



Northwestern

# STAFF HANDBOOK



# \ WELCOME

Northwestern University staff are essential to advancing the University's mission of excellent teaching, innovative research, and the personal and intellectual growth of its students in a diverse academic community.

You consistently demonstrate commitment, creativity, and pride as Northwestern employees, reflecting the values of the University overall and creating a special environment. Our shared goal is to create a workplace where you feel like you belong and can be yourself, regardless of your role or unit/school.

This handbook offers information on the University's policies and practices and your responsibilities as an employee—as well as Northwestern's responsibilities to you. It serves as a comprehensive resource and covers a range of topics. However, Human Resources is always available if you need further information. Please feel free to contact [askHR](#).

## **Lorraine A. Goffe**

Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer



Pritzker School of Law

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# 1 \ INTRODUCTION

**University mission:** Northwestern is committed to excellent teaching, innovative research, and the personal and intellectual growth of its students in a diverse academic community.

## History and Structure of Northwestern

Northwestern was established under a charter approved by the Illinois state legislature on January 28, 1851. Today, Northwestern is a private, nonsectarian university with three campuses.

Two campuses are located on Lake Michigan: one campus is in Evanston, a North Shore suburb of Chicago, and the other is located in downtown Chicago. The schools on these campuses enroll approximately 18,000 students during the academic year.

In 2008, Northwestern opened an international campus in Doha, Qatar. It is one of the American universities established in Education City, Doha, as a result of collaborative agreements between the universities and the Qatar Foundation. Each of these universities brings to Qatar educational programs for which those institutions are especially renowned.

Northwestern is comprised of 12 schools:

- Bienen School of Music
- Feinberg School of Medicine
- Kellogg School of Management
- McCormick School of Engineering and Applied Science
- Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications
- Northwestern University in Qatar
- Pritzker School of Law
- School of Communication
- School of Education and Social Policy
- School of Professional Studies
- The Graduate School
- Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences

Northwestern operates under the supervision of a Board of Trustees, whose members serve without pay. Northwestern's revenue comes from endowment and gifts, student tuition and fees, government contracts and grants, and other sources. To view Northwestern's organization chart visit [northwestern.edu/docs/university-org-chart.pdf](http://northwestern.edu/docs/university-org-chart.pdf).

## **Northwestern Mission, Guiding Principles, and Priorities**

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Northwestern is committed to excellent teaching, innovative research, and the personal and intellectual growth of its students in a diverse academic community.

### **Guiding Principles and Priorities**

To clarify our mission, Northwestern has set guiding principles and priorities. The following principles provide the foundation for our University priorities:

- We transform society.
- We grow leaders.
- We champion access, opportunity, and belonging.
- We encourage debate.
- We embrace breadth and depth.
- We pursue excellence across all disciplines.
- We strengthen our community.
- We care about one another.

The following six priorities embody our commitments to global eminence in research and innovation.

Northwestern's research and innovation priorities are

- Advance the biosciences.
- Lead in decarbonization, renewable energy, and sustainability.
- Harness the power of data analytics and artificial intelligence.
- Foster interdisciplinary innovation among the social sciences and global studies.
- Enhance the creative and performing arts.
- Deliver an outstanding educational experience for students.

The following five priorities reflect our goals of strengthening our administrative and academic community on our Chicago, Evanston, and Qatar campuses. These goals prioritize faculty and staff development and retention. With a focus on free speech and academic freedom, Northwestern also aims to foster engagement across differences.

Northwestern's community priorities are

- Invest in our employees.
- Build resilient students and a sense of belonging.

- Promote access, opportunity, and diversity.
- Defend free expression and promote engagement across differences.
- Enhance the student athlete experience.

## **About This Handbook**

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This Handbook provides general descriptions of policies, programs, and benefits, as well as guidelines for job performance and job behavior relating to staff members who work at Northwestern.

Staff members support faculty, students, and the University in their educational and research missions. Staff members include executive, managerial, administrative, professional, postdoctoral fellow, research (staff), technical, maintenance, and clerical positions. Occupational categories for staff members include jobs in maintenance, service, clerical, research, technical, professional, and administrative areas.

Some Northwestern staff positions are covered by a labor agreement. In such cases certain policies and procedures may be different and are determined by the specific labor agreement. Staff members holding such jobs should obtain a copy of the labor agreement from their union steward to determine those differences.

This Handbook also applies to staff members working at Northwestern University in Qatar. There may be differences in some employment policies, practices, and benefits. For more information about Northwestern University in Qatar, visit [qatar.northwestern.edu](http://qatar.northwestern.edu). Individuals with job titles classified as Librarian Faculty are covered by Librarian Faculty: Terms of Appointment; for more information, visit [www.library.northwestern.edu/documents/about/LibrarianFacultyTermsofAppt.pdf](http://www.library.northwestern.edu/documents/about/LibrarianFacultyTermsofAppt.pdf).

Features of this Handbook include:

- A table of [contents](#), which a reader can use to access sections within this Handbook. To access a specific section, click on the section heading or page number.
- A [directory](#) providing contact information for Human Resources and other resources. This directory is located at the end of this Handbook.

Throughout this Handbook:

- The term “supervisor” is used to refer to an individual who has supervisory responsibility for others regardless of title within Northwestern.
- Links to other specified pages and sections within this Handbook—as well as to sections of Northwestern’s website and to external websites—are underscored and highlighted in blue. Readers viewing this Handbook online may click on these links to reach the referenced page, section, or website.

## Disclaimer

**Northwestern is an at-will employer.** Either the employee or Northwestern may end the employment relationship at-will, with or without cause or advance notice, at any time.

In summarizing the terms and conditions of staff employment at Northwestern, this Handbook does not provide a detailed description of all employment policies and practices; each department/unit at Northwestern may adopt additional policies particular to its functions.

From time to time, Northwestern’s policies and programs may change; these changes will be summarized in periodic notices. To be sure you have current information, check for these notices posted online at [hr.northwestern.edu/essentials/policies-procedures/staff-handbook.html](http://hr.northwestern.edu/essentials/policies-procedures/staff-handbook.html), confer with your supervisor, or contact Human Resources.

**This Handbook is not an employment contract or an assurance of continued employment. Northwestern may change without notice any statement in this Handbook concerning rules, policies, tuition, fees, curricula, courses, procedures, benefits, or other matters.** Accordingly, a staff member should check the most current information if there is any doubt about the application of a policy. For the current edition of this Handbook, visit [hr.northwestern.edu/essentials/policies-procedures/staff-handbook.html](http://hr.northwestern.edu/essentials/policies-procedures/staff-handbook.html).

## Questions

For questions that are not answered in this Handbook, staff members are encouraged to ask their supervisor or email [askHR@northwestern.edu](mailto:askHR@northwestern.edu). Staff members also may visit Northwestern’s policies website at [policies.northwestern.edu](http://policies.northwestern.edu).

**Staff members are always welcome to contact Human Resources:**

- » **In person:**
  - In Evanston at 1800 Sherman, 1st Floor, at askHR
  - In Qatar at the NU-Q Human Resources Department
- » **Virtually:**
  - email [askHR@northwestern.edu](mailto:askHR@northwestern.edu)
  - call 847-491-4700



SHAKESPEARE GARDEN \ EVANSTON

**Northwestern is an excellent place to work, providing a stimulating work environment and competitive rewards. This combination is reinforced by strong benefits and workplace opportunities, the ability of staff members to maintain an effective integration between their work and personal lives, and the personal satisfaction of advancing the goals of one of the top universities in the world.**

## Joining Northwestern

Human Resources and the supervisor seeking to fill a position vacancy work jointly on recruiting, screening, and selecting candidates.

Staff positions must be posted no less than five business days in accordance with Northwestern policy. Offers of employment may be extended following the posting period and subsequent interview.

To view regular and temporary job opportunities, visit [hr.northwestern.edu/careers](http://hr.northwestern.edu/careers).

For a description of what constitutes an exempt position versus a non-exempt position, see Types of Employment, beginning on [page 2.2](#).

### **Northwestern is committed to**

- » equal employment opportunities**
- » establishing equitable policies, processes, and procedures, and**
- » monitoring those efforts for progress.**

### **» How to Apply**

Northwestern requires an online application be submitted for each open job opportunity at the University. All applicants should apply for staff job openings by visiting [hr.northwestern.edu/careers](http://hr.northwestern.edu/careers). Northwestern only accepts applications and resumes for specific openings, and they must be submitted online in order to be considered.

### **» Good Faith Search**

Northwestern is an equal opportunity employer. All searches are conducted in compliance with the laws of the United States, the State of Illinois, and local jurisdictions.

### **» Affirmative Action**

Northwestern is a federal contractor that actively participates in affirmative action planning in the areas of recruitment and retention as required by federal law. For each employment and promotional opportunity, Northwestern actively seeks veterans and persons with disabilities in accordance with applicable federal law.

## » Accommodation of Disabilities and Pregnancy

Northwestern reasonably accommodates persons with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides protections to persons with disabilities in employment, public accommodations, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

Employees and applicants with a disability (as defined under the ADA, as amended) may be eligible for reasonable accommodations that allow them to perform the essential functions of their position or participate in the hiring process for an open position. A reasonable accommodation for an employee may include such things as changing the physical layout of the workplace, restructuring job duties, or modifying the work schedule. A reasonable accommodation for an applicant may include making certain, reasonable modifications to the application, screening, or interview process to ensure the process is accessible.

Employees who are pregnant, recovering from childbirth, or have a condition related to pregnancy have the right to ask for a reasonable accommodation under the Pregnancy Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) and Title IX. Accommodations may include more/longer bathroom breaks, access to places to sit, assistance with or limits on lifting, a private space for expressing milk, or time off to recover from pregnancy. For more information regarding employee rights on Pregnancy in the Workplace, employees can download the Illinois Department of Human Rights fact sheet at [dhr.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/dhr/publications/documents/pregnancy-posting-idhr-eng-2023.pdf](https://dhr.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/dhr/publications/documents/pregnancy-posting-idhr-eng-2023.pdf) or refer to the posted “Pregnancy

**Northwestern is committed to providing a safe environment and endeavors to protect the health, welfare, and safety of all employees, students, and visitors. Hiring qualified individuals to fill positions contributes to Northwestern's success in meeting its mission and strategic priorities.**

Rights Notice.” Information about access to lactation rooms across campus for breastfeeding can be found by visiting [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/work-life/lactation-support/index.html](https://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/work-life/lactation-support/index.html).

For additional information regarding the process for applying for accommodations, visit [northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/accommodation](https://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/accommodation).

## Employment Eligibility

Northwestern requires staff members to complete a Form I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification. The Form I-9 must be completed by the end of the third business day after the staff member’s first day of work. Failure to meet eligibility requirements will make a candidate ineligible for hire or result in the withdrawal of an offer or termination of employment for a staff member. For more information, please see Northwestern’s Form I-9 Compliance Process and Enforcement Policy at [hr.northwestern.edu/essentials/hr-systems/e-verify](https://hr.northwestern.edu/essentials/hr-systems/e-verify).

Falsification or omission of information as part of the application process may result in denial or termination of employment. Fingerprinting may be required for certain positions; failure to comply or a negative finding is grounds for denial or termination of employment.

## Types of Employment

There are several types of employment at Northwestern. Staff members may be full-time, part-time, or term. Northwestern also employs temporary employees.

- **Full-time staff members** are scheduled to work at least 37.5 hours per week. The most common full-time schedules total 37.5 or 40 hours per week.
- **Part-time staff members** are scheduled to work fewer than 37.5 hours per week. Part-time staff members who work fewer than 18.75 hours per week are not eligible for benefits or other paid time off accruals. See [page 5.1](#) for additional benefits eligibility requirements.
- **Term staff members** are appointed into “term” positions and have predetermined position beginning and end dates. Term positions are not intended

to be ongoing. Northwestern is an at-will employer. This means either the employee or Northwestern may end the employment relationship at will, with or without cause or advance notice, at any time.

- **Temporary employees** are hired for occasional or casual employment. Temporary employees are not eligible for benefits, except those required by law, and work for Northwestern fewer than 1,000 hours in a 12-month period.
- **Other instances.** There are some instances where employees have contracts and their employment status is governed by that contract. These are different from staff on term assignments.

In addition, staff positions are classified as either exempt or non-exempt.

## Exempt Staff

Exempt staff members are exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). This exemption is determined by evaluating the duties and responsibilities required of the staff member against the criteria outlined in the FLSA. A job is classified as exempt if its duties and responsibilities are primarily executive, managerial, or administrative, or if it requires an advanced educational degree or knowledge and experience in a field considered to be professional. Exempt staff members fulfill their duties without a focus on the amount of time it takes. Therefore, exempt staff members are paid a monthly salary that does not vary between pay periods based on the quality or quantity of work, and they are not eligible to receive overtime for hours worked beyond 40 hours in a workweek.

## Non-exempt Staff

Non-exempt staff members do not qualify, by the nature of their work and responsibilities, for exemption from the overtime or minimum wage provisions of the FLSA. Non-exempt staff members are paid by the hour and must receive no less than one and one-half times their regular rate of pay for hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek.

## Background Checks

Pre-employment background checks are required for all finalists who are selected for employment. Conducting background checks of candidates prior

to date of hire helps determine the employability of candidates while ensuring the protection of current employees, property, and information of the organization.

For more information, visit [hr.northwestern.edu/for-managers/hiring/hiring-process/offer.html](http://hr.northwestern.edu/for-managers/hiring/hiring-process/offer.html).

### » Applicability

A background check will be conducted for all individuals selected during the hiring process for positions at Northwestern. This includes all candidates applying to regular and temporary staff positions within Northwestern. Prior to beginning an assignment, interns and volunteers over the age of 18 years old are also required to complete a background check. Northwestern reserves the right to background check any current employee.

### » Disclosure of Convictions

Staff members have an ongoing obligation to inform their supervisor if they:

- Are convicted of a crime
- Are added to any sexual offender registry
- Have a license or certification that is required for the position that expires, or that is suspended or revoked, or
- Are excluded, suspended, debarred, or otherwise ineligible to participate in federal programs.

Supervisors, in turn, should notify Human Resources in such instances. Registered sex offenders who are employed by Northwestern are required by law to also register with the University Police Department.

### » Types of Background Checks

There are numerous types of background checks, depending upon the position and function, including but not limited to:

- County criminal check
- Credit check
- Driving record check
- Excluded parties list/federal healthcare reimbursement sanctions and exclusions check, such as Office of Inspector General (OIG), Food and Drug Administration (FDA), General Services Administration (GSA), and Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC)
- Federal felony and misdemeanor check

- National Criminal File check
- Sex offender registry check, and
- Social Security number check.

Additionally, background checks include verifications of past and/or current employment, education, and personal and professional references.

Driving record checks are conducted for individuals who are required to drive as a function of the position or who regularly operate Northwestern vehicles. Similarly, credit checks are conducted for candidates who apply to positions with significant financial responsibility and accountability as well as individuals with access to sensitive information (for example, social security numbers or credit information).

Background checks, education and employment verifications, and reference checks are conducted by Human Resources or its agents or designees.

- Drug and alcohol testing is required prior to employment and at various times during employment in positions requiring such testing. For more information on the University's Drug and Alcohol Use and Testing Policy, visit [policies.northwestern.edu/docs/drugs-and-alcohol-policy.pdf](http://policies.northwestern.edu/docs/drugs-and-alcohol-policy.pdf).
- An internal Trustworthiness and Reliability assessment is required for positions allowing unescorted access to a cesium irradiator. In addition, finger-printing and a federally conducted risk assessment are required for positions that allow unescorted access to either cesium irradiators or regulated select agents.
- A physical examination is required for some positions where specified occupational health and safety standards must be met.

### **» Consequences**

Where it relates to existing employees, the following situations may be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment:

- Failure to obtain and maintain required licensure and/or certification
- Current inclusion in the OIG List, GSA List, OFAC List, or Sexual Offender Registry, and
- A criminal conviction, discovered at any time during employment.

### **Use of Information Obtained from a Background Check**

The information obtained through a background check is considered only insofar as it is relevant to performance in the position and/or as it relates to the issues of safety and security of people, property, and other resources at Northwestern. A plea of guilty, a finding of guilty by a referee, jury, or court, or a conviction of a crime will be considered in determining the eligibility of an individual for employment. Conviction of a crime does not necessarily prohibit being hired.

### **» Fair Credit Reporting Act**

Northwestern will advise the individual of any adverse findings and provide the individual with an opportunity to explain the situation and/or provide proof of error, in compliance with the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) and any other legal requirements.

If any reported information is used in denying a placement to a candidate, a representative of Human Resources or its agent will:

- Notify the candidate that the adverse action was taken by Northwestern
- Provide to the candidate the name, address, and phone number of the reporting agency
- Inform the candidate of the right to a copy of the report to be provided by the agency, and
- Inform the candidate of the right to dispute the information with the reporting agency.

## Other Employment Requirements

### » Mandated Reporter Acknowledgement

As employees of an educational institution in the State of Illinois, all staff members are considered mandated reporters and required to acknowledge this upon hire.

For more information, refer to [\*Minors at Northwestern and Mandated Reporters\*](#) on page 3.4 of this Handbook.

### » Reporting by University Employees of Disclosures Related to Discrimination and Harassment

For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies/reporting-by-university-employees-of-disclosures-related-to-discrimination-and-harassment.pdf](http://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies/reporting-by-university-employees-of-disclosures-related-to-discrimination-and-harassment.pdf)

### » Policy on Employment or Evaluation of Relatives

For more information, visit [policies.northwestern.edu/docs/employment-or-evaluation-of-relatives-policy.pdf](http://policies.northwestern.edu/docs/employment-or-evaluation-of-relatives-policy.pdf).

### » Policy on Consensual Romantic or Sexual Relationships between Faculty, Staff, and Students

For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/provost/docs/consensual\\_relations\\_011314.pdf](http://northwestern.edu/provost/docs/consensual_relations_011314.pdf).

### » Policy on Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct

For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies/policy-on-discrimination-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct.pdf](http://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies/policy-on-discrimination-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct.pdf).

### » Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment

For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies/policy-on-title-ix-sexual-harassment-2025-2026.pdf](http://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies/policy-on-title-ix-sexual-harassment-2025-2026.pdf).

## Onboarding—New Employee Orientation

The staff onboarding process helps new staff members quickly learn how Northwestern works, how to succeed here, and how to take advantage of the many resources and benefits the University offers to enrich their quality of life.

Visit [hr.northwestern.edu/careers/new-employees](http://hr.northwestern.edu/careers/new-employees) or email [askHR@northwestern.edu](mailto:askHR@northwestern.edu) for more information.

## Probationary Period

All staff members are on a six-month probationary period from the date of hire. Additionally, staff members who apply for and receive a transfer or promotion are in their probationary period for the initial six months in the new position. This period of time provides Northwestern an opportunity to observe and evaluate the capacity of the staff member in areas that include, but are not limited to, possessing the competencies necessary to satisfactorily perform the essential functions of the job and achieving demonstrable results. The period also allows observations and evaluations of staff members' behaviors, work habits, dependability, and conduct as well as their relationships with individuals at all levels.

In rare instances during the probationary period, Northwestern may terminate employment immediately, with or without cause and with or without notice. Supervisors may extend the probationary period after consultation with Human Resources.

Successful completion of the probationary period does not guarantee continued employment.

