit, workforce, and/or continuing education students (enrollment data taken from Summer 2015 – Spring 2016 semesters).

For an up-to-date history of Gulf Coast State College visit the Discover GCSC website:

<https://www.gulfcoast.edu/discover/history-gcsc/index.html> or explore photos and publications from the College's history in the library archives: <http://gcsc.digital.flvc.org/>.

## ***Hurricane Procedures***

**Gale Warning:** A warning of winds within the range of 39-54 mph. Gale warnings may precede or accompany a hurricane watch.

**Tropical Storm:** A tropical cyclone in which the maximum sustained surface wind speed ranges from 39-73 mph.

**Tropical Storm Watch:** An announcement that sustained winds of 39-73 mph are possible within the specified area within 48 hours.

**Tropical Storm Warning:** An announcement that sustained winds of 39-73 mph are expected somewhere within the specified area within 36 hours.

**Hurricane:** A violent storm originating over tropical waters with winds near its center reaching 74 mph or higher. In size, the storm may range from 50 to 1,000 miles in diameter.

**Hurricane Watch:** Hurricane conditions are possible in the specified area of the watch, usually within 36 hours.

**Hurricane Warning:** A warning indicates that hurricane winds of 74 mph or higher or a combination of dangerously high water and very rough seas is expected on a specified coastal area. When a hurricane warning is announced, hurricane conditions are considered imminent and may begin immediately or at least within the next 12 to 24 hours.

*The hurricane season in Florida runs from June through November. In May of each year:*

1. Building managers and Facilities Management personnel will identify and correct safety hazards on campus.
2. The Associate Director of Campus Safety and Security will update home, office telephone, and cell phone lists for essential personnel. Lists will be distributed to designated personnel.
3. Facilities Management personnel will inspect and clean all roof drains, downspouts, and road/parking lot drains.
4. The Executive Director of Broadcasting & Media Support will coordinate videotaping of the entire campus and other college facilities (inside and out, buildings and grounds) for insurance purposes.

### **Level One: Monitoring Activation**

This level is initiated by the College President when a tropical depression reaches storm status (39 mph and is assigned a name), enters the Gulf of Mexico, or when the East Coast of Florida is placed under a Hurricane Watch.

1. Disaster Response Team members will monitor news and governmental channels for up-to-date information.
2. Building managers and Facilities Management personnel will update inspections and correct safety hazards on campus. Items that could become flying debris during high winds should be identified for removal or storage at this time.
3. Supervisors will ensure accuracy of divisional/departmental phone lists. Supervisors will hold divisional/departmental meetings to review storm plans and procedures. Supervisors should make themselves aware of subordinates' short-term personal plans to determine emergency staffing requirements and responsibilities. Supervisors should designate a second-in-command for emergency response purposes at this time.
4. Divisions/departments should identify irreplaceable paper records and back up electronically stored records.
5. The Executive Director of Community Engagement will coordinate college information with local news departments and the college's cable information channel providers.
6. Faculty should direct students to monitor social media, text alerts, email, news channels, and the college's cable information channel for information from the college.

### **Level Two: Full Scale Activation**

This level is initiated by the College President when the college's service district is placed under a Gale Warning, Tropical Storm Watch, or Hurricane Watch. High winds will be expected to affect college facilities within 36-48 hours.

1. Disaster Response Team members will continue to monitor news and governmental channels for up-to-date information and meet to discuss the situation.
2. Facilities Management personnel will remove or store previously identified items that could become flying debris during high winds. Facilities Management personnel will fuel all campus vehicles and prepare to relocate them to higher ground. The Director of Facilities Management or designee will contact all construction crews on college property to secure job sites.
3. Supervisors will hold divisional/departmental meetings to review post-storm plans and procedures.
4. Information Technology Services will institute emergency response plans. Information Technology Services personnel will work with appropriate faculty and staff to secure instructional computer laboratories.
5. Divisions/departments will collect and protect irreplaceable records (paper and electronic) in appropriate storage materials. Supervisors will distribute heavy-duty garbage bags and plastic sheeting, securing them around at-risk electrical equipment.
6. All college employees will attempt to accomplish the following:
  - a. Identify and remove irreplaceable personal belongings and equipment from college facilities.
  - b. Clear desktops completely of paper and other articles.

