



Employee Handbook



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MISSION STATEMENT

With a focus on student success, Lawson State Community College provides affordable and quality educational opportunities, promotes economic growth, and enhances the quality of life in the communities it serves. Through innovative instruction and lifelong learning opportunities, the College prepares students for college transfer, employment, and career advancement.

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

It is the policy of Lawson State Community College to recruit, hire, train, promote, tenure and make educational and personnel decisions without regard to race, color, religion, sex, gender, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

NONDISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the Alabama Community College System, its Board of Trustees, and Lawson State Community College (the “College”), a postsecondary institution under its control, that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, disability, sex, religion, creed, national origin, or age, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program, activity, or employment. The College does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment.

Lawson State Community College also prohibits discrimination due to ethnic origin, marital status, parental status, economic status, genetic information, citizenship, veteran status, or disability, reasonable accommodations, or any other protected class as defined by federal and state law. The college has zero tolerance for harassment, retaliation, violence, physical bullying, cyberbullying, and hazing.

In addition to admissions and employment, this nondiscrimination policy covers training, organizational affiliation, student housing, and advisory boards in all college programs and activities. This policy is enforced by Federal law under Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972, Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended in 2008.

Inquiries can be made to the Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator, to the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights, or both. The College’s Title IX Coordinator/Section 504 Coordinator is the Dean of Students, 3060 Wilson Road SW, Birmingham, Alabama 35221, Academic Success Building, 2nd Floor, cvance@lawsonstate.edu and 205-929-6361. The Deputy Title IX Coordinator /ADA Coordinator for Employees is the Director of Human Resources, 3060 Wilson Road SW, Birmingham, Alabama 35221, *the Dr. Perry W. Ward Alabama Center for Advanced Technology & Training Building, on the 3rd floor*, ebell@lawsonstate.edu and 205-929-6313. The notice of nondiscrimination is located on the College’s website at: https://www.lawsonstate.edu/about_us/administrative/human_resources/default.aspx

HARASSMENT

Lawson State Community College has a zero tolerance for any form of harassment or discrimination based on race, sex, religion, color, national origin, age, disability, or any other factor protected by law. An employee’s race, sex, religion, color, national origin, age, disability or any other factor protected by law, may not be considered as a basis for making any employment decisions regarding the employee, including, but not limited to, any decisions relating to hiring, promotion, training, job assignments, compensation, discipline, discharge, and other terms and conditions of employment. The term “harassment” includes, but is not limited to, offensive language, jokes, or other verbal, graphic

or physical conduct; or intimidating, threatening or offensive behavior relating to an employee's race, sex, religion, color, national origin, age disability, sex or other factors protected by the College's policy and law which would make the reasonable person experiencing such harassment uncomfortable in the work environment or which could interfere with the person's job performance.

It is the College's policy that all employees and students have a right to work and learn in an environment free of discrimination, which encompasses freedom from any form of harassment. This includes the behavior of peers, superiors, subordinates, and visitors to the premises. Such conduct by an employee may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Harassment Defined

Harassment is abusive or hostile conduct which is directed toward or inflicted upon another person because of his or her race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, or veteran's status and which, because of its severity or pervasiveness, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work or academic performance or creates a hostile or abusive work or learning environment for that individual's work, education, or participation in a college activity. Harassment is typically based on stereotyped prejudices and includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, objectionable epithets, or other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct that demeans, insults, or intimidates an individual because of his or her race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, or veteran status.

Sexual Harassment Defined

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of employment or academic advancement; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance as an employee or student or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment. Sex-based harassment or discrimination is covered under Policy 620.03 (not covered under 620.02 Employee Complaints).

