Bennington College

Procedures and Policies

Nondiscrimination Policy

Bennington College is committed to a policy of nondiscrimination as defined under applicable state and federal laws, including but not limited to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities. The College does not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability, national or ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, HIV test, or any other legally protected status. Complaints of any type of unlawful discrimination that do not fall within the Sexual Harassment Policy above should be directed to Heather Faley, the director of Human Resources, whose telephone number is 802-440-4423, and whose email address is hfaley@bennington.edu.

The director of Human Resources shall adjudicate any complaint of unlawful discrimination in a prompt and equitable manner, which will permit the complainant to make a written submission, to respond to any submission by the person complained against, to be given a written decision by the director of Human Resources, and to take a written appeal to the Vice President for Finance and Administration, whose decision, which will be rendered in writing, will be final. Except in extraordinary circumstances, such grievance shall be determined by the director of Human Resources within 60 days of the filing of the complaint.

Please note: Any complaint determined by the Title IX Coordinator to fall within the jurisdiction of the Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Policies and Procedures must be brought pursuant to that policy.

Payroll Procedures

Employees are paid through ADP, the College’s integrated Human Resources, payroll, benefits, and time/attendance tracking system. Most staff are paid semi-monthly on the 15th and 30th of each month. Campus Safety staff are paid on a weekly basis and receive checks for hours worked each Thursday.

Select non-exempt employees submit hours worked by completing a time sheet and submitting it to the Business Office in accordance with the established payroll schedule. Payroll checks can be deposited directly into individual checking and/or savings accounts.

Staff Identification Badge

Bennington College does not require staff of the College to wear identification badges. However, in order for staff to access certain facilities on campus (i.e., use of the Crossett Library, Meyer Recreation Barn) a Bennington ID Card is required. Bennington ID Cards are issued through Information Technology. Bennington Cards are processed by appointment. Contact helpdesk@bennington.edu.
Campus Directory

Employees can access Bennington College’s campus directory online at www.bennington.edu. The directory is updated regularly, and includes contact information for all faculty, staff and students. If you have any questions or concerns about the campus directory, please contact Information Technology Office through helpdesk@bennington.edu.

Bennington Bulletin

The Bennington Bulletin is a weekly e-newsletter for staff and faculty. The Bennington Bulletin was established as a vehicle to get the word out on a variety of subjects in a cohesive and timely manner, so as not to overwhelm recipients with continual communiques from various offices.

Inclement Weather

At times, the College may find it necessary to alter campus operations due to inclement weather. Because Bennington College is a residential campus and must provide services and meals for students and continue essential operations, the College is never officially closed. As such, staff should make every effort to come to work during inclement weather, but should not jeopardize their safety in doing so.

However, due to the fact that individual employees are affected differently during inclement weather by virtue of their residence location or transportation requirements, the College recognizes that certain employees may be delayed in their arrival or unable to travel to work during such situations.

In accordance with the College’s Emergency Response Policy, the College will activate the Emergency Notification System, Send Word Now, to announce a change in operations. Notifications will be sent to employees via campus telephone and email, and any other communication devices that you have registered with Send Word Now (i.e., home phone, personal cell phone, personal email address). Notifications will also be placed on the College’s website, the internal employee communications hotline (802) 440-4747, and local television/radio stations.

An employee should notify his/her supervisor if he/she expects to be delayed in arrival at work. If an employee wishes to leave early due to inclement weather, he/she is required to notify his/her direct supervisor prior to leaving. For non-exempt support/hourly staff, the loss of time due to the weather, or emergent conditions, will be made up as mutually agreed to by the employee and his/her supervisor or taken as vacation time. For exempt professional staff, the loss of a full day due to the weather, or other emergent condition, will be taken as vacation time.

In any situation where telephone systems are inoperable and an employee is unable to make initial contact with the College, the employee is expected to continue to attempt such contact until successful.

Select ‘essential staff’ may be required to work during inclement weather or emergent situations. Staff working in Campus Safety are considered ‘essential staff’ at all times. Staff working in Dining Services, Buildings and Grounds, and Student Life may, at times, be considered ‘essential staff;’ individuals working in these offices should consult their supervisor about their ‘essential staff’ status.