- c. Protect books and other valuable papers and equipment with previously distributed plastic sheeting secured by duct tape.
  - d. Where necessary and possible, move computers, desks, file cabinets, etc., away from windows.
  - e. Turn off or disconnect all electrical equipment.
  - f. Clear any laboratory or classroom tables/shelving of all apparatus and glassware and place items in a protected location.
  - g. Close and latch all windows and doors, if applicable.
7. Associate Director of Campus Safety & Security will initiate a plan for additional security. Facilities Management staff and Disaster Response Team members will form standby crews. Personnel remaining on campus during the storm (WKGCC) will be identified.

### **Level Three: Campus/College Facility and Program Shut-down**

This level is initiated by the College President when the college's service district is placed under a Tropical Storm Warning or a Hurricane Warning. High winds will be expected to affect college facilities within 12-24 hours.

1. The College President will determine the specific time when classes will be suspended and nonessential personnel will be sent home. The Executive Director of Community Engagement will coordinate college information with local news departments and the college's cable information channel providers. Only the president or Executive Director of Community Engagement will contact the media to announce facility closings or canceled classes/activities.
2. When possible, building managers and Facilities Management personnel will complete final inspections of all college facilities, to ensure all doors, windows, and loose items are secured. Facilities Management personnel, when appropriate, will shut down HVAC systems and other electrical and/or gas equipment and services.
3. Each division/department head will maintain contact with personnel to establish emergency procedures and to recall personnel if necessary.

### **Level Four: After the Storm**

This level is initiated by the College President when a tropical storm or hurricane has left the college's service district.

1. The College President will determine the specific time when the college will reopen for normal operations. The Executive Director of Community Engagement will coordinate college information with local news departments and the college's cable information channel providers. Only the president or Executive Director of Community Engagement will contact the media to announce facility openings and the resumption of classes/activities. Information Technology staff will install emergency phone equipment (with message machines) as necessary to provide for staff and student contact numbers.
2. As soon as possible, the Disaster Response Team members and Facilities Management personnel will conduct a complete check of the campus and all other college facilities to assess and report damage. A list of damage will be collected by the Vice President of Administration & Finance, and work orders will be issued for each item. The Director of Facilities Management and Executive Director of Procurement & Auxiliary Services will coordinate with all off-campus utility and service providers for any necessary work. The Associate Director of Campus Safety & Security will secure security personnel for campus facilities as appropriate.
3. When campus facilities have been secured and determined safe, division/department heads will ensure that a detailed inspection of their area is conducted. All damage and problem areas should be reported to the Vice President of Administration & Finance for appropriate action by work order. All areas will need to be secured to prevent injuries, additional damage, or looting.
4. The Executive Director of Broadcasting & Media Support will coordinate the videotaping of the entire campus and other college facilities (inside and out, buildings and grounds) for insurance purposes. A photographic record will be kept throughout the initial recovery period.
5. Facilities Management personnel will begin clean up and repairs at the direction of the president or Vice President of Administration & Finance. Additional personnel will be recalled, as necessary, to carry out the business of the college.

### ***Information Technology Services- Acceptable Use Statement***

All college staff and students are required to abide by the *Acceptable Use Statement* and will refrain from:

- using the campus’s computer resources for any illegal activity;
- violating the conditions of those codes relating to student’s rights to privacy;
- using profanity, obscenity, or other offensive language;
- deliberately displaying obscene pictures or text on the monitor or allowing such pictures or text to be printed on the institution’s printer;
- copying commercial software or other protected materials (including music and movie files) protected by copyright law;
- using the institution’s computer resources for financial gain;
- engaging in activities designed to deliberately obstruct others’ work by excessive time spent on the system;
- excessively using available computer memory or hard drive space;
- using the institution’s computer resources to launch denial-of-service attacks against any other computer or network;
- deliberately causing a machine to crash;
- attempting to gain access to areas of any computer system for which authorized access has not been granted, i.e. hacking;
- engaging in activities that do not have academic merit, such as: storing files not related to academic activities, using peer-to-peer file sharing software, and/or deliberately executing files that excessively utilize the system;
- giving away your used ID and/or password for any reason under any circumstance;
- fraudulently using someone else’s ID or password;
- having or attempting to change system control information, such as program status, protection codes, and accounting information;
- sending others material and then requesting them to send additional messages to others, i.e. chain letters;
- sending bulk “spam” email or intentionally utilizing system resources to send such messages; and
- unauthorized installation of any drivers, software, or hardware on campus computers.