**Northwestern's onboarding process features valuable guidance and a Q&A with experts and specialists from across the University. Their presentations, workshops, videos, tools, and checklists are designed to help hiring managers and new staff members fully engage in "the Northwestern experience" from recruitment through the first anniversary of employment and beyond.**

## Personnel Files and Access

Human Resources maintains a personnel file for every staff member. The file includes the record of transactions relating to employment at Northwestern. The file is confidential and is not provided to persons outside Northwestern without the staff member's consent, legal authorization, or subpoena/court order. Staff members interested in reviewing their personnel file may submit a request in writing to Human Resources.

**Staff members can request to review the information contained in their own personnel file. To prevent abuses of this access privilege, Northwestern reserves the right to limit the number of times staff members can access their file during a 12-month period. Staff members interested in reviewing their personnel file should make this request in writing to Human Resources.**

## Transfer and Promotion

Northwestern values its staff and encourages them to continue to develop and consider other University job opportunities as part of their personal and professional growth.

### » Service Requirement

Staff members are not eligible for a transfer or promotion to a different department/unit at Northwestern until they have been in their current position for 12 months unless there is a mutual written agreement between the current supervisor, Department/Business Administrator, new supervisor, and Human Resources. Documentation of the agreement must be sent to Talent Acquisition. Transfers within the same department/unit may occur at any time provided there is approval by the current supervisor and the Department/Business Administrator.

### » Performance Requirement

Staff members are not eligible for transfer or promotion if they received a "corrective action" rating on their most recent performance review or if they received a disciplinary action or corrective action plan in the six months prior to their application.

### » Qualifications

To be considered for transfer or promotion to another position, a staff member must meet the minimum qualifications of the position and apply for the position. Background checks are required for all finalists who are selected for employment.

For more information, refer to [Background Checks](#) on pages 2.3 and 2.4 of this Handbook.

## » Application

To ensure consideration for a position, a staff member should apply online at [hr.northwestern.edu/careers](http://hr.northwestern.edu/careers).

For more information and assistance, the staff member may contact Human Resources or visit [hr.northwestern.edu/careers/help](http://hr.northwestern.edu/careers/help).

## » Selection Process

The hiring manager, in consultation with Talent Acquisition, reviews applications and determines which applicants will be invited to interview for a position.

## » Salary History Ban

Northwestern does not inquire into a job applicant's salary and benefit history. For more information on what is and is not allowed under the law, visit the Salary History Ban page on the Human Resources website at [northwestern.edu/hr/for-managers/hiring/hiring-process/interviewing-candidates/salary-history-ban.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/for-managers/hiring/hiring-process/interviewing-candidates/salary-history-ban.html).

## » References

Northwestern requires that reference checks be conducted for internal and external applicants. Reference checks for internal applicants must include the staff member's current supervisor.

Reference check documentation must be sent to Talent Acquisition for processing.

Offers are contingent upon successful completion of both a background check and a reference check. Hiring supervisors are strongly encouraged to seek and obtain references before extending an offer and not after.

## » Supervisor Notice

Staff members are encouraged to discuss their career plans and opportunities with their supervisor. Staff members must notify their supervisor at the point they receive an offer.

## » Decision

Offer decisions are made jointly by the hiring manager and Human Resources.

## » Transfer Date

After the offer is accepted, staff members provide notice to their current supervisor, and together they agree on a transfer date that is mutually beneficial for the current department and the new department.

Talent Acquisition coordinates the transfer process with the hiring manager and the staff member's current supervisor as needed. Unless both supervisors agree to other arrangements:

- Exempt staff members must provide at least four weeks of working notice, and
- Non-exempt staff members must provide at least two weeks of working notice.

## » Vacation, Personal Floating Holiday, and Incidental Sick Time

When a current Northwestern staff member transfers to another University staff position, the staff member retains the vacation, personal floating holiday, and Incidental Sick Time balance from the former position, up to the maximum allowed.

For more information, refer to [Section 6: Paid Time Away from Work](#) of this Handbook.

## » Lateral Transfer

Generally, a staff member's wage/salary does not increase upon lateral transfer to a position of the same pay grade or salary range unless it is determined, through an analysis conducted by Human Resources, that equity considerations merit an increase in pay.

## » Promotion

A staff member who transfers to a position with a higher pay grade or salary range may be eligible for a wage/salary increase. The amount of the increase is based on a number of factors, including but not limited to qualifications and a comparison of wage/salary of employees in comparable roles.

## Reinstatement

Staff members who return to any regular staff position at Northwestern within six months of leaving a regular staff position at the University will be reinstated without the loss of prior service or benefits status. Paid time benefits are not accrued during the absence and the number of days absent is not included in the calculation of University service.

Staff members who are reinstated will be granted a new 30-day enrollment period for benefits. If enrolled, benefits coverage will be effective on the first day of the following month, unless the staff member is hired on the first of the month, in which case coverage will be effective as of the reinstatement date.

## Rehire

A staff member who has been away from Northwestern more than six months and returns to any regular staff position at the University is considered a new staff member with no prior University service for the purposes of accruing paid time away from work and service recognition. Additionally, a new waiting period for benefits eligibility may be required.

## Eligibility for Rehire

Staff members who leave Northwestern and want to return may apply for positions to be considered for reemployment unless the University has determined they are not eligible for rehire. Circumstances that may impact eligibility for rehire include, but are not limited to, involuntary termination for cause, job abandonment, and voluntary resignation in lieu of termination.

Reemployed staff members are subject to the probationary period requirements.

Should a staff member terminate from their benefits-eligible position and subsequently be rehired into another benefits-eligible position at Northwestern, there must be a minimum 31-day break in service between the two positions. Staff members who return to any regular staff position at Northwestern within six months of leaving a regular staff position at the University will be reinstated without the loss of prior service or benefits status. For more information on when a 31-day break in service is required, please visit [northwestern.edu/hr/for-managers/hiring/rehire-transfer-guidance.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/for-managers/hiring/rehire-transfer-guidance.html).

## Performance Reviews

Performance Excellence is a year-round experience, culminating in an annual performance review and rating. Supervisors and staff members are encouraged to set clear goals, discuss development, and engage in ongoing conversations about progress and performance.

Performance Excellence promotes:

- **Focus and alignment** by setting clear goals and objectives so that staff members work toward highest priority outcomes.
- **Engagement** by making connections between staff member contributions and Northwestern's mission.
- **Development** by supporting staff members' opportunities for learning and encouraging career discussions and continuous feedback.

Northwestern's Performance Excellence is completed online, within myHR Learn ([learn.northwestern.edu](http://learn.northwestern.edu)). For additional information about the process and training resources, visit [perform.northwestern.edu](http://perform.northwestern.edu).

Finalized reviews are available to staff members and supervisors in myHR Learn. The results of a staff member's year-end review and rating should be used as an important input to determine the staff member's merit increase and facilitate the creation of the staff member's performance and development objectives for the next year.

If they disagree with their supervisor's evaluation, staff members may include a rebuttal letter in their personnel file or attach it to their review in myHR Learn. For differences in opinion relative to performance evaluation, the judgment of the supervisor typically prevails.

To learn more about Performance Excellence, including SIMple goals, REAL conversations, and how to fill out a review, visit [perform.northwestern.edu](http://perform.northwestern.edu).

## Talent Development

At Northwestern, we are committed to helping members of our community grow both professionally and personally. Our Talent Development programs offer a wide range of opportunities, including:

- Professional and Leadership Development
- Talent Management
- Organizational Development

These engaging workplace development initiatives are designed to enhance skills and knowledge in various areas. For more information, visit [hr.northwestern.edu/talent-development](http://hr.northwestern.edu/talent-development) or email [askHR@northwestern.edu](mailto:askHR@northwestern.edu).

Additionally, professional development opportunities offered by external entities that are related to a staff member's duties may also be considered and utilized, at the discretion of the staff member's supervisor and unit.

## Staff Recognition

Northwestern recognizes the crucial role that staff play in upholding the University's mission and values and honors staff service, contributions, and performance in a variety of ways. Northwestern also recognizes that creating opportunities for formal and informal recognition of staff is key to managers' supporting their teams' overall well-being.

For information on staff formal and informal recognition programs, visit [hr.northwestern.edu/talent-development/recognition](http://hr.northwestern.edu/talent-development/recognition). For information on staff well-being, see [Section 9](#).

## Corrective Action Process

Staff members must meet the expectations established by Northwestern and their department/unit. Work performance encompasses many factors, including:

- Work Performance
- Dependability
- Conduct
- Northwestern Behaviors (as defined by the performance management process), and
- General compliance with all policies and procedures of Northwestern and the department/unit.

### » Probationary Period

All staff members begin a six-month probationary period on their date of hire. Additionally, staff members who apply for and receive a transfer or promotion are in their probationary period for the first six months in the new position. The probationary period provides Northwestern an opportunity to observe and evaluate the capacity of the staff member in areas that include, but are not limited to, possessing the competencies necessary to satisfactorily perform the essential functions of the job and achieving demonstrable results. The period also allows observations and evaluations of staff members' behaviors, relevant work habits, dependability, and conduct as well as their relationships with individuals at all levels.

In rare instances, during the probationary period, Northwestern may terminate employment immediately, with or without cause and with or without notice. Supervisors may extend the probationary period after consultation with Human Resources.

Successful completion of the probationary period does not guarantee continued employment.

For information about the probationary period of police officers, contact the University Police Department at [universitypolice@northwestern.edu](mailto:universitypolice@northwestern.edu).

## » Performance Management and Corrective Action

In circumstances where staff members do not meet work expectations, they are subject to corrective or disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Performance management is communicative in nature. Performance management may include formal coaching conversations, expectations discussions, or a performance improvement plan.

Corrective action is disciplinary in nature and may include, but is not limited to, a warning, a final written warning, an unpaid suspension, or termination. Depending on the nature of the situation, performance management and disciplinary action measures may be combined or skipped. There are infractions that warrant immediate discharge; refer to [Involuntary Termination of Employment](#) on page 2.13 of this Handbook.

A corrective or disciplinary action process or plan formally documents problems while providing a staff member with clear expectations to improve work performance or change behavior.

Staff members who receive corrective or disciplinary action may attach any additional comments of their own.

A copy of the corrective or disciplinary action plan is placed in the staff member's personnel file in Human Resources.

Staff members who have been issued a corrective action or disciplinary plan within the last six months are not eligible for a promotion or transfer.

## Resolving Workplace Issues

Many staff members who have concerns about workplace matters reach a satisfactory resolution through discussion with their supervisor or within their school/unit. Staff members may also discuss their concerns with their Human Resources Business Partner.

Time spent during scheduled working hours in meetings with Human Resources is treated as time worked for pay purposes.

Staff members who wish to report or make a complaint of discrimination or harassment based on the protected categories listed in Northwestern's Policy on Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct can contact the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance at [ocr@northwestern.edu](mailto:ocr@northwestern.edu) or complete a complaint form at [northwestern.edu/NUReportDiscrimination](http://northwestern.edu/NUReportDiscrimination). See [Discrimination and Harassment](#) on page 4.1 for more information.

Staff members who wish to make a complaint of sexual misconduct can contact the Title IX Coordinator at [ocr@northwestern.edu](mailto:ocr@northwestern.edu) or complete a complaint form at [northwestern.edu/NUReportSexualMisconduct](http://northwestern.edu/NUReportSexualMisconduct). See [Section 4: Workplace Commitment](#), pages 4.2 through 4.4, for more information.

Northwestern reserves the right to take reasonable actions to investigate and address complaints and other workplace concerns brought to its attention, including reviewing systems and other sources of available evidence. If a staff member reporting a possible policy violation does not wish to pursue a complaint or proceed with an investigation, the University may nevertheless independently decide to conduct an investigation. In such situations, Northwestern will not compel the staff member to participate as a complaining party but expects the staff member to provide all relevant information to an appropriate University authority, consistent with the reporting obligation set forth on [page 4.3](#).

## Non-retaliation

Northwestern strictly prohibits retaliation against any member of its community for reporting or inquiring in good faith about what the member believes to be wrongful or unlawful activity, or for participating in an investigation or proceeding related to such activity. Northwestern considers such reporting, inquiring, or participating to be protected activities in which all members of the University community may freely engage.

### » Encouragement of Reporting

Northwestern encourages members of its community to report all information regarding any activity they reasonably believe to be wrongful or unlawful, including activities that may constitute:

- Discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct
- Fraud
- Unethical business conduct
- Academic misconduct
- Research misconduct
- Fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement in connection with a federal contract or grant
- Circumstances of substantial, specific, or imminent danger to faculty, staff, or students, or the public's health and/or safety
- Suspected child abuse and/or neglect
- Other violations of Northwestern policies or procedures, or
- Other violations of local, state, or federal laws or regulations.

Northwestern is firmly committed to a policy of encouraging timely disclosure of such concerns and prohibits retaliation against any member of the University community who, in good faith, reports such concerns.

### Protection from Retaliation

Retaliation is an action, performed directly or through others, that is aimed to deter a reasonable person from engaging in a protected activity or is done in retribution for engaging in a protected activity. Action in response to a protected activity is not retaliatory unless (i) it has a materially adverse effect on the individual; and (ii) it would not have occurred in the absence of the protected activity.

Examples of materially adverse actions that could constitute retaliation include, but are not limited to:

- Reducing one's salary
- Giving a negative performance evaluation
- Decisions relating to one's work assignments, vacation, or promotion or advancement opportunities (whether employment-related or academic)
- Terminating employment
- Reducing a student's grade
- Removing one from a student organization, academic program, or lab
- Stripping one of coauthorship on a publication
- Interfering with one's job search
- Engaging in harassing conduct that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, and/or persistent to create a hostile environment. (For this purpose, the existence of a hostile environment is to be judged both objectively—meaning a reasonable person would find the environment hostile—and subjectively—meaning the affected individual felt the environment was hostile.), or
- Threats to engage in any of the actions listed above.

In addition, no community member may be retaliated against for refusing to carry out a directive ordering the member to engage in wrongful or unlawful activity.

## » Reporting Process

Northwestern is committed to the highest standards of professional and ethical conduct and provides several channels for staff and faculty to ask questions and to communicate issues and concerns. Any staff member who has reason to believe noncompliance has occurred is obligated to report the activity.

Applicable law and Northwestern policies require reporting of certain activity, including

- suspected child abuse or neglect, and
- discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct

For information and resources to report a workplace concern, visit [northwestern.edu/report](http://northwestern.edu/report).

In addition, members of the Northwestern community may report suspected wrongful or unlawful activity, including retaliation, through one or more of the following options:

- Routine concerns may be reported to the reporter's immediate supervisor, department chair, dean, or administrative head
- Concerns may also be reported to the Office of the Provost; Human Resources; the Dean of Students Office; The Graduate School (TGS) Dean's Office; University Compliance; the Office for Research Integrity (ORI); the Title IX Coordinator; or the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance.

Concerns may be reported through either or both of the above options. If reporters so choose, they may contact multiple individuals or offices. Any instances of suspected retaliation may be reported in the same manner.

Northwestern community members who prefer to report anonymously may do so by utilizing EthicsPoint, the University's phone- and web-based system for confidential reporting of suspected misconduct and other concerns. EthicsPoint is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. For more information, see [Ethics and Compliance](#) on page 3.2 of this Handbook.

Reports should be made as promptly as possible after the suspected wrongful or unlawful activity (or retaliation) occurs to facilitate investigation of the report.

All reports will be handled as promptly and discreetly as possible, with facts made available only to those who need to know to investigate and resolve the matter.

## Resignation or Voluntary Termination of Employment

All staff members are expected to give two weeks of working notice when resigning their employment with Northwestern. It is expected that a staff member in an exempt position will provide enough working notice to provide for the transition of responsibilities (generally one month).

Staff members should submit their resignations in writing to their supervisor.

Staff members may not use vacation, personal floating holidays, or any other type of paid absences to extend their termination date. Staff members may not use vacation or personal floating holidays on their last workday, unless they are planning to retire from Northwestern.

For more information regarding the payment of vacation and personal floating holidays, refer to [Section 6: Paid Time Away from Work](#) of this Handbook.

# Involuntary Termination of Employment

## » Immediate Discharge

Some violations of policy and rules may be serious enough to result in immediate discharge. These include but are not limited to:

- Criminal conviction
- Failure to meet employment eligibility requirements
- Falsification of staff records, time reports, reasons for absence, or other University records
- Flagrant insubordination
- Fraud
- Gross dereliction of duty
- Improper disclosure or use of private or confidential information
- Intentional destruction of Northwestern property
- Job abandonment
- Physical violence or the threat of it
- Research misconduct
- Serious violations of Northwestern policy or state/federal law
- Theft
- Unauthorized use of information systems or data
- Unprofessional conduct
- Violations of Northwestern's policies prohibiting discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, or non-retaliation, and
- Conduct detrimental to Northwestern's interests or reputation.

## » Poor Performance

Refer to [Corrective Action Process](#) on page 2.9 of this Handbook.

## » Reduction In Force

Conditions may arise which necessitate a layoff due to reorganization, lack of work, and/or lack of funding. These situations are discussed between management of the unit and Human Resources and then are communicated to affected staff members by their department/unit.

# Post Resignation/Termination Procedures

## » Benefits (COBRA)

When a staff member's Northwestern benefit coverage has terminated, the staff member will be entitled to continue certain University benefits under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA).

## » Benefits Continuation Upon Retirement

Staff members who retire from Northwestern and are participating in a University-sponsored health, dental, and/or vision plan at the time of retirement are eligible to continue certain health, dental, and/or vision plan coverage after retirement by paying the premium on a timely basis.

Eligible participants must be at least 55 years of age and have met the length of service requirement as of the date of retirement and be currently enrolled in a Northwestern-sponsored health, dental, and/or vision plan on the date of retirement. Required years of service decrease when retirement age is greater than age 57, as outlined in the following table.

Age at Retirement	Years of Continuous Service Required as of the Date of Retirement	
	Full-Time	Part-Time
55	10	10
56	10	10
57	10	10
58	9	10
59	8	10
60	7	10
61	6	9
62	5	8
63	5	7
64	5	6
65 and over	2	2

Within 31 calendar days from the date of retirement, participants may arrange to convert or port their basic term life insurance and accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D) insurance. For a complete summary of benefits upon retirement, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/retirement/index.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/retirement/index.html).

## » **Exit Surveys and Interviews**

Staff members who voluntarily resign from Northwestern will receive an exit survey at their on-file personal email address shortly after their departure. This survey provides staff members with an opportunity to provide confidential feedback about their experience working at Northwestern.

In addition to the exit survey, staff members who wish to have a live discussion may request an exit interview prior to their last day. Interested staff members should contact their Human Resources Business Partner ([HRBP@northwestern.edu](mailto:HRBP@northwestern.edu)) at the time they submit their resignation to schedule the exit interview.

## » **Employment References and Verification**

Northwestern generally does not provide employment references. Northwestern verifies dates of employment and job title.

For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/essentials/personal-information/employment-verification.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/essentials/personal-information/employment-verification.html).

## » **Unemployment Compensation**

Staff members who are no longer employed by Northwestern may be eligible for unemployment compensation. Former staff members who have questions about whether they are eligible for unemployment compensation should contact the appropriate state Department of Employment Security.

## » **Northwestern Property**

Before their last day of work, staff members leaving Northwestern must return to their department/units the following: Wildcard, keys or access cards, and any University property and/or materials. Northwestern will take all appropriate action to recover its property.

## » **Vacation and Personal Floating Holidays**

Unused accruals of vacation and personal floating holiday time are paid in a single payment in the pay period following a staff member's last pay period and the employing department/unit's notice to Payroll in Human Resources that the staff member's employment has ended.