If the College is closed or employees are sent home due to weather conditions, employees will be paid for the day. Those employees required to work will get compensatory time off, if applicable, or may be entitled to overtime pay, depending on the situation.
Workers’ Compensation

Workers’ Compensation is an insurance program that provides medical and disability benefits for certain work-related injuries and illnesses arising out of and in the course of employment. Employees injured on the job will be compensated according to the Vermont Workers’ Compensation Act. The Human Resources Office, the College’s workers’ compensation carrier, and the Department of Labor will monitor these cases to ensure effective management.

Medical treatment for work-related injuries and return to work planning will be coordinated by the College in conjunction with the Occupational Health Department (OHD) of the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center (SVMC) in Bennington, VT. Employees are required to follow the steps outlined below in the event of a work-related injury:

- Any employee requiring ambulance transportation from the work site due to a life- or limb-threatening accident should be taken directly to the Emergency Department at Southwestern Vermont Medical Center in Bennington, VT, or the nearest emergency care unit.

  Employees should always notify Campus Safety (x210) regarding any emergency situation.

- All work-related injuries should be reported to Human Resources within 24 hours. In the event that the office is not open, the report should be made on the first business day that it is open. Employees must file a First Report of Injury form and related Department of Labor forms provided by the Human Resources Office. Employees must contact Human Resources regarding their return-to-work status and other case details.

- Any employee who has a non-life-threatening injury should contact the Occupational Health Department (OHD) of SVMC at 802-447-5317. The OHD nurse can advise the employee on the appropriate course of action and will make necessary appointments for treatment and/or referrals. The OHD will determine the need for additional visits for specialist evaluation and treatment, file claims, and will keep the employer updated with restrictions and return-to-work notices. The contact information is as noted:

  Southwestern Vermont Medical Center  
  Occupational Health Department  
  100 Hospital Drive  
  Bennington, Vermont  05201

  The final decision as to whether compensation shall or shall not be payable in any particular instance rests with the Vermont Department of Labor.

Accumulated sick time and vacation time may be used by an employee to supplement any workers’ compensation received, up to the amount of the employee’s regular salary. Vacation and sick time are not earned while collecting workers’ compensation.

For questions or concerns regarding work-related injuries or illnesses, please contact Human Resources.

Drug-Free Workplace Policy

In compliance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 enacted by Congress all employees are advised that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance or alcohol is
prohibited in the workplace. Any employee who engages in this activity will face sanctions that may include suspension or termination of employment. Furthermore, as an employee, you must notify the College of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after such conviction. Any employee so convicted must satisfactorily participate in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program, at the employee’s expense, or face sanctions including suspension or termination.

The College is committed to providing a drug-free workplace and to this end, from time to time, will provide information about the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace. The College’s policy regarding alcohol is designed to be consistent with the laws of Vermont; it stresses moderation, safety, and individual responsibility. In addition, the Human Resources Office maintains a list of local agencies equipped to deal with problems associated with drug and alcohol abuse.

Smoking Policy

In accordance with Vermont State law, the College is required to provide employees, students, and visitors with clearly stated guidelines on when and where they may smoke. The state policy restricts smoking in all places of public access. The policy has been formulated in recognition of the Surgeon General’s conclusion that:

- smoking is injurious to health;
- and involuntary (or second-hand) smoking is a cause of disease in nonsmokers

The College has designated its administrative, academic, and other public buildings SMOKE-FREE. Smoking is not permitted inside any of these buildings nor within 30 feet of entryways and exits of all buildings.

Pet Policy

Bennington College appreciates the special nature of the owner-pet relationship. However, the College is a workplace and residence for many, and, as such, the welfare of the entire community must be considered paramount. The College’s pet policy recognizes that animals have the potential to impose on the safety, health, personal well being, and comfort of College employees and residents, as well as the sanitation, housekeeping, and physical condition of the campus. The College’s pet policy consists of two components: (1) Dogs in the Workplace, and (2) Other Pets in the Workplace.