## ***Insurance***

### **COBRA/HIPAA Insurance Election**

Employees or dependents can elect to continue coverage under the college major medical plan if they are no longer covered for the following reasons:

- (a) termination
- (b) reduction of hours
- (c) death of an employee
- (d) divorce or legal separation
- (e) eligibility for Medicare (employee or spouse age 65 or older)
- (f) dependent child reaches age 25 (may be extended up to age 30 if specific conditions are met)

Please notify the Human Resources Office when any of the above circumstances occur. Application forms are required if coverage is desired for any of the above reasons.

### **Health Insurance**

Group insurance is available to regular, full-time employees. Gulf Coast State College employees are covered through the Florida College System Risk Management Consortium. Premiums are paid by the individual with college participation as approved by the District Board of Trustees. Insurance coverage is reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis. Specific conditions of the current plan can be obtained by contacting the Human Resources Office.

### **Life Insurance**

Life insurance is available to all regular, full-time employees. Premiums are paid by the individual with college participation as approved by the District Board of Trustees. Life insurance is reduced for active employees at age 70 and is limited to \$5,000 for retirees up to age 70. More information is available through the Human Resources Office.

## ***Optional Insurance***

Various types of insurance are available from a number of firms at the employee's expense through payroll deduction. Such plans include hospital indemnity, term, disability, whole life, income protection, prepaid dental, vision, and cancer insurance. Costs will vary depending on the extent of coverage desired. Premiums are subject to the contribution approved by the District Board of Trustees. Further information is available from the Human Resources Office.

## **Workers' Compensation**

All Gulf Coast State College employees are covered by workers' compensation insurance provided by the college for injuries or illnesses arising out of, or in the course of, employment. To protect yourself and your co-workers, follow all safety rules and regulations. Workers' compensation was designed to cover medical expenses and a portion of any earnings lost due to injury on the job. The amount of compensation is based on the employee's salary, among other factors. Workers' compensation laws prohibit reimbursement beyond normal weekly compensation. For further details, contact the Human Resources Office.

All employee illnesses-in-the-line-of-duty or on-the-job accidents or injuries, **no matter how minor**, must be reported *immediately* to the Human Resources Office. If medical attention is necessary, Human Resources staff will advise you of physicians authorized by GCSC and the Florida College System Risk Management Consortium to treat employees. It is imperative that accidents be reported to the Human Resources Office before seeking medical attention, unless the accident is life threatening, in order to receive workers' compensation benefits. Using appropriate professional judgment during hours when the Human Resources Office is closed, employees are to use the emergency rooms of local hospitals for medical attention relating to an on-the-job injury.

An *Accident-Incident Report* must be completed and forwarded to the office of the Vice President of Administration and Finance by the close of the next business day. Failure to do so may result in a monetary fine imposed on the college.

## ***Keys***

Supervisors will make arrangements with the Coordinator, Access Control for new employees to be issued badges/electronic key cards as necessary. Upon separation from the college, employees must return all badges to the Coordinator, Access Control or Human Resources prior to the final paycheck being issued or at such time access is no longer needed to perform one's duties.

## ***Lactation Accommodation***

At GCSC, we do everything we can to offer a supportive work environment for mothers. If you are breast feeding your child, we will work with you – and establish a flexible schedule if necessary – to set up break times to allow you to express breast milk.

We will also work with you and your manager to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations (other than a restroom, of course); currently, room 41A in SUW and Room 120 at North Bay are designated as Lactation rooms.

If you have any questions about lactation accommodation, do not hesitate to ask your manager or the Human Resources department.

## ***Leaves of Absence***

Employees request time off (annual, sick, roll-over sick, or personal) through the Employee Dashboard>My Activities>Request Time off. Employees may request time off in advance up through the end of Fiscal Year. After taking leave, employees report the time taken through the Employee Dashboard>My Activities>Enter Leave Report. Reporting time taken occurs only during the pay period during which the time was taken. If you need assistance requesting or reporting leave time, contact Human Resources. All other leave types are requested via the Leave of Absence Form available on GCSCNet.