Retaliation--Against Harassment Claims

Retaliation against persons who oppose or complain about harassment is strictly prohibited. Retaliation is any action that has the effect of punishing a person for engaging in a legally protected activity, such as alleging harassment, making a harassment complaint, or assisting in a harassment investigation. Examples of retaliatory adverse employment actions include suspension, demotion, or termination. In addition, this policy prohibits retaliation in the form of harassment, intimidation, threats, or coercion, or in the form of any materially adverse harm that would dissuade a reasonable student or employee from filing a harassment complaint or participating in a harassment investigation.

Claims of harassment and retaliation should be filed online immediately and advance to Step 3 in the reporting process. However, before filing such a serious claim, review the definitions to ensure you have a claim. Please

be advised that knowingly filing false harassment or retaliation claims can have repercussions. Additional Information and Procedures for reporting harassment may be viewed at:

https://www.lawsonstate.edu/about_us/administrative/human_resources/default.aspx

Lawson State employees are further protected by the State Employee Protection Act, Alabama Code Sect.36-26A-1 et seq (2012). The College and its employees must adhere to the Alabama Community College System Board of Trustees Policies 620.02: *Employee Complaints* and 620.03 *Sexual Harassment Complaints*.

POLICY NAME:	620.02: Employee Complaints
EFFECTIVE:	August 1, 2024
SUPERSEDES:	Policy 620.02, issued November 10, 2020
SOURCE:	<u>Code of Alabama 16-60-111.4</u>
CROSS REFERENCE:	

This policy is intended to cover employee complaints related to discrimination, harassment, hostile work environment, ethical concerns, and other legal-related matters against any person associated with an ACCS entity. This policy does not cover general workplace grievances, conduct, or professionalism, which are addressed by Policy 620.01 or complaints of sex-based harassment or discrimination which are covered in Policy 620.03. This policy does not apply and cannot be used against a President.

Any employee who believes he/she has been subjected to or observed:

- discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, marital status, disability, age or any other protected class as defined by federal and state law, other than sex.
- harassment in forms other than sexual,
- hostile work environment,
- ethical violations or similar concerns,
- criminal acts,
- ACCS, College, or Chancellor policy or procedure violations,
- or other legal-related issues,

by any person associated within the ACCS entity (other than a President), shall report the action immediately, and in no event less than ten (10) calendar days following the event, to the Title IX Coordinator, Human Resources Director, or President. In conjunction with the report, the employee shall provide a written statement, as well as any evidence the employee believes substantiates the complaint, and shall be required to assist in an appropriate investigation.

The College shall designate an appropriate person to review and investigate the matter and may engage legal counsel for this purpose, as determined by the President. This review and investigation shall be conducted promptly and within 45 calendar days if practical, but not later than 60 days, unless this period is extended by agreement of the complaining and responding parties. The President or his/her designee shall issue a written response to the reporting employee within 15 calendar days if practical, but not later than 30 days unless this period is extended by agreement of the complaining and responding parties; once the review and investigation has been completed, and this written response

shall be final.

An employee who brings a good faith complaint under this policy shall not be retaliated against in any manner. Any employee who retaliates against an employee for making a good faith complaint under this policy will be disciplined.

POLICY NAME:	620.03: Sex-Based Harassment and Sex Discrimination Complaints
EFFECTIVE:	August 1, 2024
SUPERSEDES:	November 10, 2020
SOURCE:	<i>Code of Alabama 16-60-111.4</i>
CROSS REFERENCE:	Policies 800.01 and 800.02

Each College shall adopt a Grievance Procedure for complaints of sex-based harassment and/or sex discrimination that is consistent with the requirements of 34 C.F.R. § [106.44](#) and §[106.45](#).

This policy is intended to cover complaints of sex-based harassment and/or sex discrimination occurring in a College's education programs or activities by an individual applying for employment, an employee, or an individual (other than a student or applicant for admission) otherwise participating in or attempting to participate in a College's educational programs or activities. This policy does not apply to complaints against students.

HAZING

Purpose

Lawson State Community College is committed to providing an environment for students, employees, and campus visitors that is free from all forms of hazing. Hazing violates both ACC policy, federal and state law, and may lead to removal from school or termination of employment as well as personal liability, civil and criminal.