1. Dogs in the Workplace
The College has established a pet policy that allows opportunities for employees to bring a dog into the workplace. Faculty and staff with private offices or faculty and staff who share an office may bring a dog to work during business hours so long as they comply with all requirements set forth in this policy. There will be select days during the academic year when dogs will not be permitted in the workplace; days include, but are not limited to, Plan Days, BenningtonWorks, Board meetings, Convocation, Fall/Alumni Weekend, Commencement Weekend, days when Buildings & Grounds must access an office for maintenance repairs and specific dates set at the discretion of a department manager. If additional College-wide days are added, employees will be notified of these days as far in advance as possible. This policy solely applies to the College’s main campus; it does not apply to any other campus facility.

Bringing a dog to the workplace is a privilege and respect for other community members is paramount. When a dog in the workplace interferes with the working or living/learning environment of the employee or another community member, the dog will no longer be allowed in the workplace. Dog owners must agree to take full responsibility and liability for their dog, must ensure that the dog does not interfere with the use of the grounds by others, and ensure that the dog remains under the control and custody of the owner or the owner’s designee at all times. Dog owners
who fail to comply with all facets of this policy will lose their privilege of bringing their dog into the workplace and may incur fines/costs for select violations or damages. Policy compliance is managed by Bennington College Campus Safety.

With the exception of service animals, dogs will not be allowed in public spaces, administrative or academic areas of the College including, among others, classrooms, libraries, studios, theatres, labs, food service areas or conference/meeting rooms. Additionally, dogs will not be allowed in the following public-facing offices/buildings:

- Buildings & Grounds
- Campus Safety
- Commons
- Crossett Library
- Dining Services (includes anywhere food is handled/served)
- Health Services
- Human Resources
- Office of Admissions
- Psychological Services
- Student Life

Dog owners must exercise good judgement when bringing a dog to campus and must agree to the following:

- Approval by the employee’s immediate supervisor. The employee’s supervisor will be responsible for vetting the initial request to have a dog in the workplace with the department members.
- The dog must be registered with Campus Safety. Registration requirements consists of a valid dog license and proof of current shots/vaccinations. Please do not bring your dog to campus until you have been granted approval by Campus Safety.
- The dog must not present any health or safety concern to others in the office/building. If colleagues are uncomfortable with dogs in their general work area, or have some type of allergic/medical reaction, then the dog will not be allowed.
- Dogs must be on leashes at all times when not in their owner’s office.
- Dogs may not be allowed to wander outside of the owner’s office into public areas.
- Dogs that show any aggressive tendencies (or have a past history of biting or aggressive behavior) will not be allowed on campus;
- Select dog breeds are prohibited by the College’s insurance carrier; contact Campus Safety for detailed information.
- Dog owners must post a sign on their office door notifying students and co-workers and visitors that a dog is present. Signage will be available through Campus Safety.
- In advance, dog owners must alert meeting participants that a dog will be present in their office; must provide an alternate meeting location to an individual who is uncomfortable meeting in an office with a dog present or must leave their dog home on a particular day.
- Employees who bring their dogs to work are wholly responsible for cleaning their offices and removing the trash; cleanliness must meet regular College standards. Buildings & Grounds staff will not perform any cleaning or trash removal regardless of whether or not the dog is in the office at the time of service. If offices are not routinely and adequately cleaned by the occupant, then the dog will no longer be allowed. If an office must be entered for maintenance or other required work, the dog owner must make arrangements to ensure the animal will not be present during the duration of work. Employees will be notified as far in advance as possible, but may receive as little as one days’ notice so owners must be prepared for alternate pet accommodations at all times.
- Immediately clean up after the dog, both indoors and out. Dog owners should be mindful of campus grounds, paying particular attention to ensure that the dog does not eliminate on any paved area, common grounds, walkways and the like. The dog owner is required to properly dispose of dog waste.
The dog owner will bear all related costs for damages attributable to the dog that require maintenance/repairs/replacements of College property/facilities and understand that the dog will not be allowed back on campus.

Dogs are not permitted in any college-owned vehicle.

The presence of the dog does not, in the supervisor’s view, interfere with the owner’s ability to perform their work duties.

Policy violations, owner negligence, and/or mistreatment of a pet will not be tolerated.

If any community member experiences a problem with another community member’s dog, the community member may contact the employee’s supervisor or Human Resources (staff) or Office of the Provost/Dean of the College (faculty) who will work with the employee to resolve the conflict.

The College reserves the right to revoke privileges of any employee who fails to comply with any tenants of this policy or whose dog, in the sole discretion of the College, presents as a concern to the campus community. The College reserves the right to revise this policy at any time, with or without notice.