### **Annual or Vacation Leave**

College personnel employed on a full-time, 12-month basis shall accumulate vacation leave at the following rate:

- One (1) day for each month of service up to five years.
- 1 ¼ days for each month of service from five to ten years.
- 1 ½ days for each month of service over ten years.

No employee shall accumulate more than 44 days of vacation leave at the end of any calendar year. Any vacation in excess of 44 days, if not used by December 31, shall be converted to special sick leave. Please see [Manual of Policy 6.070](#) or contact the Human Resources Office for more information.

Upon termination of employment with sufficient notice and under favorable conditions, the employee shall be paid, at the current rate, for any vacation not used, not to exceed an amount equal to 30 days of pay. In the case of the death of the employee, payment of the unused annual leave at the time of death shall be payable to the employee's designated beneficiary, estate, or as provided by law.

If an employee leaves the employ of Gulf Coast State College without giving and working a minimum notice of two weeks, or 30 days depending on their position, of the intent to resign, all claims to any vacation time accrued will be forfeited. The president may rescind this provision should the circumstances be considered sufficiently extenuating.

### **Bereavement Leave**

Employees may be granted up to 3 days of leave in any 12-month period in the event of the death of a family member. Sick or annual leave may be used for this purpose. Unpaid leave may be granted after all paid leave has been exhausted. The amount of time will depend upon the circumstances. Please see the [Manual of Policy 6.068](#) or contact the Human Resources Office for more information.

**Domestic Violence Leave**

Employees may be granted up to 3 days of leave in any 12-month period if the employee or a family or household member of an employee is the victim of domestic violence. Sick or annual leave may be used for this purpose. This leave may be granted after all paid leave has been exhausted. Please see [Manual of Policy 6.069](#) or contact the Human Resources Office for more information.

**Family and Medical Leave (FMLA)**

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 became effective August 5, 1993. Under this act, eligible employees may take up to twelve (12) weeks of leave per year for the following reasons:

- (a) birth or adoption of a child;
- (b) serious illness of spouse, child, or parent;
- (c) serious illness of self; or
- (d) qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent who is on active duty or call to active-duty status as a member of the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation.

*Accrued sick leave and vacation leave must be exhausted to be eligible for FMLA at GCSC.* This leave is not automatic and a certificate from the Health Care provider or a birth certificate or adoption documentation is required. A minimum of thirty (30) days' notice is required except in extreme emergencies. Please contact the Human Resources Office for more specific information. In most cases, an additional leave of absence without pay will not be granted during the same 12-month period of time in which FMLA benefits have been exhausted. If you are absent 3 days or more, you will need to provide a doctor's note returning you to work; this ensures we provide proper FMLA notice (if applicable), helps ensure we follow any doctor restrictions, and mitigates any worker's compensation risk.

**Jury Duty (Administrative Leave for Court Purposes)**

A full-time employee who is summoned as a member of a jury panel shall be granted administrative leave with pay, and the jury fees shall be retained by the employee. A *Request for Leave of Absence* form must be completed and an original copy of the jury summons must be attached. The college shall not reimburse the employee for meals, lodging, and travel expenses incurred while serving as a juror.

Accrued sick leave (if applicable) and vacation leave must initially be used for leaves of absence. In addition, personal leave without pay may be granted. All such leave must be approved by the president as authorized by the District Board of Trustees. A *Request for Leave of Absence* form must be complete for such leave.

**Military Leave**

Leave shall be granted to employees who are ordered to state or federal active or inactive duty training due to membership in the military reserves, including the National Guard. The first 17 days of such leave per year shall be with pay. Leave beyond the 17 days shall be without pay. For additional information, please consult [Manual of Policy 6.073](#).

**Personal Leave**

Full-time employees may use up to four days of sick leave for personal reasons per year (July 1 – June 30). These absences will be charged to accrued sick leave. Leave for personal reasons is noncumulative.

**Sick Leave**

Eligible, full-time employees shall earn one day of sick leave with compensation for each calendar month or major fraction of a calendar month of service, not to exceed 12 days for each fiscal year. Sick leave shall be cumulative from year to year. Also see Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave for sick leave without compensation. Employees who leave the college under favorable conditions after six years of service will receive payment for unused accumulated sick leave according to Florida Statutes and the college's [Manual of Policy 6.075](#).