## » **Appeals of Involuntary Terminations of Employment**

Staff members wishing to appeal their termination of employment (other than position elimination/layoff/reduction in force) may appeal by writing to the Vice President of Human Resources within 10 calendar days of receiving the decision. Typically within 45 business days of receiving the written appeal, the Vice President or their designee will review the matter and respond in writing. The decision of the Vice President of Human Resources or their designee will be Northwestern's final decision.

Staff members who have worked for Northwestern less than six consecutive months preceding the termination are excluded from this appeals process. Staff members who are in their six-month probationary period due to transfer, promotion, or reinstatement to Northwestern may appeal a termination (refer to [Reinstatement](#) on page 2.8 of this Handbook.)

### **COBRA Continuation of Benefits**

Under COBRA, terminating staff members are entitled to continue health, dental, vision, and flexible spending account (FSA) participation provided the former staff member remits premiums on a timely basis. Staff members and their dependents may be allowed to continue individual or family coverage for a specific period of time. For information on eligibility requirements and terms for continuation of coverage under COBRA, visit [hr.northwestern.edu/benefits/eligibility-changes/benefit-changes/terminated-employees-and-cobra](http://hr.northwestern.edu/benefits/eligibility-changes/benefit-changes/terminated-employees-and-cobra).

## Unpaid Interns and Volunteers

Under the Fair Labor Standards Act, employers must pay employees for all work performed. On occasion, individuals (who are not employees) may donate their time and services to Northwestern. Departments/units must conduct a careful review to determine if the intern or volunteer assignment meets the criteria to qualify as unpaid.

Please familiarize yourself with the intern and volunteer criteria to determine if a proposed unpaid internship or volunteer assignment is within the guidelines established by the Department of Labor (DOL). These are the legal guidelines that define instances in which an individual may “intern” or “volunteer” at Northwestern rather than be considered an “employee.” Departments/units may consult with Human Resources if they have any questions regarding the criteria.

Interns and volunteers should be at least 16 years of age.

Prior to beginning an assignment, interns and volunteers over the age of 18 years old are required to complete a background check. For more information, visit [Background Checks](#) on page 2.3.

For required forms or other information, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/for-managers/hiring/hiring-interns-volunteers/index.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/for-managers/hiring/hiring-interns-volunteers/index.html).

### » Unpaid Interns

There is an exemption from the pay requirement for interns that involves the following criteria.

The extent to which

- the intern and the employer clearly understand that there is no expectation of compensation. Any promise of compensation, express or implied, suggests that the intern is an employee—and vice versa.
- the internship provides training that would be similar to that which would be given in an educational environment, including the clinical and other hands-on training provided by educational institutions.
- the internship is tied to the intern’s formal education program by integrated coursework or the receipt of academic credit.

- the internship accommodates the intern’s academic commitments by corresponding to the academic calendar.
- the internship’s duration is limited to the period in which the internship provides the intern with beneficial learning.
- the intern’s work complements, rather than displaces, the work of paid employees while providing significant educational benefits to the intern.
- the intern and the employer understand that the internship is conducted without entitlement to a paid job at the conclusion of the internship.

These criteria examine the intern–employer relationships to determine which party is the “primary beneficiary” of the internship. If the intern is the main beneficiary of the relationship, no pay is necessary.

### » Volunteers

There is an exemption from the pay requirement for volunteers at a nonprofit institution. The factors include

- The nature of the entity that receives the services
- The receipt by the individual (or expectation thereof) of any benefits from those for whom the services are performed
- Whether the activity is less than a full-time occupation
- Whether regular employees are displaced
- Whether the services are offered freely without pressure or coercion, and
- Whether the services are of the kind typically associated with volunteer work

If all factors are met, the individual will be considered a volunteer and not an employee under the Department of Labor’s standards, which may change from time to time.



CHICAGO \ SIMPSON QUERREY BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH CENTER

## 3 \ REQUIREMENTS IN THE WORKPLACE

**Northwestern is a diverse, vibrant community. The policies outlined in this section are intended to help promote a welcoming, positive, and safe work environment for all staff members.**

### Civility and Mutual Respect

As members of the Northwestern community, staff, faculty, and students are expected to interact with each other with respect and consideration. When a community member's conduct varies from this expectation, it is the responsibility of the supervisor, director, department chair, or dean who supervises the person engaging in the inappropriate conduct to address it. Inappropriate conduct covers a broad range of behavior from rude, obnoxious, bullying behavior to threats of violence. The level of danger in the behavior determines the action that the supervisor should take.

For guidance on identifying potential threatening or violent behavior and for the best ways to deal with these incidents, contact Human Resources. For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/up/docs/civility-guidance.pdf](http://northwestern.edu/up/docs/civility-guidance.pdf).

#### » Expected Behavior

Each member of the Northwestern community is expected to treat other community members with civility and respect, recognizing that disagreement and informed debate are valued in an academic community.

#### » Unacceptable Behavior

Demeaning, intimidating, threatening, bullying, or violent behaviors that affect the ability to learn, work, or live in the Northwestern environment depart from the standard for civility and respect. These behaviors have no place in the academic community.

#### » Violence

Violence is behavior that causes harm to a person or damage to property or causes fear for one's safety or the safety of others. Examples of violent behavior include physical contact that is harmful and expression of intent to cause physical harm. Such behavior is unacceptable in the Northwestern community.

#### » Violation

A community member who displays inappropriate conduct is subject to disciplinary action up to and including separation of the offending party from the University, consistent with Northwestern disciplinary procedures.

#### » Visitors

Visitors, vendors, contractors, and the families of members of the community are required to display appropriate conduct at all times. Noncompliant behavior will lead to removal from the campus.

## Ethics and Compliance

Northwestern's commitment to ethics and compliance provides community members with the information needed to act appropriately. The University's Standards for Business Conduct provides a framework for administering Northwestern resources and establishes guidelines for acceptable standards of behavior.

For the complete text of Northwestern's Standards for Business Conduct, visit [policies.northwestern.edu/all-policies/standards-for-business-conduct](https://policies.northwestern.edu/all-policies/standards-for-business-conduct).

## Conflict of Interest

Northwestern staff members have a primary professional obligation to act in the best interests of the University and not allow outside activities or financial interests to interfere with that obligation. As part of this responsibility, Northwestern expects staff members to apply their time and effort appropriately and use University resources toward University ends. Staff members must use their position, time, and Northwestern resources in a manner that does not detract from or interfere with their University responsibilities. If a staff member's actions provide inappropriate personal advantage, or are detrimental to Northwestern's mission, they present a conflict

of interest that must be avoided or managed appropriately. In order to identify and address actual or perceived conflicts of interest, all staff members are required to disclose outside professional activities and financial interests that relate to their Northwestern role(s) and responsibilities on an annual basis.

Northwestern's conflict of interest policy for staff members also applies to their family members. Family members include spouses or domestic partners, parents, children, siblings, aunts, uncles, nephews, nieces, grandparents, and grandchildren (whether related by blood, marriage, or adoption).

For the complete text of Northwestern's Policy on Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment, visit [northwestern.edu/coi/policy](https://northwestern.edu/coi/policy).

## Acceptance of Gifts and Hospitality from External Parties

Staff members are obligated to act in the best interest of Northwestern when completing their work. Offers of gifts or hospitality above a *de minimis* value from external parties (e.g., vendors) must not be accepted to avoid even the perception that the offer

### EthicsPoint: A Resource for Asking Questions, Speaking Up, and Reporting Suspected Problems and Complaints

Faculty and staff at all levels are expected to support compliance with applicable Northwestern policies and procedures as well as applicable laws, rules, and regulations and to set a tone of intolerance for non-compliance. If a policy or procedure is unclear, faculty and staff members are encouraged to ask the responsible unit for guidance or to contact University Compliance for assistance in identifying the best individual or office to help.

Any faculty or staff member who has reason to believe noncompliance has occurred is obligated to report the incident(s) and all relevant information to an appropriate Northwestern authority. When noncompliance is suspected, observed, or otherwise made known, concerns may be reported to the faculty or staff member's immediate supervisor or to other Northwestern authorities, such as Human Resources or University Compliance.

Northwestern also maintains EthicsPoint, a third-party phone- and web-based hotline system for confidentially reporting suspected noncompliant activity, raising a concern, or making an inquiry about proper process(es). Call 866-294-3545 or visit [secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/7325/index.html](https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/7325/index.html). Reports made in good faith are protected under the Northwestern policy on non-retaliation and will not jeopardize the reporting person's status.

could bias a staff member's decision-making. For more information about this policy and associated FAQs, visit [northwestern.edu/coi/policy](http://northwestern.edu/coi/policy).

## Preventing Violence

### » Weapons

Weapons of any kind, including any toy or facsimile of a weapon, are prohibited on campus except for those carried by sworn police officers or Northwestern-authorized security officers. Individuals licensed for concealed carry under Illinois statutes are still prohibited from carrying weapons on Northwestern property. For permission to use prop weapons in theatrical productions on campus, contact University Police.

### » Orders of Protection

Northwestern community members who have obtained restraining or personal protection orders are encouraged to provide a copy of the order to University Police for enforcement on campus, and may provide a copy of the order to Human Resources.

### » Fire and Crime Logs

The Office of Risk Management maintains a fire log documenting reported fires occurring in Chicago or Evanston on-campus student housing facilities. This log typically provides general incident information including the date the fire was reported, nature of the fire, date and time of the fire, and the location of the fire. For more information, contact Risk Management.

A daily crime log (Blotter) is available for review 24 hours a day on the Northwestern University Police (UP) website or via a lobby kiosk at the UP stations in Chicago (211 East Superior Street) and Evanston (1201 Davis Street). The Blotter is updated and published Monday–Friday and contains reported criminal and non-criminal incidents. Information in the Blotter typically includes the case number, incident classification, date reported, date occurred, time occurred, general location, and disposition of each incident. The Blotter is available online at [northwestern.edu/up/facts-and-figures/campus-crime/daily-blotter/index.html](http://northwestern.edu/up/facts-and-figures/campus-crime/daily-blotter/index.html).

The Chicago campus Blotter includes a web link to crime data available on the Chicago Police Department website ([home.chicagopolice.org/statistics-data/crime-statistics](http://home.chicagopolice.org/statistics-data/crime-statistics)). The Evanston campus Blotter includes a web link to the Daily Crime Bulletin, which highlights selected criminal incidents reported to the Evanston Police Department ([cityofevanston.org/government/departments/police/reports/daily-crime-reports](http://cityofevanston.org/government/departments/police/reports/daily-crime-reports)).

A rotating 12-month period of Blotters are posted on the University Police website. Older Blotters may be requested in person at the Evanston campus University Police station Communication Center or via email ([universitypolice@northwestern.edu](mailto:universitypolice@northwestern.edu)). University Police will provide the requested information within two business days.

### » Disclosure of Convictions

All individuals applying for positions, including internal candidates, are required to disclose felony conviction information as part of the hiring process.

Falsification of information as part of the application process may result in denial or termination of employment.

### » Consequences

Where it relates to existing employees, the following situations are subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment:

- A criminal conviction, discovered at any time during employment
- Current inclusion in the Office of Inspector General (OIG) List, General Services Administration (GSA) List, Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) List, or Sexual Offender Registry, and
- Failure to obtain and maintain required licensure and/or certification.

**Employees have an ongoing obligation to inform their supervisors if they are convicted of a crime; they are added to any sexual offender registry; their license or certification to practice expires, is suspended or revoked; or they are excluded, suspended, debarred, or otherwise ineligible to participate in federal programs. Supervisors, in turn, should notify Human Resources in such instances.**

**Registered sex offenders who are employed by the University are required by law to also register with the Northwestern University Police Department.**

## **Reporting Violence**

### **» Responsibility to Act**

Anyone who believes they have been treated in an inappropriate manner should contact their supervisor. It is then the responsibility of the supervisor, whether a supervisor, department chair, or dean, to work with the individuals involved in addressing the situation, so that all members of the community can work together in a professional way. Additional assistance is available in Human Resources.

### **» Resources**

For guidance on identifying potential threatening or violent behavior and for the best ways to deal with these incidents, contact Human Resources. For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/up/docs/civility-guidance.pdf](http://northwestern.edu/up/docs/civility-guidance.pdf) and [northwestern.edu/up/docs/NorthwesternUniversityCampusViolencePreventionPlan.pdf](http://northwestern.edu/up/docs/NorthwesternUniversityCampusViolencePreventionPlan.pdf).

### **» Behavioral Consultation Team**

Northwestern's Behavioral Consultation Team conducts threat assessments; addresses aberrant, dangerous, or threatening behavior that might adversely affect the safety or well-being of the campus community; gives guidance and best practices for preventing violence; and provides supportive services

through holistic case management of situations brought to the team's attention. Staff members who become aware of or are concerned that anyone may pose a threat to the Northwestern community should contact the University Police Communication Center at 847-491-3456 (Evanston) or 312-503-3456 (Chicago).

For further information about the Behavioral Consultation Team and identifying persons-of-concern, review the Northwestern Behavioral Consultation Team Policy at [policies.northwestern.edu/docs/bct-policy-final.pdf](http://policies.northwestern.edu/docs/bct-policy-final.pdf).

### **» Minors at Northwestern and Mandated Reporters**

Northwestern is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for participants in its programs, including minors who participate in camps, clinics, workshops, conferences, research, and other programs and activities sponsored by or affiliated with the University. As stated in the University's Minors at Northwestern Policy, all University employees, staff, volunteers, and third-party contractors who interact with minors in any capacity in connection with these activities are obligated to report suspected abuse and/or neglect to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services or applicable state agency (as well as University Police in emergency situations).

#### **Any member of the Northwestern community who is involved in or witnesses violent behavior on campus should report the incident as follows:**

- **In an emergency situation that poses imminent danger:** Call 911.
- **In a non-emergency situation:** Call Northwestern University Police by dialing 456 from a campus phone.  
If calling from an off-campus phone:
  - In Evanston, dial 847-491-3456 or 847-467-7883 (TDD).
  - In Chicago, dial 312-503-3456 or 312-503-3999 (TDD).
- **In a situation that does not involve imminent danger or for advice on the appropriate course of action:**  
Notify a supervisor or department/unit head.

Alternatively, the observer may report the incident to the Office of the Provost, Human Resources, or the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs.

Faculty and staff who have reason to believe that a student is missing, or who receive a missing student report, must immediately contact Northwestern University Police at 847-491-3456. For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/up/how-to-report/missing-students.html](http://northwestern.edu/up/how-to-report/missing-students.html).

Additionally, all staff members—regardless of their position or assignment—are mandated reporters under the Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act. As such, staff members who have reasonable cause to believe that a minor known to them in their professional or official capacity may be neglected and/or abused are required to report their suspicions immediately to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). Reporting shall occur by calling the DCFS hotline at 800-25-ABUSE, followed by a written report within 48 hours. For additional information, review the Minors at Northwestern policy at [policies.northwestern.edu/docs/minors-at-northwestern-final.pdf](https://policies.northwestern.edu/docs/minors-at-northwestern-final.pdf).

## Hazing

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Hazing is illegal in the state of Illinois. It is the responsibility of all employees, students, and student organizations to encourage an atmosphere of learning, social responsibility, and respect for human dignity and to provide positive influences and constructive development for members and aspiring members. Employees, students, and student organizations are expected to use good judgment to determine the abilities of individual students as they relate to organization activities and requirements.

If a staff member becomes aware of a violation of the hazing policy involving a student, the violation should be reported to the Dean of Students Office, the Office of Community Standards, or online via NUhelp at [northwestern.edu/hazing-prevention/reporting](https://northwestern.edu/hazing-prevention/reporting). If the violation involves or affects a staff member, it should be reported to Human Resources. Failure to address and/or report an act of hazing committed against another individual may also be considered a violation of this policy. Silent participation in the presence of hazing is not a neutral act and violates Northwestern policy.

## Use of Northwestern Facilities for Political Activities

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This policy addresses the use of Northwestern's facilities and property for political activities. Although Northwestern organizations may sponsor political forums or debates, only recognized student organizations may use University facilities to host an event on

behalf of a single political candidate. This policy applies to activities on any of Northwestern's campuses and to activities relating to any political candidate, whether domestic or foreign.

Northwestern is committed to freedom of expression by its community, including the expression of individual political views. At the same time, as a tax-exempt organization, Northwestern may not participate or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office. Care must be taken to separate individual expression from any actual or perceived participation or intervention by Northwestern in political campaigns. Northwestern does not and cannot endorse or oppose any political candidate.

Northwestern recognizes that students, faculty, and staff may wish to participate in the political process and that such participation may, in fact, contain an educational component. Northwestern adheres to the principle that "every member of the academic community has a right to participate or not, as [they] see fit, in the election process. On the other hand, no member of that community should speak or act in the name of the institution in a political campaign" (American Council on Education, 1970).

For more information, visit [policies.northwestern.edu/docs/use-of-university-facilities-for-political-activities-final-012717.pdf](https://policies.northwestern.edu/docs/use-of-university-facilities-for-political-activities-final-012717.pdf).

## Demonstration

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Northwestern's Demonstration Policy applies to all members of the Northwestern community, including staff members. Staff should also be mindful that all laws, other University policy, and this Handbook apply to individuals and organizations when participating in a demonstration.

For more information, visit [policies.northwestern.edu/docs/demonstration-policy-final.pdf](https://policies.northwestern.edu/docs/demonstration-policy-final.pdf).

## Drug-free Workplace

Northwestern is committed to maintaining a drug-free workplace in compliance with applicable laws. The unlawful possession, use, distribution, sale, or manufacture of controlled substances is prohibited on Northwestern premises and, if witnessed, should be reported to your supervisor, Human Resources, and University Police. Violation of this policy may result in corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

Note: Effective January 1, 2020, personal use and possession of a limited amount of cannabis by individuals 21 years of age or older is legal under Illinois law. However, cannabis remains illegal under federal law. Northwestern complies with the federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act, which requires a drug-free campus community. Therefore, Northwestern prohibits the possession, use, manufacture, cultivation, dissemination, and storage of cannabis by students, faculty, staff, and visitors on all of Northwestern's campuses and properties and at University events.

### » Drug and Alcohol Policy

Northwestern prohibits the possession, use, or distribution of alcohol and illegal drugs by its staff members on University property, in vehicles owned or operated by the University, or at any work location or other site at which University duties are being performed by Northwestern staff. Should any staff members come to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs, they may immediately be sent to a clinic for evaluation or placed on unpaid administrative leave. Violation of this policy is subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

On occasion alcohol may be served at Northwestern sponsored events in accordance with the policy at [policies.northwestern.edu/docs/drugs-and-alcohol-policy.pdf](http://policies.northwestern.edu/docs/drugs-and-alcohol-policy.pdf).

## Staff Fitness for Duty Evaluation Policy

### » Policy

Northwestern is committed to promoting a safe and healthy environment for members of the University community. This policy covers those situations in which staff members are having observable difficulty performing their work duties, are demonstrating unusual or atypical behavior, are having serious medical issues, or are posing an imminent and serious safety threat to self or others.

A staff member may be referred by the supervisor in consultation with Human Resources to an independent, licensed health care evaluator for a fitness for duty evaluation when appropriate. The Behavioral Consultation Team (BCT) or Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance may also refer staff members for a fitness for duty evaluation. Threats of violence to self or others should be referred first to the Behavioral Consultation Team (BCT).