2. Other Pets on Campus
With exception of the ‘Dogs in the Workplace policy’, small fish and service animals, the College prohibits any person from bringing or keeping pets in residences or any administrative or academic buildings. Pets, including dogs, are not allowed in such facilities as classrooms, libraries, studios, food service areas, administrative or meeting spaces, or public access areas. When on campus grounds, a dog must be on a leash at all times. Employees occupying College housing may keep common domestic pets in their residence subject to certain conditions.

Weapons Policy

Possession of dangerous, potentially dangerous, or unauthorized materials such as explosives, firearms, or other weapons (whether or not loaded with ammunition) on College property is strictly prohibited. Employees may not carry such materials on to College property in their vehicles or by other means. The Dean of the College may authorize in writing specific exceptions for job-related activities for faculty and technical staff. The Director of Campus Safety may authorize in writing specific exceptions for job-related activities for other personnel. Violation of this policy will be considered grounds for immediate discharge.

Use of College Communications Resources

The College provides or contracts for the communications services and equipment necessary to promote the efficient conduct of its business.

Staff should not use College communications services and equipment for personal use when doing so incurs costs borne by the College or has an adverse impact on job performance or the College’s electronic infrastructure. College communications property or equipment may not be removed from the premises without authorization from supervisors.

All College communications services and equipment including the messages transmitted or stored by them, are the sole property of the College. The College may access and monitor employee communications and files as it considers appropriate. Communications equipment and services include mail, electronic mail (“e-mail”), courier services, facsimile, telephone systems, personal computers, computer networks, online services, Internet connections, computer files, telex systems, video equipment and tapes, audio and video recording equipment,
pagers, cellular phones, bulletin boards, and newly developed communications technology as it is introduced into the College.

Staff should ensure that no personal correspondence appears to be an official communication of the College. All outgoing messages, whether by mail, facsimile, e-mail, Internet transmission, or any other means, should be accurate, appropriate, and professional. Staff should not use the College’s address for receiving personal mail (unless they live on campus) or use College stationary or postage for personal letters.

Improper use of College communication services and equipment may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Improper use includes any misuse as described in this policy as well as any harassing, offensive, demeaning, fraudulent, insulting, defaming, intimidating, or sexually suggestive written, recorded, or electronically transmitted messages. Specific rules for commonly used equipment follow:

**Email**

Email is available for all staff members who currently have a Bennington-issued username and password. The site address is [www.gmail.com](http://www.gmail.com); you will then login using your Bennington email address and password. The site provides access to your Gmail inbox, contacts, tasks, calendar, and Google Drive. You may access this site from any major web browser such as Chrome, Firefox or Safari. If you have problems or questions, please contact the Information Technology Office through helpdesk@bennington.edu.

Your Bennington email should be used primarily for business directly related to your work at Bennington College. You may choose to execute some amount of personal correspondence through your work email; however, no business unrelated to your work with the College should be conducted using your Bennington assigned email or Google Drive. You should be clear that any personal correspondence conducted through your Bennington gmail does not reflect an official position of, representation of, or work for the College, and all communications, whether for personal or work-related reasons, are considered the property of the College and may be monitored.

Web browsing should be conducted judiciously and is primarily for business use. Do not download and install software from the Web unless it specifically relates to your work for the College. Be cautious when clicking on attachments in emails; this is a common means of executing viruses. Please mark all spam emails as such using the gmail “Report spam” feature. Please contact the Help Desk at x4476 with any questions.

All Bennington employees are bound by the CAN-SPAM laws and must behave appropriately with Bennington-issued email addresses. Specifically, employees must refrain from sending mass emails (more than 20 recipients) using the copy (CC) or blind copy (BCC) fields. All mass emails sent from Bennington email addresses must use a mass email system with an unsubscribe option, per U.S. federal law. For assistance, please contact the IT@Bennington Help Desk, x4476, helpdesk@bennington.edu.

**Telephones**

College telephones, including College-issued cell phones, are primarily for use for business purposes. We ask that you limit your use of these devices for personal use. The College assumes no responsibility for personal files stored on College devices.