***Lost and Found***

Reports of lost or stolen articles should be made promptly to the Student Union East Student Information Desk, ext. 2805. Articles found on or near the campus should be turned in there as soon as possible.



## ***Mailroom***

The college mailroom is located in the Student Union West. Since the mailroom exists for the purpose of processing official college mail, individuals are prohibited from using the college system to send or receive personal mail. Postage for official college mail is metered in the mailroom. Personal use of the college's mail system will result in disciplinary action. Mail should be sorted and placed in "on-campus" and "off-campus" envelopes before being delivered to the mailroom for processing. Mail must be turned in before 10:30 a.m. daily for same-day posting. Bulk mail should be properly prepared (sealed, sorted, and counted) before being taken to the mailroom. U.S. mail is picked up at 12:45 p.m. College mail not addressed to an individual or a specific organization unit will be sent to the Business Office.

## ***Marketing & Communications***

Marketing & Communications is under the department of Community Engagement, located on the third floor of the Student Union West Building, is responsible for college marketing, external communications/community relations, and image and branding. Marketing & Communications develops and implements the college communication and marketing plan, including advertising, publications, and digital media; provides community relations including, but not limited to marketing, media relations, public relations, event support, and outreach; coordinates and supervises the execution of all external college communications and marketing efforts from concept to delivery, working with a wide variety of departments, vendors, and staff.

## ***Non – Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy***

Gulf Coast State College is committed to creating and maintaining an environment in which students, faculty, and staff can work together in an atmosphere free of all forms of harassment (race, national origin, sex, etc.) and sexual misconduct (assault, harassment, exploitation, intimidation, or coercion). Harassment and sexual misconduct are illegal under both state and federal laws and are violations of the rules and regulations of the college. Harassment and sexual misconduct will not be tolerated by any member of the college community. Employees who believe they are the victims of harassment or sexual misconduct should report the facts and the circumstances directly to the Executive Director of Human Resources.

Manual of Policy 6.098 is the college's established policy and Internal Management Memoranda 6.098 is the college's established grievance procedures. This policy and procedures were established in order to preserve the right of all employees, agents, and students to an environment free from harassment and sexual misconduct. Any employee, agent, or student will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action for violation of the college policy on harassment and sexual misconduct. Please refer to the Manual of Policy 6.098 for the complete Non-Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy.

## ***Notification of Personnel Changes***

Please advise the Human Resources Office of any changes in marital status, name, address, phone number, dependents, births, deaths, or changes of beneficiary, and if either you or your spouse reaches age 65. Completion of forms may be required for insurance, retirement, or tax purposes.

In addition, it is the employees' responsibility to update changes to their personal information through Lighthouse/Banner. Information is critical for accurate record keeping and emergency contact situations.

## ***Outside Employment by College Employees***

Personnel are urged to conscientiously evaluate extra-college activities and employment with regard to professional and ethical propriety. The individual should confer with appropriate college officials concerning such outside activities. Any outside work must first be approved by the immediate supervisor and Administrative Officers in accordance with MOP 6.025.

## ***Overload Teaching***

Overload teaching for full-time exempt college employees may occur during the regular day, evenings, or on weekends and may be on-campus or off-campus. When the overload occurs during the regular work schedule, the employee workload (35 hours for faculty and 37.5 hours for other employees) is extended for the period of time involved with the additional compensation. Annual or personal leave may also be taken to offset time away from workload requirements. Documentation of how workload hours are accommodated for, and leave papers if applicable, should

be submitted at the time the overload is requested and the documentation will be maintained in the Human Resources Office. Overload compensation will be paid at the current rate in Internal Management Memoranda 6.065, Salary Schedule.

### ***Overtime***

Hourly personnel working beyond the normal 37.5-hour workweek will be compensated at the rate of time and one-half the normal hourly rate. Authorization of all “overtime” will be made in advance to the President or his designee. A time sheet will be signed by the employee and the immediate supervisor and then turned in immediately to the Vice President of Administration & Finance. Once authorized by the vice president, the time sheet will be forwarded to Payroll Services for payment. Compensatory time (AKA “comp” time) shall be earned at this same rate and must have the prior approval of the immediate supervisor. Compensatory time must be used within six calendar months.