Other issues of staff performance or discipline should be addressed through school-level or unit-level management of performance or the corrective action process referenced in the Staff Handbook, as appropriate.

The goals of the policy are to

- Act quickly, responsibly, and transparently in cases of staff impairment
- Ensure staff members are treated fairly
- Provide a process that clearly describes the role, authority, and resources of department, school, and central administrators
- Protect both the Northwestern community as well as staff members who may show signs of physical or personal impairment, disruptive behavior, or inability to perform essential functions

### » Fitness for Duty Evaluation

A fitness for duty evaluation is designed to address behavioral changes in a staff member that result in disruptive conduct or that may pose a potential threat to self or others in the workplace. Fitness for duty evaluations may also be necessary when serious medical issues, for which an accommodation through the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance cannot be provided, prevent staff members from performing their work duties.

The department is responsible for paying the cost of an evaluation(s). Records of fitness for duty evaluations will be treated as confidential medical records and maintained by the Benefits Office as appropriate. This information may be shared only on a “need to know” basis. Human Resources will choose a third party vendor to conduct the fitness for duty evaluation.

Noncompliance with a request for a fitness for duty evaluation may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Participation in a treatment or rehabilitation program does not guarantee continued employment. In order to return to work, staff members must comply with all treatment recommendations resulting from a fitness for duty evaluation and also provide documentation from their medical provider certifying that they are fit for duty. If necessary, a second fitness for duty evaluation may be requested by Northwestern prior to a staff member’s return to work.

The staff member’s department, supervisor, and Human Resources will work together to

- Obtain information regarding the employee behaviors or performance.
- Coordinate payment by the staff member’s department for the fitness for duty evaluation
- Implement any recommendations proposed by the Fitness For Duty evaluation
- Discuss recommendations and any subsequent accommodations with the supervisor
- Communicate with the staff member regarding responsibilities and employment status
- Make plans for the staff member’s return to duty once the intervention plan has been successfully completed by the staff member and the medical provider/s has approved the return to work.

#### » Definitions

- Physical impairment usually takes the form of significant medical/health problems or physical decline.
- Personal impairment usually takes the form of mental health problems, substance abuse, or cognitive impairment. This may or may not involve a risk of violence to self or others. Situations of risk of violence should be reported immediately to the Behavioral Consultation Team (see [northwestern.edu/bc](http://northwestern.edu/bc)).

- Disruptive behavior typically includes violations of the Northwestern Policy on Civility and Mutual Respect. For guidance, visit [hr.northwestern.edu/essentials/environment-behaviors](http://hr.northwestern.edu/essentials/environment-behaviors).
- Disruptive behavior is demeaning, intimidating, threatening, bullying, or violent behavior that either (1) unreasonably impedes other community members from exercising their professional responsibilities or (2) creates what a reasonable person would perceive as an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

## Emergency Preparedness

Staff members are encouraged to talk with their supervisors regarding emergency preparedness in their work area.

For more information about Northwestern’s Emergency Response Framework, visit [northwestern.edu/emergency-management/about](http://northwestern.edu/emergency-management/about).

## Indemnification

Northwestern staff members are indemnified under the University statutes for acts within the scope of their job as long as the staff member has performed the job in line with assigned duties, has acted in good faith in performance of the job, and has not violated any laws or University policies.

## Dress Code/Personal Appearance

Departments or their supervisors may set standards of personal appearance and hygiene as reasonable and appropriate for the safety and operation of the department/unit. However, such standards must be developed and applied in a manner consistent with the University’s Policy on Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct.

## Smoking

Smoking, including the use of electronic cigarettes and vaping, is prohibited in Northwestern buildings and within 25 feet of building entrances, as well as in designated outdoor facilities.

## **Personal Mail and Phone Use**

### **» Mail System**

The purpose of the campus mail service is to support the necessary communication of Northwestern business. The Northwestern mail system should not be used for receiving or sending personal mail or other deliveries. Northwestern stationery is for University business use only, not for personal correspondence. It may not be used for political purposes or for purposes of organizations or activities not sanctioned by Northwestern.

### **» Phones**

Northwestern expects that staff members will devote their full-time energy and attention at work to their job responsibilities and duties. Personal phone calls (regardless of what phone is used) and the use of personal cell phones or other electronic devices for non-work communication is a distraction that can affect a staff member's productivity and efficiency, as well as workplace safety. Staff members who bring personal cell phones or other electronic devices to work for execution of Northwestern business should limit them to incidental personal use (as defined under *System Use* on this page).

## **Use of Computers and Networks**

It is the policy of Northwestern to maintain access to local, national, and international networks for the purpose of supporting its fundamental activities, which include education, research, and administration. Violation of policies for use of computers and networks is subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **» Net ID and Email**

Each staff member is provided with a Northwestern network ID (NetID) as well as an email address for the conduct of University business. A staff member's NetID password is not to be shared with anyone. The Northwestern NetID and its associated password are the property of the University.

### **» System Use**

Northwestern electronic resources are primarily intended for execution of University business, with incidental personal use permitted. Incidental personal use is determined to be occasional and short-term use of Northwestern's electronic resources that does not

- Adversely affect a staff member's work performance or productivity
- Cause Northwestern to incur undue cost
- Impede the performance of Northwestern's networks and systems, or
- Violate any Northwestern policy or applicable laws or regulations.

Under no circumstances will staff members give others access to any system that they do not administer.

### **» Downloading Movies, Music, and Other Content**

Staff members must abide by the terms of all software licensing agreements and copyright laws. Staff members must not make copies of or make available on the network copyright material, including without limitation, software programs, music files, video files, still and digital images, radio and television broadcasts, and written text, unless permitted by a license, by the consent of the copyright owner, by a fair use limitation under copyright law, or by permitted copying under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) when made by a library or archive for preservation purposes or when incidental to computer maintenance and repair. Infringement of copyrighted material is subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **» Network Administration**

Administrators of systems and networks have the responsibility to protect the rights of the users of the systems, to set policies consistent with those rights, and to publicize those policies to their users. They have authority to control or refuse access to anyone who violates these policies or threatens the right of other users, and they will make reasonable efforts to notify users affected by decisions they have made.

## » Privacy

Northwestern places a high value on privacy and recognizes its critical importance in an academic setting. However, given that the University information systems are provided for the purpose of conducting Northwestern business, the University maintains the right to access system accounts. Although Northwestern does not routinely monitor the content of communications or transmissions using University infrastructure, at times, legitimate reasons exist for persons other than the account holders to access these services. Examples include, but are not limited to

- Ensuring the ongoing operations of Northwestern systems or business operations
- Responding to valid legal requests or demands for access to Northwestern systems and records, or
- Investigating suspected violations of Northwestern policies, regulations, or rules.

## » Threats and Harassment

Use of Northwestern's electronic resources by any employee to send threatening or harassing content or messages or to view, download, retransmit, distribute, or otherwise communicate content or messages that may violate Northwestern's Policy on Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct, Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment, the Guidance on Civility and Mutual Respect, or any other Northwestern policy is prohibited.

## » Pornography

Use of Northwestern's electronic resources by faculty, staff, student employees, contractors, temporary personnel, vendors, and visitors to intentionally display, hold, send, view, print, download, retransmit, distribute, or otherwise communicate content which the University may deem to be indecent, obscene, sexually explicit, or pornographic is prohibited by Northwestern policy absent a legitimate academic, research, or medical purpose.

Use of Northwestern's electronic resources by anyone to display, hold, send, view, print, download, retransmit, distribute, or otherwise communicate child pornography is illegal and therefore strictly prohibited. Any occurrence of child pornography material is a violation of federal and state statutes and must be immediately reported to University Police as required by law and Northwestern policy.

For more information, visit the Appropriate Use of Electronic Resources policy at [policies.northwestern.edu/docs/appropriate-use-policy-final.pdf](https://policies.northwestern.edu/docs/appropriate-use-policy-final.pdf).

## » Social Media

Staff members are expected to use social media in a responsible manner that does not violate any Northwestern policy. Staff members using Northwestern electronic resources are responsible for abiding by all Information Technology policies.

For more information, visit [it.northwestern.edu/policies](https://it.northwestern.edu/policies).

## Display and Solicitation

The University is committed to open discourse, academic freedom, and the free expression of viewpoints and beliefs. The Display and Solicitation Policy addresses the parameters for expression through displays and/or solicitation on University property by members of the Northwestern community and third parties. To review the policy in full, visit [policies.northwestern.edu/docs/display-and-solicitation.pdf](https://policies.northwestern.edu/docs/display-and-solicitation.pdf).

## Equipment and Facilities

Northwestern equipment and facilities provided for use by staff—such as lockers, offices, office furniture, phones, mobile devices, tablets, and personal and network computers, their files, CDs, and peripherals—are Northwestern property and are fully accessible to the University at all times.

Staff members may not use Northwestern facilities, supplies, vehicles, or equipment for personal reasons unless authorized to do so by their supervisor.

## Security of Confidential Information

Information contained in Northwestern files and records, whether paper or computer records, is to be used for its intended purposes only. Certain information concerning Northwestern—such as budget, financial, and research information, as well as personal information related to faculty, staff, students, or donors—is confidential and should only be disseminated within Northwestern and then only to authorized personnel on a need-to-know basis. Inappropriate staff member access to, use of, or disclosure of such information is subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Patents and Inventions**

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Patentable discoveries or inventions occasionally result from the research and educational activities at Northwestern. The University desires to assure that all such discoveries and inventions are properly disclosed and used for the greatest possible public benefit. The University also desires to protect the patent rights in the discoveries and inventions made by members of the Northwestern community, including staff, and to abide by federal law, University policy, and patent regulations of agencies and other sponsors providing funds for programs.

Staff members may be required to sign a patent assignment agreement that assigns rights in such discoveries and inventions to Northwestern and must submit disclosures of all discoveries and inventions subject to the University's Patent and Invention Policy to Northwestern's Innovation and New Ventures Office (INVO).

Any invention or discovery by staff members is subject to the Patent and Invention Policy if they

- Make the invention or discovery within the normal field of their employment responsibility and activity with Northwestern, without regard to location or salary source (specifically including individuals employed at affiliated hospitals and institutions), or
- Make use of Northwestern resources, except library.

If funds are received from the licensing of such discoveries and inventions, those funds will be distributed according to the Patent and Invention Policy. INVO administers the Patent and Invention Policy.

For more information, visit [invo.northwestern.edu](http://invo.northwestern.edu) and refer to the Patent and Invention Policy.

## **Copyright/Works Made for Hire**

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Copyright-protected works created by staff members in the performance of an administrative duty for Northwestern are works made for hire. In accordance with United States copyright law and the University's Copyright Policy, Northwestern owns copyright in such works and all revenues derived therefrom.

For more information, visit [invo.northwestern.edu](http://invo.northwestern.edu) and refer to the Copyright Policy ([invo.northwestern.edu/policies/copyright-policy](http://invo.northwestern.edu/policies/copyright-policy)).

# 4 \ WORKPLACE COMMITMENT

**Northwestern is committed to providing a respectful, accessible, and inclusive environment for all members of its community. An inclusive workforce and environment increases effectiveness and efficiency in the way we work and learn, promotes the development of new ideas, and enhances Northwestern's ability to continue to be innovative in an increasingly complex, competitive, and diverse world.**

Northwestern is committed to creating and sustaining a productive, collaborative, and safe work environment. If staff members have knowledge of an action taken by a Northwestern employee that conflicts with or is in violation of policies, they must act on that knowledge and contact the proper University office.

## Discrimination and Harassment

Northwestern prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ethnicity, caste, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, parental status, marital status, age, disability, citizenship status, veteran status, genetic information, reproductive health decision making, height, weight, or any other class of individuals protected from discrimination under federal, state, or local law, regulation, or ordinance, or any other classification protected by law in matters of admissions, employment, housing, or services, or in the educational programs or activities Northwestern operates, as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended in 2008; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; and any other federal, state, or local laws, regulations, or ordinances that prohibit discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation.

Prohibited discrimination based on sex includes sexual misconduct, including but not limited to sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, and dating or domestic violence. Such conduct violates Northwestern's values and disrupts the living, learning, and working environment for students, faculty, staff, and other community members.

Individuals impacted by discrimination or harassment may contact the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance to receive support, resources, and information even if they do not wish to move forward with the Complaint Resolution Process.

Northwestern's Policy on Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct can be found at [northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies/policy-on-discrimination-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct.pdf](http://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies/policy-on-discrimination-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct.pdf).

## Title IX Statement

It is the policy of Northwestern to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination (including sexual harassment and sexual violence) based on sex in the University's educational programs and activities. Title IX also prohibits retaliation for asserting or otherwise participating in claims of sex discrimination.

The Title IX coordinator and deputy coordinators have been designated to oversee Northwestern's compliance with Title IX and to respond to reports of violations. For more information about Title IX, visit Northwestern's Title IX website at [northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office](http://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office). A person may also file a complaint with the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights regarding an alleged violation of Title IX by visiting the US Department of Education's website or calling 800-421-3481.

Employees may also file a charge with the Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) regarding an alleged violation of the Illinois Human Rights Act by calling 312-814-6200 (Chicago) or 866-740-3953 (TTY). In addition, after the IDHR has completed its investigation of the complaint, an appeal process is available through the Illinois Human Rights Commission, which can be contacted by calling 312-814-6269 or 866-832-2298 (TTY).

## Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

Prohibited sex discrimination includes sexual misconduct (dating/domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, and stalking). Individuals impacted by sexual misconduct may contact the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance to receive support, resources, and information even if they do not wish to move forward with a formal complaint process. Contact the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance ([northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office](http://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office)) for additional information or see the Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment or the Policy on Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct at [northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies](http://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies).

## Additional Guidance

### » Investigations and Privacy

The Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance is responsible for handling reports alleging discrimination, harassment or sexual misconduct involving a member of the Northwestern community. All reports will be handled in a prompt, fair, and impartial manner in accordance with relevant laws and regulations, applicable Northwestern policies, and this process.

Information about the complaint resolution process can be found in Section II of the Policy on Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct or the Policy on Title IX Sexual Harassment at [northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies](http://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies).

Northwestern considers reports and investigations of discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct to be private matters for the parties involved. For that reason, Northwestern will protect the identity of persons involved in such reports to the best of its ability. Northwestern will only share personally identifiable information with persons with a need to know in order for the University to investigate and respond or to deliver resources or support services. Northwestern does not publish the names or post identifiable information about persons involved in a report of discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct.

### » Non-retaliation

Northwestern strictly prohibits retaliation against any member of its community for reporting an incident of discrimination, harassment or sexual misconduct or for participating, in any manner, in an investigation or hearing related to a report of discrimination, harassment or sexual misconduct. The University considers such actions to be protected activities in which all members of the Northwestern community may freely engage.

A detailed definition of retaliation and examples of retaliatory conduct are provided in Northwestern's Policy on Non-Retaliation found at [northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies](http://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies).

The Northwestern community is strongly encouraged to report any potential incident of retaliation under this policy to the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance, which shall assess the matter and take appropriate actions to address such conduct.

### » Resolution

Individuals who violate these policies may be subject to discipline under Northwestern policies and procedures, up to and including termination of employment or academic dismissal.

## » Reporting Obligations

All Northwestern employees (including student employees) and graduate students with teaching or supervisory authority are obligated to promptly report incidents of discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct of which they become aware in the scope of their work for the University to the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance, unless they are designated a confidential employee. More information about who is designated a confidential employee and who is designated a responsible employee can be found in the Policy on Reporting by University Employees of Disclosures Related to Discrimination and Harassment at [northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies](http://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies).

Failure to fulfill this reporting obligation will be referred to the appropriate office for corrective action.

Note that the reporting obligation does not require a person experiencing harm to report the incident.

Northwestern encourages all individuals—including students not referenced above—to report discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct.

Northwestern strictly prohibits retaliation against any member of its community for reporting or inquiring in good faith about what the member believes to be wrongful or unlawful activity or for participating in an investigation or proceeding related to such activity.

## » Vendors, Contractors, Visitors, Guests, and Third Parties

Northwestern's policies on discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct apply to the conduct of the entire University community, including vendors, contractors, visitors, guests, and third parties.

## » Free Expression and Academic Freedom

Northwestern is firmly committed to free expression and academic freedom. Northwestern is equally committed to creating and maintaining a safe, healthy, and discrimination- and harassment-free environment for all members of its community and firmly believes that these two legitimate interests can coexist.

Discrimination, harassment, and retaliation against members of the Northwestern community are not protected expression or the proper exercise of academic freedom. Northwestern will consider academic freedom in the investigation of reports of discrimination or harassment that involve an individual's statements or speech in an academic context.

## » If you believe you have been discriminated against or harassed:

- Contact one of the individuals listed in [Where to Get Advice and Help](#) on the following page.
- Don't blame yourself.
- Don't delay reporting a problem.
- Consider keeping a written, dated record of events.

## » If you witness or become aware of possible discriminatory or harassing conduct by others:

- Consistent with your reporting obligations, contact one of the individuals listed in [Where to Get Advice and Help](#) on the following page.

## » If you think you may have offended or harassed someone:

- Listen to and reflect upon any feedback that is provided.
- Manage feelings of defensiveness. Try to be open to feedback.
- Seek resources for support.
- Don't assume others will tell you when they feel offended or harassed by what you say and do.

## » If you have experienced sexual violence, you have options:

- Seeking medical attention.
- Preserving evidence.
- Getting support from a confidential resource.
- Reporting the incident to law enforcement and/or Northwestern.
- Learning more at [northwestern.edu/sexual-misconduct](http://northwestern.edu/sexual-misconduct).

## Confidential Resources

If you wish to speak with someone who does not have a reporting obligation, you may contact a confidential resource. Seeking advice from a confidential resource does not constitute reporting an incident. For more information and a list of confidential resources, visit [northwestern.edu/sexual-misconduct/assistance-support/confidential-support.html](http://northwestern.edu/sexual-misconduct/assistance-support/confidential-support.html).

## Where to Get Advice and Help

- **Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance:** Discrimination, harassment, and sexual misconduct complaints. [northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/about/contact-us.html](http://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/about/contact-us.html)
- **Title IX Coordinator:** Northwestern's Title IX Coordinator is Emily Babb, 1800 Sherman Avenue, Suite 4500, Evanston Campus, 847-467-6165; [ocr@northwestern.edu](mailto:ocr@northwestern.edu).
- **Electronic Reporting to Northwestern:** Sexual Misconduct: [northwestern.edu/NUReportSexualMisconduct](http://northwestern.edu/NUReportSexualMisconduct) Discrimination and Harassment: [northwestern.edu/NUReportDiscrimination](http://northwestern.edu/NUReportDiscrimination)
- **EthicsPoint:** To file a report confidentially online or by phone, see [northwestern.edu/ethics](http://northwestern.edu/ethics).

## Section 504 Statement of Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of Northwestern to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination (including harassment) based on disability in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its program or activity. Section 504 also prohibits retaliation for asserting or otherwise participating in claims of disability discrimination. Laura Conway, Director of ADA Compliance and ADA Coordinator, has been designated to oversee disability grievances. For more information about filing a disability grievance go to [northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies/reasonable-accommodation-policy.html](http://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies/reasonable-accommodation-policy.html).

