

Employee Policy Manual 2023



November 2023

Dear WNE Colleagues,

We are pleased to present the digital Faculty and Staff Policy Manual, a comprehensive guide to the most frequently referenced Human Resources policies and practices for faculty and staff at Western New England University. This manual was developed in collaboration with the Policy Committee, representing a broad range of perspectives from all employee groups, including exempt and non-exempt staff, and faculty.

Our faculty and staff play a pivotal role in shaping a positive and enriching experience for our students, guiding them towards success during their time at WNE and beyond. The University's leadership is committed to these goals and supports our community in understanding and applying the policies that reflect our core values of inclusivity, equity, and ethical conduct.

We firmly believe that our people are our most valuable asset, making WNE a unique place to work and learn. By embracing and adhering to our shared responsibilities, every member of our community contributes to making WNE an outstanding institution.

We encourage you to regularly consult this manual and stay informed about our evolving policies. Should you have any questions, suggestions, or feedback, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of Human Resources. We are committed to continuously updating and refining our policies to ensure fairness and consistency across the University.

Best regards,

Cindy Donnelly

Associate Vice President of Human Resources

NOTICE: PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THIS POLICY MANUAL

This Policy Manual is intended to serve as a practical mini-guide to the Human Resources policies and practices most often referenced by employees of Western New England University.

However, since this Policy Manual is only a limited summary of policies compiled for the convenience of our employees and supervisors, it is not intended to cover all topics or circumstances that will guide employees in the performance of their duties. A complete list of all WNE personnel policies and practices can be found in the [Policy Library](#).

WNE reserves the right (on an individual basis or generally) to make any revisions, modifications, interpretations, or deletions to any WNE policies, procedures, benefits, or other programs, at any time with or without notice at WNE's sole discretion.

Nothing in this Policy Manual is intended to create an express or implied contract of employment. While it is our hope at WNE that you will have a long, fulfilling, and successful career with us, all employment is at-will, which means that either the employee or WNE has the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without cause or notice.

No oral or written representation made by any employee, supervisor or manager of WNE can modify the employment at-will relationship unless it is reduced to written agreement and signed by the employee and Vice President or the Office of Human Resources of Western New England University.

This Policy Manual replaces and supersedes any and all previous Human Resources manuals, guidelines, Policy Manuals, or memos and all oral and written descriptions and explanations of WNE's policies.

This Policy Manual applies to all employees regardless of date of hire.

Western New England University Employee Policy Manual

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POLICIES

ADA COMPLIANCE

It is the policy of the University to provide reasonable accommodations or academic adjustments when necessary.

[ADA Policy](#)

APPEARANCE

Western New England University Employees should dress appropriately to their duties, with no negative impact on the University's image.

[Appearance Policy](#)

ATTENDANCE

It is the policy of the University that Faculty and Staff report for duty at the assigned time and place, remain on duty during scheduled work hours, and accurately report hours worked and leave taken in accordance with State and Federal law.

[Attendance Policy](#)

BEREAVEMENT (FUNERAL) LEAVE

University employees are provided with paid time off for making arrangements, settling family affairs, bereavement, and/or attending the funeral or memorial service of a member of the immediate family.

[Bereavement Policy](#)

CONSENSUAL RELATIONSHIP

WNE strives to provide an educational and work environment that is collegial, respectful and productive. This policy establishes rules for the conduct of consensual relationships between employees and between employees and students, including supervisory personnel, in an attempt to prevent conflicts and maintain a productive and professional work environment.

[Consensual Relationship Policy](#)

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

WNE expects that each member of our community will be treated with civility, respect, and dignity. If a disagreement occurs between individuals and/or groups, we expect that the merits of opposing positions will be discussed without resort to insult, personal attack, or bias. Behavior or conduct that is biased or harassing will not be tolerated.

[Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy](#)

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

The University maintains an Employee Assistance Program to provide help and counseling for on- or off-the-job emotional, family, substance abuse, legal, and financial problems, etc., for employees and their families.

[EAP Policy](#)

EMERGENCY CLOSURES AND SNOW DAYS

During the year it may be necessary to suspend some or all of University operations due to inclement weather or other emergency events.

