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Respectful Workplace Guidelines

A fair, collaborative, inclusive and respectful Workplace is a vital prerequisite to the University's achieving its teaching, research, public service, and patient care goals and preserving its reputation for excellence.

Therefore, the University embraces the concept of a Respectful Workplace as a core value and is committed to promoting an environment where employees respect each other regardless of their roles or levels of responsibilities, or the nature or extent of their contributions.

Everyone Is Responsible For A Respectful Workplace

Employees: All employees, regardless of role or status, are responsible for behaving respectfully and for refraining from disrespectful behaviors that violate other relevant University policies.

All Employees, regardless of their role or status, are also responsible for:

- Recognizing when they or others are being subjected to disrespectful behavior;
- Addressing the behavior directly with the person engaging in disrespectful or abusive conduct;
- Bringing the situation to the attention of a supervisor or the next person in the chain of command (if a supervisor is the issue) for prompt resolution;
- Making a complaint.

Supervisors: In addition to their personal responsibilities as Employees, supervisors are responsible for:

- Encouraging the reporting of instances of disrespectful behavior;
- Immediately addressing all disrespectful behavior once reported or observed;
- Taking the situation seriously and promptly investigating the extent and nature of the problem (See [Tips for Managers](#))

Vice Presidents, Deans, and Unit Heads: In addition to their personal responsibilities as employees and as supervisors, University vice presidents, deans, and unit heads bear the primary

responsibility for maintaining a workplace environment free from disrespectful behavior, and they are expected to act on this responsibility whenever necessary.

Human Resources Responsibilities: The responsibilities of University Human Resources include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Providing a system for receiving, addressing, and resolving complaints;
- Providing training for employees in interpersonal communication skills, problem solving, resolving conflict, and resources available to address difficult situations;
- Conducting periodic surveys of employees to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of and compliance;
- Incorporating demonstrated compliance with these guidelines as part of annual employee performance appraisal;
- Requiring vendors and employees of vendors to comply with these guidelines as a condition of doing business with the University;
- Acknowledging and rewarding employees who demonstrate outstanding commitment to a respectful workplace.

Examples of Respectful Behavior

Every employee of the University of Virginia has the right to work in a respectful workplace. In order to promote and sustain a workplace where all employees are treated with respect and dignity, regardless of their status or position, each employee is expected to abide by these values and standards of interpersonal behavior, communication and professionalism:

- We respect and value the contributions of all members of our community, regardless of status or role in the organization;
- We treat employees with respect, civility, and courtesy;
- We work honestly, effectively and collegially with employees and others;
- We respond promptly, courteously, and appropriately to requests from others for assistance or information;
- We use conflict management skills, together with respectful and courteous verbal communication, to effectively manage disagreements among employees;
- We encourage and support all employees in developing their individual conflict management skills and talents;
- We have an open and cooperative approach in dealings with employees, recognizing and embracing individual differences;
- We recognize that differing social and cultural standards may mean that behavior that is acceptable to some may be perceived as unacceptable or unreasonable to others;
- We abide by applicable rules, regulations, policies and bylaws and address any dissatisfaction with, or violation of, policies and procedures through appropriate channels;

- We demonstrate commitment to continuous personal and professional learning and development;
- We demonstrate commitment to a culture where all employees cooperate and collaborate in using best practices to achieve high work-related outcomes;
- We are responsible stewards of material and human assets to achieve excellence and innovation in the education of our students, care of our patients, and the creation and sharing of knowledge across all disciplines;
- If we are in leadership positions, we model civility for others and clearly define expectations for how employees treat each other, and are responsive to complaints when they are brought forward.

Examples of Disrespectful Behavior

Consistent with this and other relevant University policies, all employees at the University of Virginia are expected to refrain from disrespectful behavior. Examples of disrespectful behavior can include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Use of threatening or abusive language, profanity or language that is intended to be, or is perceived by others to be, demeaning, berating, rude, or offensive;
- Bullying (See Definitions);
- Making threats of violence, retribution, litigation, or financial harm; shouting or engaging in other speech, conduct or mannerisms that are reasonably perceived by others to represent intimidation or harassment;
- Using racial or ethnic slurs; demonstrating racial, gender, sexual orientation, or cultural bias; see also University policies: [Preventing and Addressing Discrimination and Harassment](#) and [Preventing and Addressing Retaliation](#);
- Making or telling jokes that are intended to be, or that are reasonably perceived by others to be, crude or offensive; teasing, name calling, ridicule or making someone the brunt of pranks or practical jokes;
- Using sarcasm or cynicism directed as a personal attack on others;
- Spreading unsubstantiated rumors or gossip;
- Making actual or threatened inappropriate physical contact; see also University Policy: [Preventing and Addressing Threats or Acts of Violence](#);
- Throwing instruments, tools, office equipment, or other items as an expression of anger, criticism, or threat, or in an otherwise disrespectful or abusive manner;
- Making comments or engaging in behavior that is untruthful or directed as a personal attack on the professional conduct of others;
- Retaliation (See Definitions and/or [Anti-Retaliation, Confidentiality & Anonymity webpage](#));

- Engaging in any pattern of disruptive behavior or interaction that could interfere with the workplace or adversely impact the quality of services, education or patient care.

Related Information:

[Preventing and Addressing Discrimination and Harassment](#)

[Preventing and Addressing Retaliation](#)

[Preventing and Addressing Threats or Acts of Violence](#)

[University Code of Ethics](#)

[Health System Compliance Code of Conduct](#)

[Department of Human Resources Management Employee Standards of Conduct \(applicable to University Staff and classified staff only\)](#)

[Medical Center Human Resources Policy Manual](#)

[Faculty Handbook-Professional Ethics](#)

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