

**VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY AND MEDICAL CENTER**  
**HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**SUBJECT: HOURS OF WORK POLICY**

**POLICY #: HR030**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: March 1, 2001 Revised: June 1, 2004**

(Revised July 1, 2006, Revised January 2007, September 2008 changes noted in Red)

**POLICY**

This policy establishes the official workweek at Vanderbilt. Because of the differing nature of our business, departmental guidelines determine staff scheduling needs and should be communicated to staff as part of their orientation.

**PROCESS**

The official workweek for payroll purposes begins at midnight on Sunday and ends at 11:59 p.m. Saturday. Each department determines the work schedule and hours for staff as necessary for its operation. The normal full time schedule for staff is 40 hours a week. However, work schedules may vary among departments including reduced fulltime schedules, parttime, required overtime, flexible and seasonal schedules to accommodate the operational needs of the department. (See Alternative Work Arrangements Policy, HR Policy #023). Staff are expected to work their regular schedule based on the FTE for each work week or supplement nonworked time with the use of accrued time. Accrued time is not to be used to supplement the schedule beyond the staff member's FTE. **Hourly staff must record all non-work time as an accurate record of the work day. Staff are not allowed to adjust the assigned schedule without prior approval of the supervisor.**

**PROCEDURE**

Staff is paid for the work performed as regulated under applicable state and federal laws. Staff is expected to report to work at the start of their schedule. Staff is also expected to work until the end of their scheduled work day.

**I. Hourly Paid Staff** Hourly paid staff are not permitted to leave work prior to the end of the workday without advance notification and approval of the supervisor. If departments put in place alternative notification options for emergency situations, they should be communicated to all staff within the work area.

**A. Meal Period:** Staff who work six hours a day are required to take a meal break of at least 30 minutes away from the work area. However, schedules for meal breaks are based upon the operational needs of the work area. Vanderbilt generally recognizes a meal break as unpaid time for which a staff member is relieved from work for a period of time.

**B. Breaks:** Generally, most work areas within Vanderbilt allow for an appropriate amount of break time within the work day as needed, however, staff jobs that cannot be left unattended such as nurses and other clinical staff, receptionists and switchboard operators, are permitted, at a minimum, one 10 minute paid break every 4 hours as

part of the normal work day. Supervisors should identify the standards for breaks in their area and communicate same to both the relief person and staff member working the position. **Breaks are to be utilized consistently for all staff. Unapproved extended breaks will be addressed by the attendance and punctuality policy (Policy # HR-026). Repeated offenses to comply with departmental scheduled break times will result in disciplinary actions through Performance Improvement Counseling (Policy # HR-014).**

C. **Overtime:** Hourly paid staff must be paid for all hours worked whether preapproved or not. However, staff who fail to adhere to departmental procedures for preapproval of overtime will be subject to Performance Improvement Counseling (PIC) up to and including discharge. (See Performance Improvement Counseling Policy, HR Policy #014) Hourly paid staff that work in excess of the regularly scheduled week must be paid one and onehalf times their regular hourly rate for all hours worked in excess of 40 during the official University workweek.

D. **Compensatory Time Off:** Compensatory time off is not recommended. If the department approves the use of compensatory time off for hourly paid staff, this time must be agreed upon and approved in advance by the staff member and supervisor and if used, it must be taken in the same pay period in which it is earned. Compensatory time off used in a week where hours worked are 40, or less than 40, is hour for hour. Compensatory time off used in a week where hours worked are more than 40 the first week of the pay period must be computed by the manager and reported accurately the following week on the basis of one and onehalf times the hours worked the previous week and given in the same pay period as worked. Compensatory time off is not appropriate for exempt staff. For questions, please contact Employee Relations.

E. **Differential Pay:** Some departments that schedule hourly paid staff on evening, night or weekend shifts pay a shift differential. Hourly paid staff in positions that are eligible for differentials will receive differential pay for specified holidays, weekends and shifts worked.

F. **Oncall:**

Some departments provide oncall compensation if they require hourly paid staff to be available during a specified period other than their regular shift. Oncall pay is for hours that a staff member is "oncall" while off the premises and required to be available if called in to work within a specified period of time.

G. **Standby:**

If a staff member is required to remain available (but not actually working) on the premises or in close proximity, waiting time should be considered hours worked. Please contact the Compensation Office of Human Resource Services for further information regarding standby pay.

**Note:** Holidays, vacation, sick leave, or other nonworked paid hours are not used for the purpose of calculating overtime. Please contact the Compensation Office of Human Resource Services for further information regarding overtime calculation.