[Emergency Closures and Snow Days Policy](#)

EMPLOYEE CONFLICT OF INTEREST

It is the policy of the University that Faculty and Staff avoid any conflict, or appearance of conflict, between personal interests and the interests of the University in dealing with any organization or third party. When Faculty and Staff are aware that such organization or individual (i) has or seeks to have a business relationship with the University, or (ii) has objectives or interests that may be adverse to the University's interests, Faculty and Staff are expected to avoid such conflicts of interest, to disclose any personal interest that may conflict with their obligations to the University, and to refrain from influencing any decision of the University on a matter in which such a conflict exists.

[Employee Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE

Western New England University has implemented a progressive discipline policy and procedures that are designed to provide a structured corrective action process to improve and prevent a recurrence of undesirable Faculty and Staff behavior and performance.

[Employee Discipline Policy](#)

FIREARMS

All members of the University community, as well as visitors, are prohibited from possessing firearms, explosives or weapons on the premises of the University without the explicit advance authorization of the University, regardless of whether a federal or state license to possess the same has been issued to the possessor.

[Firearms Policy](#)

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR STAFF (NON-TITLE IX MATTERS)

The University recognizes that there are times when the need arises for Staff members to express concerns or complaints in a formal manner. The following procedures will ensure that Staff members receive a fair review of workplace concerns.

[Grievance Procedure Policy](#)

JURY DUTY LEAVE

Employees are encouraged to serve on jury duty and fulfill their court-related, civic obligations. The University provides regular faculty or staff members paid time off to do so without change in status or loss of pay.

[Jury Duty Policy](#)

LIVE-IN POLICY

This policy establishes the criteria for full-time Professional Residence Life Staff to have a spouse or partner and/or their dependent children live with them in University housing and to set expectations for the registration and conduct of those individuals.

[Live-In Policy](#)

LONG-TERM DISABILITY PLAN

WNE provides Long Term Disability (LTD) through Guardian to eligible Faculty and Staff.

[Long-Term Disability Plan](#)

MASSACHUSETTS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE

Pursuant to Massachusetts law, WNE will provide up to fifteen (15) days of annual job-protected leave to employees who are victims of domestic violence or for an employee to assist a family member who is a victim of domestic violence.

[Domestic Violence Leave Policy](#)

MASSACHUSETTS PAID FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) is a Commonwealth of Massachusetts program designed to give Massachusetts workers the resources to manage their own health and the health of their family. PFML is a state-offered benefit for anyone who works in Massachusetts and is eligible to take up to 26 weeks of paid leave for medical or family reasons.

[Paid Family and Medical Leave Act](#)

NEPOTISM

This policy addresses the potential perception of favoritism, preferential treatment or the appearance of conflicts in hiring and supervising relatives of Faculty, Staff, or Student employees, or in academic matters.

[Nepotism Policy](#)

PREGNANCY IN THE WORKPLACE

Unlawful discrimination has no place at WNE. It violates the University's core values, including its commitment to equal opportunity and inclusion, and will not be tolerated. Discrimination and harassment based on pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, including but not limited to childbirth, termination of pregnancy, or lactation, are prohibited by University policy and prohibited by Title IX.

[Pregnancy in the Workplace Policy](#)

PREGNANT WORKERS FAIRNESS ACT

In accordance with Massachusetts state law, it is unlawful to discriminate against an employee due to pregnancy or a condition related to pregnancy including, but not limited to lactation or the need to express breast milk for a nursing child.

[Pregnant Workers Fairness Act Policy](#)

REMOTE WORK

Remote work arrangements allow employees to work at an alternate work location, usually their home, for all or part of their workweek. The University considers remote work to be a viable, flexible work option when both the employee and the position are suited to such an arrangement. The benefits of remote work can be significant for employees and the organization. Remote work arrangements can enhance productivity, lower turnover, expand applicant pools, and provide employees with a greater work-life balance.

[Remote Work Policy](#)

SHORT-TERM DISABILITY PLAN

WNE provides Short Term Disability (STD) through Guardian to eligible Faculty and Staff who have completed 6 months of employment.

[Short-Term Disability Plan](#)

TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS

This policy establishes the University's position regarding staff employees teaching outside of their primary job duties.

[Teaching Assignments Policy](#)

UNIFORMED SERVICES EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT (USERRA)

Employment rights of employees engaged in the armed forces are protected by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act.

[USERRA Policy](#)

WORKPLACE ANTI-VIOLENCE

Western New England University is committed to preventing violence in the workplace and to maintaining a safe work environment.

[Workplace Anti-Violence Policy](#)