## Accommodation of Disabilities and Pregnancy

Northwestern reasonably accommodates persons with disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as amended by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides protections to persons with disabilities in employment, public accommodations, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

Employees and applicants with a disability (as defined under the ADA, as amended) may be eligible for a reasonable accommodation that allows them to perform the essential functions of their position or participate in the hiring process for an open position. A reasonable accommodation for an employee may include such things as changing the physical layout of the workplace, restructuring job duties, or modifying the work schedule. A reasonable accommodation for an applicant may include making certain, reasonable modifications to the application, screening, or interview process to ensure the process is accessible.

Employees who are pregnant, recovering from childbirth, or have a condition related to pregnancy have the right to ask for a reasonable accommodation under the Pregnancy Workers Fairness Act (PWFA). Accommodations may include more/longer bathroom breaks, access to places to sit, assistance with and/or limits on lifting, a private space for expressing milk, or time off to recover from pregnancy. For more information regarding employee rights on Pregnancy in the Workplace, employees can download the Illinois Department of Human Rights fact sheet at [dhr.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/dhr/publications/documents/pregnancy-posting-idhr-eng-2023.pdf](http://dhr.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/dhr/publications/documents/pregnancy-posting-idhr-eng-2023.pdf) or refer to the posted "Pregnancy Rights Notice." On-campus lactation room locations for breastfeeding can be found at [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/work-life/lactation-support/index.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/work-life/lactation-support/index.html).

For additional information regarding the process for applying for accommodations, visit [northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/accommodation](http://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/accommodation).

## **Religious Accommodations**

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Northwestern will make a reasonable effort to allow members of the University community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing the fulfillment of their academic or work obligations. For more information about requesting a religious accommodation, please refer to the Reasonable Accommodation Policy at [northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies/reasonable-accommodation-policy.pdf](https://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/policies/reasonable-accommodation-policy.pdf).

## **Reproductive Health Decision Making**

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Northwestern shall not discriminate or retaliate against a staff member for their or their dependents' reproductive health decisions or require a staff member to waive such decision-making rights. Northwestern also shall not access a staff member's personal information regarding their or their dependents' reproductive health decisions, absent prior informed written consent. A staff member who believes a violation of these standards has occurred may contact the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance for additional information and/or to pursue available civil remedies.



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**Northwestern is committed to providing a selection of cost-effective, high-quality benefit plans so staff members may choose the plans and coverage that best fit their personal needs.**

## Eligibility

In general, Northwestern regular staff must be scheduled to work at least 18.75 hours per week (half-time or greater) to be considered benefits eligible. Benefits eligibility is determined by the following criteria:

- The staff member must be employed by Northwestern in a regular benefits-eligible position
- The staff member must be compensated from the Northwestern payroll system, and
- The staff member must hold a position or appointment with a total full-time equivalent (FTE) equal to or greater than 50 percent (0.50).

A staff member's Northwestern salary must be sufficient to cover benefit plan deductions. Benefit deductions from a staff member's University paycheck will pay for that month of coverage. Staff members and their eligible dependents may be covered by Northwestern's benefit plans.

Postdoctoral trainees may have different eligibility requirements for benefits. See the postdoctoral trainee website ([northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/postdoc-benefits.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/postdoc-benefits.html)) for more information.

For a complete listing of eligibility requirements, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/eligibility-changes/eligibility/index.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/eligibility-changes/eligibility/index.html).

The benefits summary presented in this section is for informational purposes. If there is a conflict between the legal plan documents and this summary, the legal plan documents will take precedence.

## Health, Dental, and Vision Benefits

Northwestern offers an array of health plans to benefits-eligible staff. The plans differ in the amount of monthly contributions a staff member pays and in how the costs of health care services are covered.

Northwestern also offers a choice between dental plans, as well as a vision plan. For more information about these plans, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits).

## Financial Benefits

Northwestern offers a variety of ways to provide financial protection to benefits-eligible staff members and their family. These include

- Basic/Accidental Death and Dismemberment Life Insurance
- Supplemental/Accidental Death and Dismemberment Life Insurance
- Spouse Life Insurance
- Dependent Child Life Insurance
- *Extended Sick Time* (see page 6.6 in this Handbook)
- *Incidental Sick Time* (see page 6.6 in this Handbook)
- Long-Term Disability Coverage

In the event of a staff member's death, Northwestern remits a condolence check equivalent to two months' base pay—with a minimum payment of \$1,000—to the staff member's surviving spouse or partner (registered with the University) as an expression of sympathy and concern. If the staff member is single

at the time of death, the condolence check is paid to the beneficiary (or beneficiaries) of the staff member's basic life insurance benefits, in proportion to the beneficiary's allocation percentage. If there is no surviving beneficiary on record, the condolence check is paid to the staff member's estate.

For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/health-insurance/life-insurance-plans/basic-term-life-insurance](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/health-insurance/life-insurance-plans/basic-term-life-insurance).

## Spending Accounts

Northwestern offers four types of pre-tax spending accounts:

- Health Care Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
- Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
- Limited-Use Health Care Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
- Health Savings Account (HSA)

Eligibility for these accounts is dependent upon the benefit plans in which a staff member is enrolled.

For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/health-insurance/spending-and-saving-accounts/index.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/health-insurance/spending-and-saving-accounts/index.html).

## Commuter Benefits

Northwestern staff members may arrange for pre-tax deductions from their pay in order to provide a convenient payment method for commuting expenses to and from work. For more information on pre-tax commuter benefits, contact Human Resources at [askHR@northwestern.edu](mailto:askHR@northwestern.edu) or 847-491-4700.

## Tuition Benefits

Northwestern provides financial assistance to full-time, benefits-eligible employees who have higher education expenses for themselves and their eligible dependents. Certain dependent tuition benefits may extend to eligible retirees. For more information about Northwestern's tuition benefit plans, visit [hr.northwestern.edu/benefits/tuition](http://hr.northwestern.edu/benefits/tuition).

## Retirement Plans

Northwestern offers two 403(b) Retirement Plans that allow benefits-eligible and non-benefits-eligible staff members to save and invest part of their University earnings. Staff members have a choice of two record keepers to contribute pre-tax and after-tax Roth dollars.

- **Northwestern Retirement Plan:**

Benefits-eligible staff members must be at least 21 years of age and complete one year of continuous service to participate in the Plan.

A service waiver is available to staff members who join Northwestern from another educational institution and who can satisfy all waiver requirements.

This plan allows the following retirement contributions:

- **Automatic Contributions:** 5% of eligible earnings; funded entirely by Northwestern.

- **Matched Contributions:** Make an election in myHR of 1% to 5% of eligible earnings; Northwestern matches staff member contributions dollar-for-dollar up to 5%.

- **Northwestern Voluntary Savings Plan:**

All staff members are eligible to participate in the Voluntary Savings Plan on their date of hire. This plan allows the following retirement contributions:

- **Voluntary Contributions:** Elect a percentage of eligible earnings or a flat dollar amount; funded entirely by the staff member.

Contributions to the Northwestern 403(b) Retirement Plans are made through payroll deductions and subject to IRS limitations.

For additional information, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/retirement](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/retirement). Questions should be directed to Human Resources at 847-491-4700 or [askHR@northwestern.edu](mailto:askHR@northwestern.edu).

## Leaves of Absence

Northwestern offers a variety of leaves of absence for eligible staff members. Each leave of absence varies in its provisions with respect to availability, duration, holding the position, benefits available, and contributions for those benefits, as well as documentation and approvals.

Northwestern's leave administrator may require documentation to support the need for the leave of absence at any time.

For additional information, visit [hr.northwestern.edu/benefits/leaves-holidays/leaves-of-absence](http://hr.northwestern.edu/benefits/leaves-holidays/leaves-of-absence) or contact Benefits in Human Resources at 847-491-7513.

**While on an approved medical and/or FMLA leave of absence, staff members may not work outside Northwestern or provide services where they receive any form of direct or indirect compensation.**

### » Types of Leaves of Absence

Northwestern offers numerous types of Leaves of Absence in recognition of the diverse needs of its staff as well as to be compliant with federal and state laws:

- Family and Medical Leave of Absence (FMLA Leave)—in accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act
- Birth and Adoption Parental Leave (BAPL)
- Illinois Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act Leave (VESSA Leave)—in accordance with the Illinois Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act
- Military Leave and its components are provided for by these Acts:
  - Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
  - Illinois Family Military Leave Act
  - National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA)
  - The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)
- Workers' Compensation Leave
- Medical Leave
- Personal Leave, and
- Repatriation Leave (Qatar).

## » Service Time Accrual While on Leave

A paid leave of absence enables a staff member to return to active employment at the end of the leave without loss of service credit accrued at the time the leave began. Staff members who return to active employment following an approved leave of absence will not lose prior service credit. While on an unpaid leave of absence, staff members do not accrue vacation, personal floating holidays, paid sick time, or holiday time. Staff members do not accrue service credit during unpaid time off, unless on Active Duty Leave or on an approved FMLA leave.

## Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) Leave

In accordance with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Northwestern will grant an eligible staff member up to a total of 12 work weeks of leave during a 12-month rolling period for one or more of the following reasons:

- For the birth and care of a newborn child of the staff member
- For the placement of a child with the staff member for adoption or foster care

- To care for an immediate family member (spouse, domestic partner/civil union partner, child, or parent) with a serious health condition, and
- The staff member's own serious health condition, which causes the staff member to be unable to work.

## Eligibility for FMLA Leave

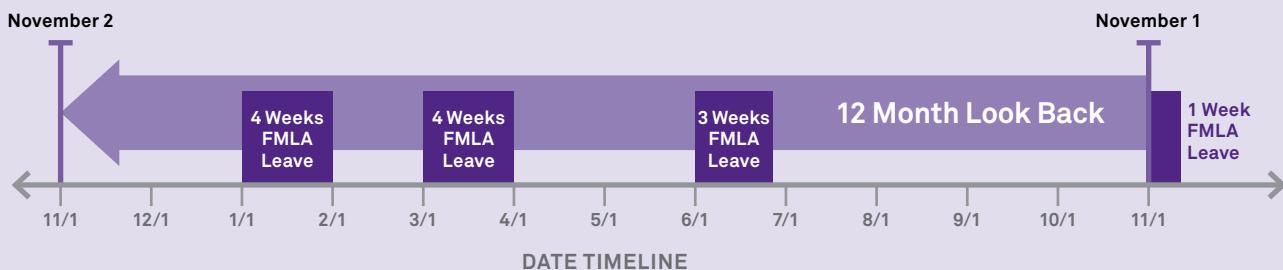
FMLA Leave is available to staff members who have at least a year of service and who have worked at least 1,250 hours during the past continuous 12 months of service.

Staff members who qualify for FMLA Leave are entitled to up to 12 weeks of leave in a rolling 12-month period during which time the staff member's benefits may be continued. This leave may be on a continuous or intermittent basis. To calculate the available leave time, Northwestern looks back over the last 12 months from the date of the request, totals the FMLA time used during those 12 months, and subtracts that total from the staff member's 12-week leave allotment. Staff members will return to their job or an equivalent job immediately following the expiration of their FMLA Leave. (See example below.)

### Eligibility for FMLA Leave: Example of Calculation of Available FMLA Leave Time

Alex requests two weeks of FMLA Leave to begin on November 1. Northwestern looks back 12 months (from November 1 back to the previous November 2) and sees that this employee had taken four weeks of FMLA Leave beginning January 1, four weeks beginning March 1, and three weeks beginning June 1. Alex has taken 11 weeks of FMLA Leave in the 12-month period and has one week of FMLA-protected leave available. After taking the one week in November, Alex can next take FMLA leave beginning January 1 as the days of the previous January leave "roll off" the leave year.

This means Alex would recoup (and be entitled to use) one additional day of FMLA Leave each day for four weeks, commencing January 1. Alex would also begin to recoup additional days beginning on March 1 and additional days beginning on June 1.



Source: [dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/28h-fmla-12-month-period](http://dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/28h-fmla-12-month-period)

Staff members who have resigned their position, whose positions have been eliminated, who are receiving severance pay, or whose term appointments have ended are not eligible for FMLA or Extended Sick Time (EST) beyond their last day worked. The last day worked is the last day that the staff member performed work duties prior to their resignation date, position elimination date, or term appointment end date.

FMLA Leave time runs concurrently with any other approved leave, including Extended Sick Time (EST).

### **Notification and Request for FMLA Leave**

Staff members must contact the leave administrator and their supervisor at least 30 days in advance of the start of a planned FMLA Leave or within five days following the start of an unplanned FMLA Leave. The leave administrator may require medical or other documentation at any point during the FMLA Leave. For questions regarding contact information for Northwestern's leave administrator, please contact Human Resources at [askHR@northwestern.edu](mailto:askHR@northwestern.edu) or 847-491-4700.

### **Benefits While On FMLA Leave**

Staff members on FMLA Leave may continue certain benefits while on the leave. Staff members on an FMLA Leave for their own personal health condition may receive pay by using their Incidental Sick Time, Extended Sick Time, personal floating holiday, and vacation time.

While Incidental Sick Time is limited to the seven calendar days immediately prior to an approved Extended Sick Time absence, there are specific circumstances when a staff member may use up to their annual allowance of Incidental Sick Time. These are

- Staff members with less than six months of service who are unable to work due to their own illness (this includes birth of a child)
- Staff members who have been approved for intermittent FMLA and need to be away from work, and
- Staff members who must care for a sick family member and be absent from work.

Unauthorized or misuse of sick time is subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

For more information on Extended Sick Time, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/leaves-holidays/sick-time/extended-sick-time](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/leaves-holidays/sick-time/extended-sick-time).

Staff members on an FMLA Leave to care for a family member may use Incidental Sick Time, personal floating holiday, and vacation time as available, but must exhaust all applicable paid time off before taking an unpaid leave.

If a staff member is still unable to work after six months from the onset of the personal health condition, the staff member may apply for Long-Term Disability benefits. For more information about Long-Term Disability, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/health-insurance/long-term-disability](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/health-insurance/long-term-disability) or contact Human Resources at 847-491-4700 or [askHR@northwestern.edu](mailto:askHR@northwestern.edu).

### **Returning from FMLA Leave**

At the expiration of an FMLA Leave, staff members who are ready to return to work will be placed in the same or an equivalent position to the one they held when the leave began.

Staff members returning from leave for a personal health condition must confirm that their personal health care provider has cleared them to return to work and must therefore complete a self-certification form found at [northwestern.edu/hr/documents/benefits/rtw-self-certification.pdf](http://northwestern.edu/hr/documents/benefits/rtw-self-certification.pdf). The form must be submitted to [askHR@northwestern.edu](mailto:askHR@northwestern.edu) in advance of their return from leave. In addition to the self-certification, Northwestern may in certain cases require additional information from the staff member's health care provider before clearing the staff member's return to work.

In cases where the staff member returning from leave is subject to restrictions or requires a reasonable accommodation in order to perform the essential functions of their position, the staff member should contact the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance prior to their return from leave.

If the leave of absence extends longer than the approved period, the staff member must contact the leave administrator to request an extension prior to the expiration of the approved Leave. If an extension is needed, the staff member should notify their manager that they will not return on the expected date and must contact the leave administrator to request an extension at least two weeks prior to the expiration of the leave. If the staff member's FMLA job protection is approaching exhaustion, the staff member may contact the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance to request additional job protection as an accommodation.

If the staff member does not return from the leave of absence and does not request and receive an extension (whether through FMLA leave or an accommodation from the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance), the staff member's employment will be subject to termination.

**In some instances, staff members seeking to return to work may be subject to restrictions that impact their ability to perform their job. In this event, a reasonable accommodation may be requested from the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance. For more information, refer to [Section 4: Workplace Commitment](#) in this Handbook.**

## **Birth and Adoption Parental Leave (BAPL)**

BAPL is paid absence from work for parents with a newborn or newly adopted child. This leave of absence allows for bonding time between the parent(s) and the child.

The staff member must have one year of continuous, full-time benefits eligible service no later than when the approved BAPL would commence.

For additional information about BAPL, please visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/leaves-holidays/leaves-of-absence/birthadoption-parental-leave](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/leaves-holidays/leaves-of-absence/birthadoption-parental-leave).

## **Illinois Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act (VESSA) Leave**

The Illinois Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act provides a staff member who is a victim of domestic violence, dating violence, gender violence, sexual assault, or stalking or who has a family or household member who is a victim of domestic or sexual violence with up to 12 weeks of VESSA Leave during a 12-month rolling period to address issues arising from such violence. Additionally, this Act provides a staff member with two weeks of unpaid leave due to a family or household member's death arising from a crime of violence.

### **Eligibility for VESSA Leave**

This leave has no length of service requirement.

### **Notification and Request for VESSA Leave**

Staff members must provide the leave administrator with at least 48 hours advance notice of their intention to take a VESSA Leave, unless providing such notice is not practical.

### **Benefits While on VESSA Leave**

Staff members have the option to take VESSA Leave without pay or may use accrued vacation or personal floating holiday time to care for themselves or a family member. While on approved VESSA Leave, staff members may qualify for Extended Sick Time for their own serious health condition. Please see page 6.6 for more information on eligibility for the [EST program](#).

### **Returning from VESSA Leave**

At the expiration of a VESSA Leave, staff members return to the same or equivalent position held when the VESSA Leave began.

## **Military Leave**

Military Leave and its components are provided for by these Acts:

- Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)
- Illinois Family Military Leave Act
- National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), and
- The Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

**Northwestern provides broad reemployment protections for members of uniformed services following periods of military service in accordance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).**

An Active Duty Leave may be granted by the leave administrator when service members of the Armed Forces' Reserve components, National Guard, retired service members, or Reservists are on active duty or called to active duty in support of a contingency operation.

Similarly, the National Defense Authorization Act provides up to 12 weeks of leave for a qualifying obligation when service members of the regular Armed Forces are deployed to a foreign country under a certain call or order to active duty.

#### **Notification and Request for Military Leave**

A staff member must provide advance notice of the need for Military Leave by contacting MetLife and Benefits, unless circumstances make such notice unreasonable or the staff member is prevented from doing this by military necessity.

#### **Pay and Benefits While on Military Leave**

Northwestern grants time off for mandatory periods of training to eligible staff members who are members of a military reserve or National Guard unit. For training periods of two workweeks or less, active staff members of Northwestern receive their regular University wages for this period, less the amount of gross pay from federal or state authorities. A military voucher is required by Payroll in Human Resources to reimburse the difference in their gross pay and the amount received from federal or state authorities.

Military Leave other than training leave of two weeks or less is unpaid. A staff member may choose to use vacation and personal floating holiday time during the absence or receive the value of accrued but unused vacation and personal floating holiday time in a lump sum payment subject to the maximum vacation payout. The value of accrued but unused Incidental Sick Time may not be paid out in a lump sum payment but will be available when the staff member returns to employment at Northwestern.

Employees may continue some benefits while on Military Leave. Contact Human Resources at [askHR@northwestern.edu](mailto:askHR@northwestern.edu) or 847-491-4700 for information.

<b>Active Military Service Period</b>	<b>Reinstatement*</b>
Less than 91 days	Reemployed by Northwestern to the position (with the pay, benefits, seniority, and other job perquisites) they would have attained with reasonable certainty if they did not take Military Leave.
More than 91 days	Reemployed by Northwestern to the position (with the pay, benefits, seniority, and other job perquisites) they would have attained with reasonable certainty if they did not take Military Leave or a position of similar seniority, status, and pay.

\* For staff members who incur a disability or aggravate a disability during service that causes them not to be qualified for the position they would have held if no interruption of employment occurred, Northwestern will provide them with a position that is equivalent in seniority, status, and pay.