### ***Payday***

All twelve-month salaried and hourly employees are paid bi-weekly. If a payday should fall on a holiday or weekend, payment is made on the last workday prior to the holiday or weekend. In order to be paid for a holiday, holiday break, or spring break, an employee must work the day before and after, or be in an approved paid leave status. Should any employee terminate employment during the year, final compensation will be adjusted to reflect actual earnings up to the date of termination. All other employees will receive their checks on the last day of the month. Instructional personnel will have their annual salaries divided into 12 equal payments. They will receive 1/12 of their salary each month beginning in August. Any outstanding balance will be paid in one lump sum at the end of the contract. Personnel teaching on an adjunct or overload basis should review the Adjunct Faculty Handbook or the Internal Management Memoranda section of the Manual of Policy for relevant information on paydays for such work.

### ***Payroll Deductions***

In addition to those required by law, payroll deductions from college employees’ earnings are authorized by the District Board of Trustees when approved in writing by the employee. Please contact the Human Resources Office.

1. Employee Benefits:
  - a. Annuities
  - b. Flexible Benefits Plan
  - c. Insurance
  - d. Voluntary
  - e. Other
  
2. Gulf Coast State College Direct Support Organizations:
  - a. Commodore Club, Incorporated
  - b. Gulf Coast State College Foundation, Incorporated
  
3. Other Campus Initiatives:
  - a. Association of Florida Colleges (AFC)
  - b. Commodores Care
  - c. United Way
  - d. WKGCC
  - e. Other

### ***Persons with Disabilities***

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Gulf Coast State College will not discriminate against any person with disabilities in application, enrollment, employment, or promotion. The college will consider any reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities. Persons with a disability that may require a workplace accommodation should contact the Human Resources Office.

### ***Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA)***

As required by the federal Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA), Gulf Coast State College will provide reasonable accommodations to employees and applicants with limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, unless the accommodation will cause undue hardship to Gulf Coast's operations.

An employee or applicant may request an accommodation due to pregnancy, childbirth or a related medical condition by submitting the request in writing to human resources (HR). The accommodation request should include an explanation of the pregnancy-related limitations, the accommodation needed and any alternative accommodation(s) that might be reasonable. Depending on the nature of the accommodation, the individual may be requested to submit a statement from a health care provider substantiating the need for the accommodation.

Upon receipt of a request for accommodation, HR will contact the employee or applicant to discuss the request and determine if an accommodation is reasonable and can be provided without significant difficulty or expense, i.e., undue hardship.

While the reasonableness of each accommodation request will be individually assessed, possible accommodations include allowing the individual to:

- Sit while working.
- Drink water during the workday.
- Have flexible hours.
- Receive additional break time to use the bathroom, eat and rest.
- Take time off to recover from childbirth.
- Be excused from strenuous activities and/or activities that involve exposure to compounds deemed unsafe during pregnancy.

An employee may request paid or unpaid leave as a reasonable accommodation under this policy; however, Gulf Coast State College will not require an employee to take time off if another reasonable accommodation can be provided that will allow the employee to continue to work.

Gulf Coast State College prohibits any retaliation, harassment or adverse action due to an individual's request for an accommodation under this policy or for reporting or participating in an investigation of unlawful discrimination under this policy.

### ***Printing and Copying Services***

The college uses Office Depot/Creative Printing for larger or more complex jobs. Typically, any print job of 100 pages/copies or fewer should be completed on the division or department's copying machine. For additional questions, contact the Office of Procurement.

### ***Introductory/Orientation Period***

All employees are considered to be in an introductory/orientation status during the first six months of employment, but may be discharged within the first 90 days without formal disciplinary action. This is also true when an employee is assigned to a new position whether it be through promotion, transfer, etc. Faculty members are normally granted continuing contract status following 5 years of satisfactory service. The president or his/her designee may move a regular employee to probationary or annual contract status, and the president or his/her designee may extend the probationary period or annual contract of an employee. Please consult [Manual of Policy 6.048](#) for specific details.