**Digital File Storage**

Bennington College provides several forms of device- and cloud-based storage employees, including a personal computing device, a Bennington-issued Google Drive account, file storage in Amazon Web Services, and, in some cases, cell phones and tablets. These devices remain the property of the College and are subject to review of contents by the College at any time; no expectations of privacy of data is
implied when a device or account is issued to an employee. Storage of personal files in College-supported digital storage systems is prohibited; the College will not return any personal files from any device or system upon employee separation.

Other
Equipment such as computers and fax machines should be used primarily for College business. Photocopiers should not be used for personal printing; however, digital scanning and sending to personal email is permitted, as the College incurs no cost for these services.

The College engages with a number of third-party, Software-as-a-Service (Saas) and cloud-based vendors. Employees are expected to use these systems and services exclusively for business-related purposes. The use of any Saas or cloud-based service that employees access with Bennington-issued credentials is strictly prohibited.

Financial Whistleblower Policy and Procedure

This policy is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns relating to the financial affairs or the financial recordkeeping (“Financial Affairs”) of the College within the organization, for investigation and appropriate action. With this goal in mind, no employee who, in good faith, reports such a concern shall be threatened, discriminated against, or otherwise subject to retaliation or adverse employment consequences as a result of such report.

The following concerns are covered by and may be reported under this policy:

- providing false or misleading information on the College’s financial documents, tax returns or other public financial document;
- providing false material financial information to, or withholding such information from, the auditors, accountants, lawyers, trustees or other parties responsible for ensuring the College’s compliance with fiscal and associated legal responsibilities;
- violation of any law relating to the Financial Affairs of the College, including embezzlement, private benefit, or misappropriation of funds;
- material violation of the Board of Trustees’ policy on conflict of interest.

Procedures to Report Concerns

An employee may report a concern covered by this policy directly to the President, the Vice President for Finance and Administration, the Provost and Dean of the College, or the Director of Human Resources. However, if for any reason an employee is not comfortable reporting to any of these individuals or does not believe the issue is being properly addressed, the employee may report the matter to the Chair of the Board or any member of the Board of Trustees. A report must be in writing.

Handling of Reported Concerns

The College will investigate promptly any report made in accordance with this policy. A matter reported to any of the four staff members referenced above will be investigated to determine whether the allegation is true, whether the issue is material, and what actions, if any, are necessary and appropriate to correct the problem.

A matter reported directly to the Chair of the Board or any member of the Board of Trustees will be investigated by the Chair or her/his designee, unless the matter pertains to the Chair. The Chair or her/his designee will investigate to determine whether the allegation is true, whether the issue is material, and what, if any, corrective action is necessary and appropriate. If the report pertains to the Chair, the President will investigate to determine whether the allegation is true, whether the issue is material, and what, if any, corrective action is necessary and appropriate.
**Acting in Good Faith**

An employee reporting a concern must act in good faith and have reasonable grounds for believing the matter raised is a serious violation of law or policy relating to the Financial Affairs of the College, or a material accounting or auditing matter.

**Confidentiality**

Reports of concerns, and investigations pertaining thereto, shall be kept confidential to the extent practicable and permitted by law.

**Guest Policy**

Bennington College encourages all members of the community, including staff and faculty to enjoy all the public events and shows published on the college calendar designated as “Open to Public.” Please check the calendar for event details including times and location.

The College also hosts private and internal events that are intended for a specified audience; these events are not open to the general College community or to the public. Requests for permission to attend an event that is published on the college calendar but not designated as “Open to Public” should be submitted to the Director of Campus Safety at least 24 hours in advance of the event.

All students residential housing, on and off campus, are considered private and staff/faculty attempting to visit as a guest is not permitted under any circumstances. Outside of those staff who, as required by their position, to officially conduct work in student housing during their regularly scheduled shift, permission to visit or be a guest in the student housing will not be granted. Alumni staff and faculty are allowed to visit campus, excluding student housing, for unlimited day visits.

The College reserves the right to limit or deny guests and may revoke guest privileges for any reason, at any time for including, but not limited to violation of this guest policy, or any College regulation or policy, or of any law.

Campus Safety is responsible for enforcing all policies related to staff and faculty guest visitation. Please feel free to contact the Director of Campus Safety at extension 4420 or at (802) 440-4420 for any related questions.

Last update: October 2019