<b>Active Military Service Period</b>	<b>Time Allowed to Return to Work</b>
1-30 days	The next regularly scheduled workday after travel home and an eight hour rest period.
31-180 days	Application for reemployment must be submitted within 14 days.
181 or more days	Application for reemployment must be submitted within 90 days.

The deadlines listed above are extended in the case of disability incurred while on active military duty.

## **Returning from Military Leave**

To be eligible for reinstatement with Northwestern after a Military Leave, a staff member must:

- have given, if possible, advance notice to the University of the need for leave
- report to or submit applications for reemployment in a timely manner, and
- be honorably discharged from military service.

Staff members who take Military Leave and who remain qualified for their position will be reinstated to employment with Northwestern according to the military service time frames described in this section.

## **Military Caregiver Leave**

Under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), staff members can request a Military Caregiver Leave to care for a military service member who is the staff member's spouse, domestic partner/civil union partner, child or parent with a serious illness or injury incurred in the line of active duty as a member of the Armed Forces, including the National Guard or Reserves, and is

- Undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy
- Assigned as an outpatient to a military medical treatment facility
- Assigned to a unit providing command and control of Armed Forces' members who are receiving outpatient medical care, or
- On the temporary disability retired list.

If the Military Caregiver Leave is approved, Northwestern will grant up to 26 weeks of leave during a single, 12-month period to eligible staff members to care for the service member in their family as described above. Staff members who do not take all 26 weeks of leave during the single, 12-month period will forfeit the remaining part of the leave.

## **Notification and Request for Military Caregiver Leave**

Staff members are expected to notify MetLife and Benefits 30 days prior to the start of a Military Caregiver Leave.

For more information, contact Human Resources at [askHR@northwestern.edu](mailto:askHR@northwestern.edu) or 847-491-4700.

## **Benefits While on Military Caregiver Leave**

A staff member on a Military Caregiver Leave to care for a family member may use Incidental Sick Time, personal floating holiday, and vacation time as available, but must exhaust all applicable paid time off before taking an unpaid leave. A staff member on an FMLA Leave also may continue certain benefits while on leave.

For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/leaves-holidays/leaves-of-absence](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/leaves-holidays/leaves-of-absence).

## **Returning from Military Caregiver Leave**

The 26 weeks of Military Caregiver Leave can include leave taken for other FMLA-qualifying reasons. A single, 12-month period begins on the first day staff members take leave to care for seriously ill or injured service members and ends 12 months after that date, regardless of which method is used to determine other types of FMLA Leave.

If the leave needs to extend longer, the staff member must request this extension with MetLife prior to the expiration of the leave. Benefits will advise the staff member's department/unit that the staff member is not returning at the end of the leave. Reinstate of staff members in their position or equivalent position is determined on a case-by-case basis.

The employment of staff members who do not return from a Military Caregiver Leave and who do not request and receive an extension may be subject to termination.

## **Illinois Family Military Leave**

Northwestern will grant up to 30 days of unpaid Illinois Family Military Leave to the spouse, domestic partner/civil union partner, parents, children, or grandparents of a soldier called to active military duty for more than 30 days.

### **Eligibility for Illinois Family Military Leave**

This leave is available to staff members who have at least a year of service and who have worked at least 1,250 hours during the past continuous 12 months of service.

### **Notification and Request for Illinois Family Military Leave**

Staff members must provide the leave administrator at least 14 days' notice of the date they intend to start an Illinois Family Military Leave of five or more consecutive workdays. To the extent possible, staff members must consult with their supervisor to schedule the leave so as to not unduly disrupt the department's/unit's operations. Staff members taking an Illinois Family Military Leave of less than five consecutive days must give Northwestern as much advance notice as practicable.

### **Benefits While on Illinois Family Military Leave**

Vacation and personal floating holiday time may be used for Illinois Family Military Leave.

A staff member's benefits will continue during an Illinois Family Military Leave. The staff member will not lose any benefits accrued before the commencement of the leave.

### **Returning from Illinois Family Military Leave**

Northwestern will return a staff member from an Illinois Family Military Leave to the same position or a position with the same seniority, status, benefits, and pay. Northwestern is not required to return a staff member because of conditions that are not related to taking an Illinois Family Military Leave.

## **Workers' Compensation Leave**

Staff members suffering from a work-related illness or injury may be approved for a Workers' Compensation Leave.

Staff members who incur occupation-related injuries or illnesses are entitled to all necessary medical and hospital care. Additionally, staff members who are approved by a Northwestern-authorized physician for a Workers' Compensation Leave are entitled to certain disability benefits in accordance with the Illinois Workers' Compensation and Occupational Diseases Act.

An FMLA Leave may be used concurrently with a Workers' Compensation Leave. A Workers' Compensation Leave is managed by the Claims Division of the Office of Risk Management. Absences under the FMLA are approved by Benefits.

If it is determined by the Northwestern-designated health care provider that as a result of a work-related injury or illness, a staff member is not able to perform the normal duties of the staff member's position but is able to perform other meaningful tasks, the staff member may be provided a modified duty assignment within the University.

For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/risk/risk-insurance/university-insurance-programs/workers-compensation](http://northwestern.edu/risk/risk-insurance/university-insurance-programs/workers-compensation).

**To qualify as work-related, an injury or illness must arise out of or in the course of employment. Staff members must immediately notify their supervisor and/or Risk Management of any work-related illness or injury.**

## **Medical Leave**

### **Eligibility for Medical Leave**

Staff members who need to take a medical leave to care for their own personal serious health condition but either do not qualify for an FMLA Leave (or job-protected EST) or have exhausted such leave (or EST coverage) may apply for an unpaid Medical Leave as a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A Medical Leave may be granted, subject to the approval of the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance.

Pregnant staff members who either do not qualify for an FMLA Leave (or job-protected EST) or have exhausted such leave (or EST coverage) may apply for an unpaid Medical Leave as a reasonable accommodation under the Pregnancy Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) and Title IX.

Absent an approved leave as an ADA accommodation, following the exhaustion of FMLA leave and job-protected EST (if applicable), a staff member's job will typically be considered unprotected.

For additional information regarding the process for applying for a reasonable accommodation, visit [northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/accommodation](http://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/accommodation).

### **Approval of Medical Leave**

Staff members must contact the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance to request a leave of absence as a reasonable accommodation as far in advance as possible (except in an emergency). The Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance will work with the employee, the employee's medical providers, and the employee's department to determine whether the leave request is covered by the ADA and whether the department/unit can hold the employee's position during the leave without creating an undue hardship for the department/unit.

### **Benefits While on Medical Leave**

Staff members may use accrued sick, vacation, or personal floating holiday time during a Medical Leave. Otherwise, the Medical Leave is typically unpaid. Staff members on Medical Leave may continue certain benefits while on the leave and may be required to pay an applicable contribution. For more information on Medical Leave, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/leaves-holidays/leaves-of-absence/medical-leave.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/leaves-holidays/leaves-of-absence/medical-leave.html). For information on Extended Sick Time, refer to page 6.6 of this Handbook.

### **Termination of Medical Leave and Return to Work**

Staff members may not return to work without appropriate medical documentation.

### **Unpaid Personal Leave**

Occasionally staff members need a leave of absence for personal needs. Staff members must be in a benefits-eligible position, have worked at Northwestern for at least 12 consecutive months, and have not been under any disciplinary action for workplace conduct concerns or policy/procedure violations within the past six months.

Operational and staffing needs, availability of replacements, the reason for the request, and the staff member's job performance and attendance are considered in deciding whether to grant an Unpaid Personal Leave. See [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/leaves-holidays/leaves-of-absence/personal-leave.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/leaves-holidays/leaves-of-absence/personal-leave.html) for more information on Unpaid Personal Leaves.

An Unpaid Personal Leave is not a medical leave (see Medical Leave section above for more information).

Staff members wishing to request Unpaid Personal Leave should contact their supervisor. An Unpaid Personal Leave must be approved by the department/unit and Human Resources.

### **Benefits While on An Unpaid Personal Leave**

Staff members must exhaust all vacation and personal floating holiday time before an Unpaid Personal Leave is granted unless the leave is being requested because a staff member's work authorization has expired and the renewal is being sought in coordination with the International Office. Staff members on an Unpaid Personal Leave may continue some Northwestern benefits.

For more information, contact Human Resources at [askHR@northwestern.edu](mailto:askHR@northwestern.edu) or 847-491-4700.

### **Local Benefits**

For information on state-specific disability benefits and paid leave coverage, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/eligibility-changes/eligibility/regional-benefits.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/eligibility-changes/eligibility/regional-benefits.html).

### **Repatriation Leave (Qatar)**

Staff members from Northwestern's US locations who accept an assignment in NU-Qatar will be extended a six-month unpaid Repatriation Leave upon return to the United States at the conclusion of their assignment in NU-Qatar. Service credit will continue to accrue during the leave.

### **Notification and Request for Repatriation Leave**

Staff members should notify Benefits a minimum of 30 days prior to the start of a Repatriation Leave. The Leave of Absence Request form must be submitted to Benefits for approval of the designated leave period.

### **Benefits While on Repatriation Leave**

Staff members may use accrued vacation or personal floating holiday time during their Repatriation Leave. Staff members may continue their participation in Northwestern benefit plans for up to six months by paying any applicable employee contribution.



WEBER ARCH \ EVANSTON

## 6 \ PAID TIME AWAY FROM WORK

Paid time away from work is intended to provide Northwestern staff members the time they need to rest, relax, and recharge, as well as to fulfill their personal responsibilities.

Paid time away from work is provided through a number of programs, including University scheduled holidays, vacation time, Northwestern's Incidental Sick Time and Extended Sick Time programs, and time off for jury duty and military reserve training.

### Eligibility

Eligibility for paid time away from work is determined by the following criteria:

- The staff member must be employed by Northwestern in a regular benefits-eligible position
- The staff member must be compensated from the University payroll system, and
- The staff member must hold a position or an appointment with a total full-time equivalent (FTE) greater than or equal to 50 percent (0.50).

Paid status means being at work or on

- A personal floating holiday
- Approved, paid Extended Sick Time
- Approved, paid Incidental Sick Time
- Jury duty
- Paid bereavement absence
- Paid military leave
- Paid vacation

For absences in excess of seven calendar days, excluding scheduled vacation time and/or personal floating holidays, refer to [Leaves of Absence](#) on pages 5.4 through 5.11 of this Handbook.

### Scheduled Holidays

Staff members in paid status are paid for these holidays observed by Northwestern:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth National Independence Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday after Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve Day
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve Day

To view the holiday calendar, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/leaves-holidays/university-scheduled-holidays.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/leaves-holidays/university-scheduled-holidays.html).

**Paid time away from work may not be taken before it is accrued, it cannot be cashed out, and no payment will be made to a staff member in lieu of vacation or personal floating holiday time except at termination of employment.**

Usually holidays that fall on a Sunday are observed on the following Monday and holidays falling on a Saturday are observed on the previous Friday. Staff members in part-time positions are paid on a prorated basis for scheduled University holidays.

In certain circumstances, staff members may be scheduled to work on a day that Northwestern observes as a holiday. In such cases, non-exempt staff members will receive holiday pay at the regular hourly rate or an alternate workday off (as outlined below) plus one and one-half times their regular hourly rate for the hours actually worked on the holiday.

If a holiday falls on a staff member's scheduled day off, the staff member will receive an alternate workday off. This alternate day off must be scheduled with supervisory approval within 30 days of the holiday. For example, if a holiday falls on a Thursday when a staff member is not scheduled to work, the staff member may take another day off within 30 days of the Northwestern holiday with prior supervisory approval.

Scheduling of vacation, personal floating holidays, and alternate holidays is always at the mutual convenience of the staff member and the employing department/unit and requires the prior approval of the supervisor.

## **Winter Recess**

Unless otherwise announced, Northwestern offers Winter Recess time off for the three work days between Christmas and New Year's Eve Day for those who are not required to provide essential services during these days. Human Resources provides additional information on Winter Recess at the appropriate time. For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/leaves-holidays/winter-recess](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/leaves-holidays/winter-recess).

## **Personal Floating Holiday Time**

Personal floating holidays are available to staff members for personal business, family sickness, and religious observance, and may also be used as an extension of bereavement absence or vacation time. Northwestern annually provides up to three personal floating holidays as paid time away from work each fiscal year (September 1–August 31).

### **» Personal Floating Holiday Time**

Staff members are granted three personal floating holidays on September 1 of each fiscal year (September 1–August 31). New staff members hired on or after September 1 are granted personal floating holidays as follows:

Hire Date	Personal Floating Holidays
September 1 - November 30	3 days
December 1 - February 29	2 days
March 1 - May 31	1 day
June 1 - August 31	0 days

The hire date is a staff member's first day of employment.

### **» Using Personal Floating Holiday Time**

Personal floating holiday time must be scheduled in advance and in accordance with department/unit rules. Scheduling personal floating holidays on short notice for emergency purposes is at the discretion of the supervisor, who may request documentation of the reason for the emergency. The department/unit may limit the amount of personal floating holiday time taken at one time in consideration of departmental/unit needs.

**Three personal floating holidays will be granted on each subsequent September 1 following the date of hire. Personal floating holiday time is not available for use during an unpaid leave of absence. Part-time staff members receive the percentage of personal floating holiday time proportionate to the percentage of full-time that they are scheduled to work.**

The following conditions apply to the use of personal floating holiday time:

- **No advance:** Personal floating holiday time may not be taken before it is granted.
- **Not cashable:** No payment is made to a staff member in lieu of personal floating holiday time, except at termination of employment or upon change to a faculty appointment or as otherwise referenced in this Handbook.
- **Portability:** Staff members who transfer from one department/unit to another staff position retain their accrued personal floating holiday time.
- **Coinciding holiday:** When a Northwestern holiday falls during a staff member's approved paid time off, the day is paid as holiday time rather than as personal floating holiday time.

Personal floating holiday balances are maintained in the Northwestern-approved time entry system. Staff members should report personal floating holiday usage as they take the time off. For staff members in

- **Non-exempt positions:** The staff member and supervisor must sign off on personal floating holiday usage on each biweekly timesheet.
- **Exempt positions:** The staff member and supervisor must sign off on personal floating holiday usage on a monthly basis.

Personal floating holiday time for exempt staff members should be recorded in half-day or full-day increments in the Northwestern-approved time entry system. For full-time staff, a half-day is 3.75 hours and a full-day is 7.5 hours. For part-time staff, half-day and full-day should be calculated based on their standard weekly hours. With manager approval, personal floating holiday time may be recorded in smaller increments of one hour or more, but never less than one hour.

#### » **Carryover**

Personal floating holidays that are unused at the end of the fiscal year (August 31) are forfeited.

#### » **Transfer and Separation**

When a staff member transfers to another staff position at Northwestern, the staff member and supervisor should ensure that the University-approved time entry system is up to date and accruals are approved by the supervisor. Staff members who transfer from one department/unit to another retain their personal floating holiday time.

When a staff member's primary role is changed from staff to faculty, all of the staff member's personal floating holiday time will be paid out upon transfer to the faculty status.

## Vacation Time

Vacation time is available to staff members for personal business, family sickness, and religious observance. It may also be used as an extension of bereavement absence or personal floating holiday time.

#### » **Vacation Accrual for Staff Members in Non-exempt Positions**

Vacation is calculated by multiplying the vacation factor per accrual base hour by the staff member's accrual base hour. The vacation factor per hour is based on qualified service.

Qualified Service	Vacation Factor Per Accrual Base Hour	Approximate Vacation Earned
Under 6 months	.0385	1 week
6 through 12 months	.0770	2 weeks
After 1 completed year	.0575	3 weeks per year
After 9 completed years	.0767	4 weeks per year
After 19 completed years	.0958	5 weeks per year

**On separation from Northwestern, the staff member and supervisor must approve all vacation and personal floating holiday time balances in the University-approved time entry system to ensure the staff member receives the correct accrual payout.**

Accrual base hours are regular, scheduled work hours. These scheduled work hours may be paid as:

- A personal floating holiday
- Approved, paid Extended Sick Time
- Approved, paid Incidental Sick Time
- Jury duty
- Paid bereavement absence
- Paid military leave
- Paid vacation
- Paid holiday

For each of these hours, the staff member receives vacation time based on the fraction of an hour indicated by the vacation factor per accrual base hour. Vacation is not accrued on hours of unpaid absence.

**Accrued vacation time cannot exceed one and one-half times the annual accrual. Staff members in non-exempt positions cannot exceed one and one-half times the annual accrual in a pay period; staff members in exempt positions cannot exceed one and one-half times the annual accrual at the end of the fiscal year. If the vacation balance of an exempt staff member exceeds the maximum accrual at the end of the fiscal year, any accrual balances above the 1.5 times the annual accrual time is forfeited. Staff members and their departments/units must ensure that vacation time is scheduled to avoid losing it. Upon termination, staff members will be paid out their accrued and unused vacation time that has been approved by the supervisor in the time entry system.**

## » **Vacation Accrual for Staff Members in Exempt Positions**

Vacation is earned at the vacation factor per month. Staff members in exempt positions earn vacation time on the 16th of each month at the monthly rate listed in the following table. A part-time exempt staff member accrues vacation time proportionate to the percentage of full-time that the staff member is scheduled to work.

Qualified Service	Vacation Factor Per Month	Approximate Vacation Earned
Under 6 months	0.83	1 week
6 through 12 months	1.67	2 weeks
After 1 completed year	1.25	3 weeks per year
After 9 completed years	1.67	4 weeks per year
After 19 completed years	2.08	5 weeks per year

A separate table applies to vacation accrual for staff members in exempt positions with pay grade Exempt 14 or higher and ITS 85 or higher.

Qualified Service	Vacation Factor Per Month	Approximate Vacation Earned
0 months through 19 completed years	1.67	4 weeks per year
After 19 completed years	2.08	5 weeks per year

Variances to these vacation accruals must be approved in advance by the Vice President of Human Resources in Human Resources or designee.

Staff members working 9, 10, or 11 months per year accrue vacation at the rates shown in the corresponding non-exempt or exempt accrual charts above during the time paid in the 9, 10, and 11 months of the work schedule. Vacation time does not accrue during the months when a staff member is not paid. Consequently, the annual amount of vacation accrues in proportion to the number of months worked during the year. In addition, Northwestern service indicated by the "Qualified Service" in the preceding tables accrues during the time worked in the 9-, 10-, or 11-month schedule but does not accrue in the months not paid. During the months not paid, staff members on these schedules are on leave of absence and may continue to be enrolled in certain benefits.

#### » Qualified Service

The qualified service period is the service since the hire date and excludes unpaid leave time off.

#### » Approximate Vacation Earned

For all staff members, a full-time work schedule without unpaid leaves results in accrual of the approximate vacation earned indicated in the table.

#### » Using Vacation Time

Vacation time must be scheduled in advance and in accordance with department/unit rules and must be scheduled by staff members and their supervisors when it is mutually convenient.

Requests for vacation time that do not comply with department/unit rules are at the discretion of the supervisor. The department/unit may limit the amount of vacation time taken at one time in consideration of departmental/unit needs. Departments/units may specify periods when no vacation time may be taken.

Staff members may not use vacation or personal floating holidays on their last workday, unless they are planning to retire from the University.

The following conditions apply to the use of vacation time:

- **No advance:** Vacation time may not be taken before it is accrued.
- **Not cashable:** No payment is made to a staff member in lieu of vacation time, except at termination of employment, or upon change to a faculty appointment, or as otherwise referenced in this Handbook.