## ***Purchasing Policies and Procedures***

The rules and regulations governing purchasing at the college shall be provided by the Executive Director of Procurement & Auxiliary Services. Gulf Coast State College personnel are not authorized to obligate college funds or enter into agreements with vendors. Purchases involving the use of college funds must be authorized through the established procedures. Any unauthorized purchases shall be the sole responsibility of the person placing the order.

## ***Resignation of Employment***

All college personnel must assume the responsibility of following certain procedures upon resignation from their respective positions. An employee should submit a letter of resignation to the immediate supervisor to be forwarded to the Human Resources Office. In order to receive accumulated annual leave and other terminal leave benefits, the employee must submit the resignation per Manual of Policy 6.070.

## ***Salary Increases***

All employees have a common anniversary date of July 1 for salary increases, as approved by the District Board of Trustees. Additional information on salaries and increases may be found under the professional, instructional, or career employee salary schedules in the Internal Management Memoranda 6.065. Failure to provide proper notice will result in ineligibility for rehire.

## ***Scheduling/Event Forms***

Events sponsored by the college must be approved through appropriate channels. All rooms for classes, meetings, workshops, events, etc. should be scheduled through the Ad Astra (unless noted below):

North Bay Campus, Tyndall, or Gulf Franklin Campus..... Senior Administrative Assistant, Appropriate Campus  
Athletic Facilities ..... Operations Specialist, Wellness & Athletics  
Amelia Center..... Chair, Visual & Performing Arts  
John Holley Dining Room..... Instructional Coordinator, Culinary & Hospitality

### **Steps for Holding Events on Campus**

- Reserve the room in AdAstra through myGCSC or the intranet
  - On the homepage, login with your user name and password
  - Select **Request an Event** and then choose the campus on the next drop-down menu
  - Fill in all necessary information, select meeting date/time and request room
  - When finished, hit **Submit** on at the top left corner of the page
  - An email confirmation will be sent after the request is submitted along with a follow up email once it has been scheduled
- Submit a door lock request
  - Electronic locks- email your request to [doorlockrequest@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:doorlockrequest@gulfcoast.edu)
  - Manual locks - include in Maintenance work order (see below)
- Complete Facilities & Media Services work orders through myGCSC
  - Log in to myGCSC and select **Fresh Service Ticketing System**
  - Select the **Service Catalog** tab at the top of the screen
  - Complete the request form for **Maintenance & Operations** to notify them of any specific room requirements needed, such as room layout
  - Complete the request form for **Media Services** to request any equipment needed and they will make sure that everything in the room is working properly
- Complete the Event Form on GCSC intranet

- o The form is located on the main page under the **Forms Quick List**
- Add event to the Events Calendar on the GCSC website or contact Campus Events to have it added
- If event requires food/refreshments, **any caterer may be used and their license information must be submitted to the Procurement Office**

For questions or additional assistance, please contact Campus Events at [events@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:events@gulfcoast.edu)

Requests for use of rooms or college property/grounds by outside organizations are handled through the Office of Community Engagement. Rental fees are assessed according to Manual of Policy 5.175.

### ***Security***

Administrators and FSU-PC police officers are on campus to handle security problems. If any problems arise, call 850-774-2705 and talk directly with an FSU-PC police officer. Then call the switchboard and the operator will notify appropriate personnel. See Internal Management Memoranda 5.015 for emergency procedures.

### ***Social Media Statement***

Gulf Coast State College employees are free to express themselves as private citizens using personal social media accounts, to the degree that their speech or actions do not impair working relationships of the College for which loyalty and confidentiality are important, impede the performance of duties, impair discipline and harmony among coworkers, violate the standards of conduct, or negatively affect the public perception of the College. Employees should never use their College email account or password in conjunction with a personal networking site. These statements are not intended to restrict employees' rights under the NLRA.

### ***Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities***

Gulf Coast State College holds students and community of central importance. The College provides many opportunities for learning and offers a range of programs and services to help students become well-educated, productive citizens. The College is equally dedicated to collaborating with the community to help create or improve economic well-being and to offer the space of the college for social dialog, events of art and culture, and other moments that enhance our quality of life.