H. **Office Closing:** Departments that have a need to suspend operations or close the office due to business reasons may do so with the appropriate administrative approval. If a department operates with a "skeletal staff" or closes based on a business need

(such as the Friday after Thanksgiving, power outages, etc.), the department may provide the following time reporting options to nonexempt staff, see options below:

1. Nonexempt staff may use an appropriate accrual bank (vacation, holiday, or personal day) to supplement any nonworked hours to complete their schedule; however, they are not required to do so or,
  2. Nonexempt staff may elect to take unpaid time in lieu of utilizing an accrual bank.
- Note: This is an exception to the requirement to exhaust all available accruals before going into an unpaid status.  
(See HR Policy #012)

**I. University Sponsored Activities:** Staff are encouraged to attend University Sponsored events. Hourly paid staff attending should gain supervisor approval. If approval is provided by the supervisor, the time away from work that is a part of their normal work day is paid.

**J. Travel Time:** On occasion, hourly paid staff may be required to travel for Vanderbilt related purposes. The following guidelines should be used when determining when travel time is considered "work time" and therefore must be paid. Travel time considered work time includes:

1. Participating in any business related activities at a conference or seminar.
2. Participating in social activities where attendance is required.
3. Traveling out of town for Vanderbilt related reasons, regardless of the day/time.
4. Traveling between work locations during the workday.
5. Traveling from the office to a local airport, bus depot, or train station, or vice versa.

Travel time not considered work time includes:

1. Participating in social activities where attendance is not required.
2. Sleeping.
3. Nonwork related meal breaks.
4. Traveling from home to a local airport, bus depot or train station, or vice versa.
5. Traveling from home to an intown conference. However, mileage may be reimbursable.
6. Traveling from home to a regular designated work location or vice versa.

**K. Training/Conference Time:** Attendance at lectures, meetings, training programs, seminars or similar activities must be counted as hours worked when the training is related to the staff member's job. Prior to attending such programs, staff should obtain supervisory approval.

**L. Voting:** Vanderbilt recognizes that staff are entitled to participate in the political process by voting in local, county, state and national elections. Staff are encouraged to exercise their right to vote by voting in advance of the last day available or by absentee ballot when appropriate. Polls are typically open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. The following

guidelines are to be used in evaluating time off request for voting.

a. If the staff member's schedule begins three hours or more after the opening of the polls or ends three hours or more before the closing of the polls the department is not required to approve time off from work to vote.

b. If the staff member's schedule does not provide for three hours before or after their schedule, when polls are open, the staff member may be absent from work for a reasonable period of time not to exceed three hours to vote. However, if staff request time off to vote, that request must be made no later than noon the day prior to Election Day. Supervisors and staff will determine a reasonable arrangement that supports the operation of the work unit. Time away from work approved by the supervisor for voting is paid time.

## **II. Exempt Staff**

Exempt staff are paid on a salaried basis. Exempt staff are expected to adhere to the FTE for the position and the regular workweek of the department; exempt staff are also required to work the hours necessary to perform the duties of the job. Exempt staff generally do not receive overtime, compensatory time, or additional pay for hours worked or travel time outside normal work hours.

a. Vanderbilt is committed to compliance with all applicable federal and state wage and hour laws. Deductions from the salary of exempt employees are prohibited, whether for quality or quantity of work, discipline, violations of workplace conduct rules, or otherwise, unless authorized by law.

b. Any employee who believes that an improper deduction has been made from his/her salary should discuss the situation with their supervisor. If the complaint is not resolved to the employee's satisfaction, the Administrative Review Process is available (See ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW POLICY #HR021). After an investigation, if a deduction is determined to have been improper, the employee will be reimbursed.

## **III. Time Reporting**

Each department is responsible for maintaining accurate time and attendance records. For each hourly paid staff member, a time record must be completed for each pay period. The time record must record the total number of hours actually worked each day, as well as the number of accrual hours (if applicable) paid towards the required FTE. **Time records must be an accurate reflection of both work and non-work time and cannot be adjusted without prior approval.** Time records will not be processed without the approval of the supervisor. The approving supervisor is responsible for verifying the hours recorded. Falsification of a time record is grounds for immediate discharge. **Both the staff member and the supervisor will be held accountable.** ([HR Policy #015](#)). Exempt staff are responsible for accurately reporting any use of sick, vacation, or personal time. Exempt staff should report time away from work in halfday increments. (Refer to the following policies: ([HR Policy #029](#) and [HR Policy #005](#)))

Approved by Kevin Myatt, Chief Human Resource Officer  
Approved by Lauren Brisky, Vice Chancellor, Administration

Approved by Harry Jacobson, M.D. Vice Chancellor, Health Affairs

This policy is intended as a guideline to assist in the consistent application of University policies and programs for staff. The policy does not create a contract implied or expressed, with any Vanderbilt staff members, who are employees at will. Vanderbilt reserves the right to modify this policy in whole or in part, at anytime, at the discretion of the University.