- **Portability:** Staff members who transfer from one department/unit to another staff position retain their accrued vacation time.
- **Coinciding holiday:** When a Northwestern holiday falls during a staff member's approved paid time off, the day is paid as holiday time rather than as vacation time.

Vacation balances are maintained in Northwestern's approved time entry system. Staff members should report their vacation usage as they take the time off. For staff members in

- **Non-exempt positions:** The staff member and supervisor must sign off on vacation usage on each biweekly timesheet.
- **Exempt positions:** The staff member and supervisor must sign off on vacation usage on a monthly basis.

Vacation time for exempt staff members should be recorded in half-day or full-day increments in the Northwestern-approved time entry system. For full-time staff, a half-day is 3.75 hours and a full-day is 7.5 hours. For part-time staff, half-day and full-day should be calculated based on their standard weekly hours. With manager approval, vacation time may be recorded in smaller increments of one hour or more, but never less than one hour.

#### » Transfer and Separation

When a staff member transfers to another staff position at Northwestern, the staff member and supervisor should ensure that the University-approved time entry system is up to date and accruals are approved by the supervisor. Staff members who

**On separation from Northwestern, staff members and their supervisors must approve all vacation and personal floating holiday time balances in the University-approved time entry system to ensure the staff members receive the correct accrual payout. Staff members who separate from the University are paid their unused vacation accruals up to the maximum allowed.**

transfer from one department/unit to another retain their accrued vacation time, up to the maximum allowed.

When a staff member's primary role is changed from staff to faculty, all accrued but unused vacation time will be paid out upon transfer to the faculty status.

## Incidental Sick Time and Extended Sick Time

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Northwestern provides paid time away from work as a form of income protection for a staff member who is unable to work because of illness or injury. Northwestern's sick time program has two main components:

- **Incidental Sick Time (IST):** Hours may be used for absences due to personal illness or injury; or to receive professional care, including preventive care, diagnosis, or treatment for medical, mental, or behavioral issues, including substance use disorders; or when a family member is ill or injured; or to care for a family member receiving professional care, including preventive care, diagnosis, or treatment for medical, mental, or behavioral issues, including substance use disorders; or if the staff member or staff member's family member is a victim of domestic violence. In addition, Incidental Sick Time hours may be used when a staff member or the staff member's family member is ordered to quarantine, the staff member is obeying a stay-home or isolation order related to communicable disease, or the staff member's workplace or the school or place of care of the family member for whom the staff member must care is closed due to a public health emergency.

Qualifying family members are defined as a child, legal guardian or ward, adopted child, stepchild, godchild, foster child, spouse, domestic partner, co-parent, parent, spouse or domestic partner's parent, stepparent, adoptive parent, godparent, legal guardian, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, or any other individual related by blood or whose close association with the staff member is the equivalent of a family relationship.

The Incidental Sick Time allocation is replenished at the start of each fiscal year (September 1) with no "carrying over" or banking of sick time from one year to the next.

- **Extended Sick Time (EST):** Provides 100% of a staff member's hourly rate or monthly salary for an approved extended illness or injury after a seven-calendar day elimination period, for up to six months. Any additional compensation such as overtime, bonus, on-call pay, incentive pay, or additional pay is excluded. For a staff member on approved FMLA Leave, EST (if also approved) would run concurrently. Extended Sick Time is provided at no cost to employees and is available after a staff member has been employed in a benefits-eligible staff position for six months. Staff members who have resigned their position, whose positions have been eliminated, who are receiving severance pay, or whose term appointments have ended are not eligible for EST beyond their last day worked. The last day worked is the last day that the staff member performed work duties prior to their resignation date, position elimination date, or term appointment end date.

A staff member's job is typically not protected while on EST unless they are also approved for job protection through an FMLA Leave or ADA accommodation. For additional information regarding the process of applying for a reasonable accommodation through the Office of Civil Rights, visit [northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/accommodation](http://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office/policies-procedures/accommodation).

Sick leave may vary by campus or work location or through applicable laws. If the injury or illness extends beyond six months, a staff member may apply for long-term disability benefits. For more information on any of these programs, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/health-insurance/long-term-disability](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/health-insurance/long-term-disability).

An eligible staff member who is away from work for more than seven calendar days may be eligible to apply for a Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave. For more information, refer to [Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\) Leave](#) on page 5.4 of this Handbook.

## » IST Accrual

A staff member is granted Incidental Sick Time on September 1 of each fiscal year (September 1–August 31). A new staff member hired on or after September 1 is granted Incidental Sick Time as follows:

Current Staff	New Hires (September 1 - November 30)	New Hires (December 1 - February 29)	New Hires (March 1 - May 31)	New Hires (June 1 - August 31)
15 days	15 days	10 days	5 days	2 days

Incidental Sick Time will be granted on each subsequent September 1 following the date of hire. If a staff member is not in paid status on September 1, the sick time will be refreshed upon return to paid status based on the table above.

Part-time staff members receive the percentage of IST and EST proportionate to the percentage of full-time that they are scheduled to work.

## » Hire Date

The hire date is a staff member's first day of employment.

## » IST Granted Upon Hire

Staff members receive sick time on their hire date according to the *IST Accrual* chart above. Accrued IST can be used as soon as it is accrued.

## » Using IST

When possible, staff members are expected to provide reasonable advance notice to their supervisor when scheduling the use of Incidental Sick Time. If advance notice is not possible, staff members should follow their departmental protocol or procedure for calling out sick.

In certain cases, Northwestern may require documentation for visits to licensed certified caregivers for treatment or checkups, but only when the staff member is absent for (3) three or more days. Supervisors should consult with their HR Business Partner prior to requiring documentation. IST cannot be denied or wages cannot be delayed due to not receiving documentation.

Incidental Sick Time for exempt staff members should be recorded in half-day or full-day increments in the Northwestern-approved time entry system. For full-time staff, a half-day is 3.75 hours and a full-day is 7.5 hours. For part-time staff, half-day and full-day should be calculated based on their standard weekly hours. With manager approval, Incidental Sick Time may be recorded in smaller increments of one hour or more, but never less than one hour.

Absence due to an injury on the job or occupational disease is not charged to IST or EST if it is approved as Workers' Compensation. For more information, refer to [Workers' Compensation](#) on page 6.8 of this Handbook.

When an Extended Sick Time absence is approved, the use of Incidental Sick time is typically limited to the seven calendar days immediately prior to the approved EST absence. However, there are specific circumstances when staff members may use up to their annual allowance of Incidental Sick Time consecutively. These are:

- Staff members with less than six months of service and unable to work due to their own illness (this includes birth of a child).
- Staff members who have been approved for intermittent FMLA and need to be away from work.
- Staff members who must care for a sick family member and be absent from work.

Misuse or unauthorized use of sick time is a basis for denial of sick time pay and subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

Incidental Sick Time is renewed at the beginning of each fiscal year (September 1) and any unused IST at the end of the fiscal year (August 31) is forfeited. For more information, see IST Accrual above.

## » Transfer and Separation

When a staff member transfers to another staff position at Northwestern, the staff member and supervisor should ensure that the University-approved time entry system is up to date and accruals are approved by the supervisor. Staff members who transfer from one department/unit to another retain their sick time balance.

When a staff member's primary role is changed from staff to faculty, sick time will not be paid out upon transfer to the faculty status.

On separation from Northwestern, the staff member will not be paid for accrued and unused sick time.

## Paid Sick Leave for Non-Benefits Eligible Staff

Northwestern provides Paid Leave and Paid Sick Time to non-benefits eligible staff and student employees. This program covers non-benefits eligible staff employees including temporary staff, temporary student employees (including college work study), part-time staff who work less than 18.75 hours per week, and graduate student employees not otherwise covered by the terms of a collective bargaining agreement. For every 35 hours worked, non-benefits eligible staff employees and student employees earn the following: (1) one hour of Paid Leave; and (2) one hour of Paid Sick Time. Paid Leave and Paid Sick Time are earned in full hour increments up to a maximum of 40 hours for each leave type per fiscal year (September 1–August 31).

For more information, visit [hr.northwestern.edu/documents/work-essentials/nbe-paid-leave-sick.pdf](https://hr.northwestern.edu/documents/work-essentials/nbe-paid-leave-sick.pdf).

## Workers' Compensation

Those who sustain occupational injuries or illness while at work may be entitled to workers' compensation. Staff members who sustain such an injury or illness must immediately report the incident to their supervisor who should then contact the Office of Risk Management.

Absence due to an injury on the job or occupational disease is not charged to Incidental or Extended Sick Time if it is approved as workers' compensation.

For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/risk/insurance-programs/university-insurance-programs/workers-compensation](https://northwestern.edu/risk/insurance-programs/university-insurance-programs/workers-compensation).

## School Visitation

Staff members may take school visitation time off from work to visit their child's school for conferences or classroom activities for a total of eight hours in a school year, but no more than four hours on any given day. Staff members must request this time off in advance and may be required to provide documentation regarding the need to take time off. Supervisors or departments/units may allow additional time depending on departmental/unit operations.

Vacation and/or personal floating holiday time may be used, if available, for school visitation. If no paid vacation or personal floating holiday time is available for a non-exempt staff member, an unpaid excused absence may be used for the school visits.

## Voting Time

Staff members are encouraged to exercise their right to vote, voting either before or after work hours. Staff members who wish to vote and face difficulty in doing so during those pre- or post-work hours are encouraged to take advantage of early voting opportunities that provide extended and weekend hours on multiple days, usually about a week before the election.

Early voting opportunities are offered by many municipalities, including Evanston and Chicago, whose city clerk websites provide information on this topic.

If early voting is not an option, staff members need to make a request to their supervisor at least 48 hours before an election day. Staff members who are unable to vote before or after regular working hours on an election day may take the time needed to vote, not to exceed two hours, during the working day, without loss of pay.

## Bereavement Absence

In the event of a death of a family member, a paid leave of absence is provided as follows to benefits-eligible staff members:

- Ten days are provided for death of a spouse or domestic partner/civil union partner; parent; child (including stillbirth or miscarriage); stepparent; stepchild, foster child, adopted child, or child of a civil union or domestic partner; grandparent, grandchild; or sibling and those bearing the same relationship to the staff member's spouse or domestic partner/civil union partner (including all step categories). The first five days are paid. For the second five days, the staff member can use vacation or personal floating holiday time or can take the days unpaid.
- One paid day is provided for the death of other close family members.

Staff members who are not eligible for benefits may take the same time allocations outlined above as unpaid.

The staff member's supervisor must be notified of the need to take bereavement leave as soon as practical. In special circumstances, staff members may request additional unpaid time off from their supervisor. If such a request is granted, the additional time off will be unpaid, unless paid vacation or personal floating holiday time is used. Northwestern may require proof of the relationship to the family member.

If necessary, staff members may delay the use of their bereavement time for up to one year following the death of their family member. The staff member must notify their supervisor accordingly and provide as much advance notice as possible about when they plan to take the time.

Staff members who experience the loss of a child by suicide or homicide may be eligible for up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave, which runs congruent with the two-week Bereavement Absence. Staff members who are approved for this leave must exhaust available bereavement time, incidental sick time, vacation and/or personal floating holidays prior to going unpaid. For additional information or to request this leave time off, please contact MetLife.

## **Illinois Family Bereavement Leave Act**

Under the Illinois Family Bereavement Leave Act (FBLA), FMLA-eligible staff members may be absent from work for up to 10 days for the following reasons:

- unsuccessful round of intrauterine insemination or of an assisted reproductive technology procedure.
- failed adoption match or an adoption that is not finalized because it is contested by another party
- failed surrogacy agreement
- diagnosis that negatively impacts pregnancy or fertility

Staff members can use incidental sick time, vacation time or personal floating holidays or take the time unpaid.

Leave under the FBLA must be completed within 60 days after the date on which the staff member receives notice of the covered event; and staff members must provide their supervisor with at least 48 hours' advance notice of the need for FBLA leave, unless otherwise unreasonable or impractical.

Leave covered under both the University's bereavement absence policy and the FBLA shall run concurrently.

## **Jury Duty**

Northwestern encourages participation in jury duty. Staff members are allowed to be absent with pay for jury duty but are expected to report for their regularly scheduled work on days when not required to perform jury duty.

Pay received for jury duty service may be retained by the staff member and staff members will also receive their regular pay. Staff members must provide appropriate documentation with as much notice as possible to the supervisor or department/unit. Staff members may be required to provide proof of jury duty service upon return to work.

## **Documentation of Absence**

In certain cases, Northwestern University may require documentation for visits to licensed certified caregivers for treatment or checkups, but only when the staff member is absent for three (3) or more days. Supervisors should consult with their HR Business Partner prior to requiring documentation. IST cannot be denied or wages cannot be delayed due to not receiving documentation. Documentation or justification is not required for vacation or personal floating holiday time unless an emergency necessitates short notice.

A scenic view of a campus path lined with autumn foliage and flower beds. The path is paved with light-colored stones and leads through a variety of trees and shrubs. On the right side, there is a large tree with branches bare except for a few orange and yellow leaves. In the foreground, there are several large, colorful flower beds filled with mums in shades of yellow, orange, red, and white. The background shows more trees and a building, with a few people visible in the distance.

AUTUMN LEAVES ON CAMPUS

## 7 \ COMPENSATION

**Northwestern is committed to establishing compensation programs that attract, retain, and engage talented staff in an environment that promotes fairness and competitiveness, and is in compliance with applicable federal and state laws and regulatory requirements.**

### Career Path Framework

The career path framework features systemic paths/ladders and is formed by reviewing all job categories and the positions within each of these categories (also known as “families”).

Job families represent a grouping of similar jobs or a hierarchy of jobs within a functional area, such as research, information technology, or finance. The families establish the natural progression of jobs within the function by detailing the core standards for duties, accountabilities, knowledge, skills, and educational requirements for each level of job.

The establishment of pay grades begins with documenting job content via a job description and organizing jobs in a manner that identifies the relationships and the natural progression of jobs within a certain function.

**Job descriptions provide clear and concise summaries of a job's essential functions, scope of responsibilities, and the required, as well as desired, skills and experiences to carry out the duties successfully. Job descriptions also provide a basis on which to develop and assess most employment-related activities. These include goal and expectation setting, performance review and appraisal, pay determination, succession planning, training and development, and career pathing.**

## **Salary Structures and Pay Grades**

Northwestern is committed to providing externally competitive and internally equitable pay programs.

Salary structures are tools that help ensure staff members are paid in a manner that is appropriate and competitive. This is accomplished by organizing jobs into groupings known as pay grades.

Pay grades combine jobs together that are paid similarly in the market while taking essential functions, required knowledge, work complexity, accountability, and any unique factors into consideration. At Northwestern, pay grades represent various levels of work such as staff, management, or executive. Jobs that have lower levels of responsibility are placed at lower pay grades. As jobs change in complexity, scope, responsibility, breadth, and depth, pay grades generally increase as well.

Each pay grade has a corresponding market-based pay range that represents the span between the minimum and maximum base salaries for a job. Determining the specific point in the pay range at which a staff member is to be paid is dependent on several factors, including but not limited to the value of the job in the labor market; the knowledge, skills, and experience of the staff member; and the departmental context (for example, budget, location, and other factors). Pay rates should fall within the established pay ranges; at no time should a staff member's pay rate be less than the minimum of the range.

## **Performance Management and Merit Pay**

Northwestern has an established annual process—known as “Performance Excellence”—for assessing performance and granting pay adjustments based on achievement of goals, demonstration of Northwestern

**Questions or concerns about staff compensation should be directed to the staff member’s immediate supervisor.**

values, overall job performance, and the impact of contributions. Staff members may be eligible for pay adjustments based on several factors, including but not limited to the date of hire, job performance, external labor market conditions, current position in the pay range, and departmental and University budget considerations.

## **Designation of Staff Jobs**

Staff jobs are divided into two general categories referred to as exempt and non-exempt, as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the federal law that governs overtime, minimum wage, child labor, and recordkeeping.

### **» Exempt Staff**

Exempt staff members are exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). This exemption is determined by evaluating the duties and responsibilities required of the staff member against the criteria outlined in the FLSA. Employees may be considered exempt if they meet a minimum salary threshold and if their job also meets certain requirements with respect to primary duties. A job is classified as exempt if its duties and responsibilities are primarily executive, managerial, or administrative, or if it requires an advanced educational degree or knowledge and experience in a field considered to be professional. Exempt staff members fulfill their duties without a focus on the amount of time it takes. Therefore, exempt staff members are paid a monthly salary that does not vary between pay periods based on the quality or quantity of work and are not eligible to receive overtime for hours worked beyond 40 hours in a workweek.

### **» Non-exempt Staff**

Non-exempt staff members do not qualify, by the nature of their work and responsibilities, for exemption from the overtime or minimum wage provisions of the FLSA. Non-exempt staff members are paid by the hour and must receive no less than one and one-half times their regular rate of pay for hours worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek.

# 8 \ WORK HOURS AND PAYROLL

**By defining work schedule and payroll policies, Northwestern promotes a shared understanding—and ensures consistency and fairness among staff members—regarding these matters.**

## The Workday

The most common Northwestern office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. However, each department/unit determines the hours of work for its staff members as necessary to staff its operations. Departments/units and supervisors may set and adjust individual staff member schedules to meet department/unit operational needs.

Northwestern's workweek generally starts at 12 a.m. Sunday and ends at 11:59 p.m. the following Saturday. Most work schedules continue throughout the year, but some are partial year (for example, 9, 10, or 11 months). Staff members who work such shortened schedules are considered full-time during the months when they work their full workweek.

**The most common full-time schedules total 37.5 or 40 hours per week. For staff members hired after January 1, 2013, a 37.5 hour workweek is the minimum to be considered full-time.**

## Attendance

Prompt and reliable attendance is an expectation of performance for all employees, as it directly impacts Northwestern's productivity and ability to meet operational needs and commitments. Staff members are expected to report to work on time and to return from lunch on time.

Staff members may be disciplined for unreliable attendance and/or lack of dependability. Authorized absences such as approved leaves of absence and pre-approved time off do not constitute violations of attendance expectations.

## Unscheduled Absence

Unscheduled absences are all instances when a staff member is scheduled to come to work and does not, unless the staff member has an approved time off request. On each day that a staff member takes an absence not scheduled in advance with the supervisor, the staff member must notify the supervisor and give the expected return date and time. Excessive unscheduled absences or lack of notice during an absence is subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

## Job Abandonment

Lack of notice to the supervisor for an absence of three consecutive days indicates that the staff member has abandoned the job and is grounds for termination of employment.

## Pattern Absence

Pattern absences are absences that consistently occur before or after scheduled holidays, personal floating holidays, or vacation days; on scheduled weekend shifts; on days for which the time off request was denied; on a desirable day off; or on the same day each week or month. Disciplinary action up to and including termination may be taken when a pattern of absences has been identified. Northwestern retains discretion in determining what constitutes a pattern.

## Tardiness

All staff members are expected to report to work at the scheduled work time, to work the full duration of the scheduled shift, and to take reasonable meal or break periods. Staff members are tardy if they fail to report to the assigned workplace, prepared to work and at the scheduled time. This includes returning from breaks and meal periods. Each department/unit defines the punctuality standards for its operations and communicates them to staff members. Staff members who expect to be late must notify their supervisors according to department/unit procedures. Excessive tardiness is grounds for corrective action, up to and including termination of employment.