In accordance with the College's mission, the institution articulates rights and responsibilities that shall form the foundation of the social contract between the student and the institution. Basic to these rights and responsibilities are the students' rights:

To be treated with respect and dignity

To be afforded due process in resolution of all conflicts with the College

To be provided counsel of a student advocate (Student Ombudsman) to assist in the resolution of such conflicts

To be afforded the protection of all rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States of America

As a member of the Gulf Coast State College community, students also are obligated to the following basic responsibilities:

To behave in a mature, responsible manner

To respect the rights, opinions and beliefs of other community members

To adhere to all established College policies and procedures

### ***Telephone Service***

Telephone and personnel lists, for internal use only, are available on GCSC NET. Please report changes to the Human Resources Office. Requests for telephone service or repair are made by sending an e-mail to the "Help Desk" address or, if urgent, call extension 3303 in Information Technology Services.

## ***Tobacco Free Environment***

Use of all tobacco products is prohibited on all property owned by the college, including vaping products. Students, staff, & faculty may use tobacco products in their personal vehicle.

## ***Travel for College Purposes***

All college-sponsored travel shall be for college business and must have prior approval. All duly authorized travelers need to complete the top half of the *Authorization & Reimbursement Travel Voucher form* in advance of their travel (available on GCSC NET). If a registration fee is required, a completed *Purchase Requisition/Check Requisition/Petty Cash Reimbursement form* (found on GCSC NET) must be completed and submitted with the voucher form. Both forms must be signed by the employee and the employee's supervisor. Out-of-state travel requires the approval of the vice president. The voucher form shall clearly indicate the purpose of the travel, benefit to the college, and estimated expenses; and must include a copy of the meeting agenda or registration form.

If traveling by automobile, vehicle rentals must go through the Travel Coordinator in Procurement. When traveling out of district, you have the option to rent a vehicle or use your personal vehicle, **whichever is the most cost effective for the entire trip**. If you prefer to use your own vehicle, reimbursement will only be at the rental car rate. Check the appropriate box on the TDY form to reserve a rental car. Rental upgrades are only authorized if the gas mileage is comparable to the vehicle originally reserved for you. The reservation is charged directly to the college under your Budget Index Code. A credit card will be provided for use in refilling the tank with gas, as well as, to return the vehicle with a full tank as required by the agency.

If traveling by air, submit your preferred flight times with the voucher form. Following full execution of the form, the Travel Coordinator will make your airline reservations. Travel questions may be directed to the Travel Coordinator. For more information on travel, meal allowances, and reimbursements, see Travel & Expenses guidelines in Manual of Policy 5.165. The employee is responsible for making hotel and other miscellaneous reservations. Travel advances are given only when students are traveling.

Upon return from the business trip, the bottom of the Authorization & Reimbursement Travel Voucher form should be completed. All receipts should be attached for reimbursement excluding meals. Meals are paid per diem and no receipts are required. Both the employee and supervisor's signature are required for reimbursement. Reimbursement is made through ACH payments.

## ***Vulnerable Persons Act***

Gulf Coast State College is committed to protecting those individuals on campus who are most vulnerable and will adhere to Florida Statutes §39.205 and §39.201 as amended by Florida Legislature in 2012, which requires educational institutions to report known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or cases of neglect. Any individual who fails to report known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect, or prevents another from making such a report, regardless of where the event occurred or the relationship of the perpetrator to the victim, is guilty of a felony punishable by imprisonment for a term of up to 5 years and a fine not exceeding \$5,000.00. Any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected, must report such knowledge to the Florida Department of Children and Family Services via the toll free, anonymous hotline at 1-800-962-2873 or TDD 1-800-453-5145. For more information see Manual of Policy 6.109.

## ***Working Hours***

All full-time employees, excluding faculty and 9-month staff, are required to work 37.5 hours per week. The normal workday is 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Included in the workday is a 15-minute break period and a non-paid 30-minute lunch. Breaks and lunch periods are to be taken on a daily basis and are noncumulative. With the agreement of the immediate supervisor, staff may elect to take the break period and lunch period together or separately. Any changes in working hours must be authorized by the immediate supervisor and their respective Administrative Officer, depending on the situation. Faculty and 9-month staff are required to work 35 hours per week. Faculty should consult with division chairs to determine specific work requirements. As a reminder, all faculty and contractual employees at Director Level or above (excluding career service) are required to participate in commencement exercises and Honors Convocation, as well as other graduation activities.