Supervisors may adjust work schedules to accommodate a staff member's scheduling needs. A non-exempt staff member may not be paid for time not at work—for example, when tardy—and may not work any hours (such as to compensate for tardiness) without being paid for them. The staff member must be paid according to the time actually worked, even if this time does not coincide with the planned work schedule.

## Varying Schedule

A work schedule for non-exempt staff members is determined by the supervisor and can be any combination of days and hours totaling no more than 40 hours in a workweek. The hours scheduled for work must not exceed those hours budgeted for the position.

Examples of flexible scheduling with this policy include a schedule in which a staff member works four days of 10 hours each for a total of 40 hours in the week. Another example is a work schedule of three days of 9.5 hours each and one day of nine hours, totaling 37.5 hours in the week. When a staff member uses vacation, personal floating holiday, or sick time, the amount of paid time away from work used is equal to the scheduled work hours for that day.

For more information, refer to [Workplace Strategies](#) on page 9.1 of this Handbook.

## Changing from Full-Time to Part-Time Status

Employees moving from a full-time schedule to a part-time schedule should contact Benefits ([askHR@northwestern.edu](mailto:askHR@northwestern.edu)) and their HR Business Partner ([HRBP@northwestern.edu](mailto:HRBP@northwestern.edu)) in advance to understand the implications of this schedule change. For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/eligibility-changes/benefit-changes/full-time-to-part-time.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/eligibility-changes/benefit-changes/full-time-to-part-time.html).

## Overtime

Non-exempt staff members are paid for the hours worked beyond 40 hours in a workweek—and not already paid at a premium rate—at the rate of one and one-half times their hourly rate. Prior supervisor approval is required in order to work overtime.

Time paid for Northwestern's scheduled holidays is considered time worked when computing overtime in a week where a University-scheduled holiday falls. Other paid time away from work is not considered time worked for purposes of calculating overtime.

Subject to limited exceptions, non-exempt staff members must have at least 24 consecutive hours off work every consecutive 7-day period in addition to the regular period of rest allowed at the close of each working day. Supervisors seeking an exception to this requirement must consult with Human Resources.

## **Reporting Hours**

Non-exempt staff members are required to report accurately all work hours, as well as paid time away from work in the Northwestern-approved time entry system. Non-exempt staff members are encouraged to submit each day's hours on a daily basis, but are required to report their time no less than biweekly.

Exempt staff members must accurately report all paid time away from work on a monthly basis. Supervisors must approve all time reported by their direct reports in the Northwestern-approved time entry system.

Anyone falsifying the reporting of time worked or paid time away from work is subject to corrective action, up to and including termination of Northwestern employment.

For more information regarding documentation, policies and procedures, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/essentials/hr-systems/timekeeping](http://northwestern.edu/hr/essentials/hr-systems/timekeeping). For assistance, email [askHR@northwestern.edu](mailto:askHR@northwestern.edu).

## **Compensatory Time**

Compensatory time (time off taken in lieu of pay) is strictly prohibited.

## **Lunch Periods**

Lunch periods for non-exempt staff members are unpaid and range from a minimum of 30 minutes to a maximum of one hour. Staff members are expected to return to work promptly at the end of the scheduled lunch period. Staff members are not allowed to shorten or eliminate scheduled lunch periods to alter the beginning or ending of a workday. In a work period of 7.5 hours or more, a meal period of at least 20 minutes must be provided and begin no later than 5 hours after the start of the work period, and an additional meal period of at least 20 minutes must be provided for every additional 4.5 hours worked beyond the initial 7.5 hours. Staff members may not be required to work or be on call during their lunch period.

## **Rest Periods**

In work situations where staff members are free to move about and visit restrooms from time to time, formal rest periods are not designated. Therefore, many departments/units and offices do not have formal rest breaks. However, staff members who are substantially bound to one work site and to continuous tasks with limited freedom to move about should have a specific rest break each half-day and staff members who work at least four but less than seven hours per day are eligible for one such rest break per day.

Rest breaks are paid and do not exceed 15 minutes and may not be accumulated or used to shorten the beginning or ending of a workday.

Rest breaks are scheduled at the discretion of the supervisor.

## **Pay Day**

Non-exempt staff members are paid every two weeks on the Friday following the end of each two-week pay period. Exempt staff members are paid monthly, on the last working day of each month. See the pay dates webpage ([hr.northwestern.edu/essentials/pay-taxes/pay-dates.html](http://hr.northwestern.edu/essentials/pay-taxes/pay-dates.html)) for more information.

## **Direct Deposit**

Direct deposit is the standard method of paying staff through the Northwestern's payroll system. Staff members who elect direct deposit will have their pay deposited into their bank account on pay day, even if a staff member is absent from work. In most cases, enrollment is immediate when entered through [northwestern.edu/myhr](http://northwestern.edu/myhr). Staff members with direct deposit are able to split their paycheck between multiple bank accounts.

For more information on direct deposit, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/essentials/pay-taxes/direct-deposit.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/essentials/pay-taxes/direct-deposit.html).

Individual paycheck details can be viewed online and printed through [northwestern.edu/myhr](http://northwestern.edu/myhr).

## Exempt Pay Deductions

Staff members in positions classified as “exempt” in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)—see [Exempt Staff](#) on page 7.2 of this Handbook—receive a monthly salary that does not vary based on the amount or quality of work performed and does not vary between pay periods.

However, the FLSA identifies several situations where it is appropriate to deduct from an exempt staff member’s pay; these situations are

- Absences for one or more full days for personal reasons, other than sickness or disability
- Absences for one or more full days due to sickness or disability if deductions are made under a bona fide plan, policy, or practice of providing wage-replacement benefits for these types of absences
- Unpaid disciplinary leaves or suspensions of one or more full days imposed in good faith for violations of serious workplace conduct rules
- Full or partial day absences for a Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) qualifying absence
- Partial week worked during the first or last week of the staff member’s employment, and
- Penalties imposed in good faith for violating safety rules of “major significance.”

If you believe that an error in your pay has been made through a deduction based on a situation that is not included in this list, you must notify your supervisor or Human Resources immediately. (If you notify your supervisor, your supervisor must promptly elevate the issue to Human Resources.) The appropriate staff in Human Resources will investigate all claims regarding possible improper deductions. Corrective action will be taken as soon as possible to resolve any identified improper deductions, including reimbursement of the improper deduction.

Pay deductions will be made when appropriate paid time away (vacation, personal floating holiday, and Incidental Sick Time) is not used for the absences.

## Workplace Based Outside of Illinois

In exceptional circumstances, Northwestern recognizes the occasional need to hire or reassign an employee who will, due to the nature of a particular position or business needs of the University, need to reside and perform their work in the U.S., but outside of the State of Illinois. School/unit leaders and managers are expected to follow applicable guidance within the Policy on Workplace Strategies when

considering offering employment to or approving a current employee to work on a primarily remote basis. For tax purposes, the Office of Human Resources must be notified at least 60 days in advance if an employee is approved by their school/unit to perform work in the United States from a remote location outside the State of Illinois.

The University generally does not permit work to be performed from remote locations outside of the United States, except under very limited circumstances. Schools/units are required to consult with their respective HR Business Partner (staff) or the Office of the Provost (faculty) before approving a current employee to perform work from a remote location outside of the U.S. or before extending an employment offer to an employee who will not be physically residing in the U.S. when they begin working, regardless of whether it is on a temporary or permanent basis.

For more information, visit the Policy on Workplace Strategies at [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/work-life/alternative-work-strategies/index.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/work-life/alternative-work-strategies/index.html).

## Required Staff Information

Staff members are required to maintain their home addresses and telephone numbers at [northwestern.edu/myhr](http://northwestern.edu/myhr).

Staff members are also required to list at least one office phone number, home phone number, and/or a cell phone number. These phone numbers will be used for any emergency disaster notifications at Northwestern.

Staff members must also include an emergency contact in [northwestern.edu/myhr](http://northwestern.edu/myhr), whether a family member or friend, who could be contacted in case of an emergency.

A change of name, marital status, or tax withholding should be reported to Payroll in Human Resources. Name changes must be accompanied by a copy of the Social Security Card bearing the new name to be used in the payroll system.

It is important for staff members to notify Human Resources at [askHR@northwestern.edu](mailto:askHR@northwestern.edu) or 847-491-4700 of any change in family circumstances that will affect those who are covered by or who are beneficiaries of the staff member’s benefits and retirement plans. For retirement plans, staff members also must notify the providers directly.

# 9 \ STAFF WELL-BEING

**Northwestern recognizes that experiencing well-being at and outside of work plays a significant role in staff engagement. The University seeks to address the overall well-being of Northwestern employees through an array of services for both staff and their household members.**

## Employee Assistance Program

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a network of a variety of mental health and well-being services, including short-term counseling, to help staff members and their household family members cope with everyday life issues. Professional counselors can help with anything from everyday needs, life events, and ongoing stress management to anxiety, relationship concerns, loss of a loved one, communication issues, and more.

Northwestern works with an external employee assistance provider. This provider works separately from Northwestern and shares no files or individual names with the University. As required by law, the use of this service is a confidential matter between the staff member and the provider.

For more information, including contact information, visit [hr.northwestern.edu/benefits/well-being/programs/employee-assistance-program](http://hr.northwestern.edu/benefits/well-being/programs/employee-assistance-program). In the event of an emergency, counselors are available 24 hours, seven days a week.

## Well-being Resources

Northwestern encourages and supports employees tending to their well-being so they thrive professionally and personally as whole people. Well-being is multifaceted and can be described as a state of being healthy and judging life positively; it is vital to living a fulfilling life. A variety of services and resources are

available to help support employees' well-being journey. For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/well-being/index.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/well-being/index.html).

## Workplace Strategies

Northwestern's Policy on Workplace Strategies supports a variety of institutional goals related to staff engagement and well-being, recruitment and retention, sustainability, service excellence, cost efficiencies, space utilization, and the overall empowerment of employees to do their best work.

The Policy on Workplace Strategies establishes a common, ongoing framework with shared definitions within which school and unit leadership can implement various workplace strategies in accordance with their operational needs.

Northwestern is a campus-based community, and a certain level of physical presence will always be required for most staff positions. The University expects that many employees will work on-site at their designated campus locations for three or more days each week. However, strategies and arrangements can vary by school, unit, department, team, and position. School and unit leaders have the discretion to determine, develop, and communicate their own internal approach and approval process for Workplace Strategies. They may establish non-negotiable schedule parameters and core hours, based on business or community support needs.

Staff members may request workplace strategies, and the decision to approve requests is at the discretion of their school or unit leadership or designee. Managers and designated school or unit approvers are responsible for making determinations on acceptable modalities based on legitimate business and operational requirements. They are also responsible for equitable decision-making and documenting individual arrangements with eligible staff. All staff participating in Workplace Strategies are subject to the performance standards and expectations for their position.

Workplace strategies are not permanent or otherwise guaranteed to continue for any period of time. School and unit leaders and managers retain the discretionary authority to change or revoke workplace strategies (either temporarily or permanently) as needed for business or operational needs, special work functions or activities, or seasonal variations in work volume as well as for performance-related reasons. In certain circumstances, workplace strategies may be changed or revoked without prior notice.

For more information, please see the Policy on Workplace Strategies at [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/work-life/alternative-work-strategies/index.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/work-life/alternative-work-strategies/index.html).

## NU Cares

The Northwestern University Staff Advisory Council (NUSAC) established the NU Cares financial fund to provide an opportunity for staff members to help one another during a time of need. All benefits-eligible staff members who have not been under disciplinary action for workplace conduct concerns or policy/procedure violations within the past six months are eligible to apply, whether or not they donate to the fund. The fund is administered by the Well-being team within Human Resources. Assistance granted is not a loan and is not required to be repaid.

For more information, visit [sites.northwestern.edu/nusac/nu-cares](http://sites.northwestern.edu/nusac/nu-cares).

**The Workplace Strategies Toolkit contains information and resources designed to support both managers and individuals in implementing such arrangements. It can be found at [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/work-life/alternative-work-strategies/alternative-work-strategies-toolkit1.html](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/work-life/alternative-work-strategies/alternative-work-strategies-toolkit1.html).**

## Adoption Assistance Reimbursement Program

The purpose of the Adoption Assistance Reimbursement Program is to provide reimbursement for all or a portion of the expenses resulting from the adoption of an eligible child. The program is intended to satisfy the requirements of section 137 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the “Code”), and to provide to eligible employees reimbursement that is excludable from federal gross income under section 137 of the Code.

All active, benefits-eligible staff members with at least three years of continuous service at the time of the adoption are eligible for this benefit.

Adoption assistance reimbursement is available for up to \$5,000 with respect to any eligible child and up to \$6,000 for a child with special needs. Second parent adoption, meaning the adoption of a spouse’s child (including stepchild), is permitted.

To adopt a child internationally, the adoptee must be either a US citizen or a resident. If the adoptee is not a US citizen or resident, the adoption must be finalized by a competent authority in the foreign-sending country and evidence provided that the child has been issued the appropriate visa by the United States Department of State.

For additional information, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/caregiving/adoption-assistance](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/caregiving/adoption-assistance).

## Childcare Support and Caregiving Resources

Northwestern offers many programs to help staff members understand and access caregiving resources, benefits, and programs. The Well-being team within Human Resources can best assist with caregiving resources through their one-on-one consultations. The team can provide support navigating parent leaves of absence and returning to work; lactation support; locating and sourcing childcare and backup care; connecting with area caregiving resources; and more. Staff members may contact the Well-being team for a tailored, individual consultation regarding their and their family’s needs.

For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/caregiving](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/caregiving).

## **Senior and Adult Care Program**

Northwestern offers support and resources to staff members who may be caring for a senior or adult relative. Through the Northwestern Senior and Adult Care Program, staff members and their family may access expert senior care advisors for assistance, back-up care, and monthly support groups.

For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/caregiving/senior-adult-care](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/caregiving/senior-adult-care).

## **Discounts, Facilities, and Services**

### **» Wildcard Advantage Discounts**

Wildcard is an official Northwestern photo identification card issued to new staff members by Auxiliary Support. A regular staff member's spouse or domestic partner may also receive a card. Northwestern retirees can retain active Wildcard privileges by submitting a retiree privileges form to Payroll in Human Resources. To obtain a copy of the request form, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/essentials/forms](http://northwestern.edu/hr/essentials/forms).

For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/wildcard/services](http://northwestern.edu/wildcard/services).

### **» PerkSpot Discounts**

Northwestern has partnered with PerkSpot to offer staff members and their family discounts from more than 900 merchants nationwide. PerkSpot provides access to discounts and exclusive offers on a wide range of goods and services, including buying a car or home, electronics, and travel and entertainment.

For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/discounts-transit/perkspot-discounts](http://northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/discounts-transit/perkspot-discounts).

### **» Discounted Fitness and Recreation Memberships**

Regular staff members who work 18.75 or more hours per week and have a valid Northwestern Wildcard are eligible to purchase a gym membership at a reduced rate. For more information, visit [nurecreation.com/sports/2015/8/12/employemembership.aspx](http://nurecreation.com/sports/2015/8/12/employemembership.aspx).

### **» Campus and Intercampus Shuttle Service**

Safety and Security manages transportation options for both the Chicago and Evanston campuses. These services include shuttle buses that are free to staff members. The buses operate on or near both campuses and between the campuses.

For schedules and more information, visit [shuttle.northwestern.edu](http://shuttle.northwestern.edu).

### **» Parking**

Parking permits for Northwestern parking lots in Evanston are issued for a fee by Safety and Security. For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/transportation-parking/evanston-parking](http://northwestern.edu/transportation-parking/evanston-parking) or call 847-491-3319.

University parking on the Chicago campus is limited. Permits are issued by Safety and Security to each school and to certain departments/units so that they can determine who qualifies for a permit. A fee is charged.

For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/transportation-parking/chicago-parking](http://northwestern.edu/transportation-parking/chicago-parking) or call 312-503-1103.

Parking fees are paid by payroll deduction on a pre-tax basis.

### **» University Libraries Privileges**

Northwestern staff members are granted library borrowing privileges with their Wildcards. For more information about University Libraries, visit [www.library.northwestern.edu](http://www.library.northwestern.edu) or call 847-491-7658.

### **» Athletic, Cultural, and Recreational Opportunities**

Northwestern offers many cultural and recreational opportunities to staff members. It is a member of the Big Ten Conference and is famous for the quality of its theater and music programs, which staff members may attend for free or at modest cost.

Events are listed on Northwestern's online calendar—[planitpurple.northwestern.edu](http://planitpurple.northwestern.edu)—which is searchable by category.

A photograph of a large, multi-story stone building with many arched windows, likely a university building. A flag flies from a pole on top of the building. To the right, a modern glass skyscraper with a prominent 'M' logo is visible. Bare trees are in the foreground.

## CHICAGO CAMPUS BUILDINGS

# 10 \ PROFESSIONAL AND OTHER UNIVERSITY ORGANIZATIONS

**Northwestern supports numerous social and professional organizations in which staff members are invited to participate.**

Social and professional organizations in which staff members are invited to participate include but are not limited to

- **Association for Higher Education Administrators' Development at Northwestern University (AHEAD@NU):** [northwestern.edu/ahead](http://northwestern.edu/ahead)
- **Association of Northwestern University Women (ANUW):** [northwestern.edu/anuw](http://northwestern.edu/anuw)
- **Mixed Backgrounds and Origins Staff Space (MBOSS):** [sites.northwestern.edu/mboss](http://sites.northwestern.edu/mboss)
- **Northwestern APIDA Staff Affinity Group (ASAG):** [sites.northwestern.edu/asag](http://sites.northwestern.edu/asag)
- **Northwestern Black Professionals Network (BPN):** [northwestern.edu/bpn](http://northwestern.edu/bpn)
- **Northwestern University Circle:** [northwestern.edu/university-circle](http://northwestern.edu/university-circle)
- **Northwestern University Research Administration Professionals (NURAP):** [nurap.northwestern.edu](http://nurap.northwestern.edu)
- **Northwestern Unidos: Latinx Professionals Coalition:** [unidos.northwestern.edu](http://unidos.northwestern.edu)
- **Northwestern University Women's Center:** [northwestern.edu/womenscenter](http://northwestern.edu/womenscenter)
- **Out Network:** [sites.northwestern.edu/out-network](http://sites.northwestern.edu/out-network)

A list of campus resources can be found on the website of the Office of Community Enrichment at [northwestern.edu/community-enrichment/advocacy/affinity-groups](http://northwestern.edu/community-enrichment/advocacy/affinity-groups).

## NUSAC

Chartered by Northwestern's president in 1973, the Northwestern University Staff Advisory Council (NUSAC) provides service to the University community by advising University leaders on the opinions, concerns, and experiences of its staff. This takes place in meetings with Human Resources and other Northwestern administrators. Members are regular, benefits-eligible staff; have two or more continuous years of service and a most recent performance rating of "achieving" or above; and have not received disciplinary action within the past six months. Service on NUSAC is subject to supervisory approval. For more information, visit [northwestern.edu/nusac](http://northwestern.edu/nusac).



EVANSTON CAMPUS GATE

# RESOURCES DIRECTORY

## **Office of Human Resources**

Phone: 847-491-4700

Email: [askHR@northwestern.edu](mailto:askHR@northwestern.edu)

[hr.northwestern.edu](http://hr.northwestern.edu)

## **Conflict of Interest**

Phone: 847-467-4515

[northwestern.edu/coi](http://northwestern.edu/coi)

## **Office of Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance**

Phone: 847-467-6165

[northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office](http://northwestern.edu/civil-rights-office)



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