Policy

Lawson State ("the College") is committed to maintaining a supportive, educational environment that seeks to enhance the well-being of all members of its community. This commitment reflects the institution's adherence to its mission, to its various policies supporting its mission, and to relevant state and federal laws. Consistent with that commitment, the College has implemented the following policy on hazing.

Prohibition on Hazing

Simply defined, hazing includes any act that threatens or inflicts physical, emotional, or psychological pressure or injury on an individual or that purposely demeans, degrades, or disgraces an individual. The College does not condone hazing, regardless of its form. Indeed, hazing is prohibited by the College's Code of Student Conduct and considered a crime in the State of Alabama under Alabama Code § 16-1-23. No individual shall directly engage in hazing or indirectly encourage, aid, or assist any other person in hazing. All students and other College representatives, including employees, should immediately report known or suspected hazing violations as directed herein.

An individual commits hazing by intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing, coercing, or forcing another individual to engage in or endure any of the following for pre-initiation or pre-pledging activities, pledging, initiating, holding office, admitting or affiliating into or with an organization, or to continue, reinstate, or enhance an individual's membership or status in an organization:

1. Conduct or conditions that violate College policy or local, state, or federal law.
2. Physical brutality or any other conduct or conditions that pose a substantial risk of physical injury or death, including, but not limited to, whipping, striking, punching, beating, paddling, electric shock, placing harmful substances on the body, excessive exercise or calisthenics, branding, or exposure to the elements.
3. The consumption of any food, alcohol, drug, non-alcoholic liquid, or other substance that could adversely affect the physical health or safety of the individual.
4. Sexual misconduct, harassment, assault, humiliation, or brutality, such as forced nudity or an act of sexual penetration, or both.
5. An unreasonable act of forced servitude, restraint, including confinement, or sleep deprivation.
6. Any activity that would subject the individual to extreme mental stress, such as forced conduct that could result in extreme embarrassment, or other forced activity that could adversely affect the mental health or dignity of the individual.

For the purposes of this Policy, "organization" means any formal or informal fraternity, sorority, association, corporation, order, society, corps, student organization (registered or not), cooperative, club, service group, social group, band, spirit group, athletic team, or similar group whose members are primarily students at, or former students of, the College.

This Policy does not apply to reasonable and customary athletic, law enforcement, or military training, testing, competitions, or events, or to other similar events sanctioned by the College.

Reporting Hazing

All members of the campus community have a duty to promptly report good-faith concerns about potential hazing impacting another member of the campus community. Specifically, if any such individual holds firsthand knowledge about hazing, whether that hazing has already occurred or is set to occur in the future, they must make a reasonable effort to immediately report the hazing-related information as noted herein.

If the situation is an emergency and you or someone else needs immediate assistance, please contact The Lawson State Community College Police Department (LSCCPD) at 205-925-3587 (Birmingham) or 205-426-3654 (Bessemer).

An individual with a duty to report a specific hazing incident or concern may be immune from College sanctions that might otherwise be imposed as a result of the reported hazing incident if the individual:

1. Immediately provides a full report of all known information upon learning that hazing will occur or has occurred;
2. Makes a reasonable effort to stop the hazing if it is planned or in progress, which, among other things, may include immediately reporting the situation;
3. Participates in good faith with:
 - a. Any College or law enforcement agency investigation regarding the incident, and
 - b. Any judicial proceeding resulting from a report of hazing; and
4. If the reporting individual is present at the scene of the hazing and the individual who is a victim

requires medical attention:

- a. The reporting individual immediately takes steps to get the victim assistance from appropriate medical personnel; and
- b. The reporting individual remained with and assisted in good faith the individual requiring assistance until such medical personnel arrived.

To report hazing that does not involve an emergency, please provide specific information about the hazing incident to any of the following:

- The Lawson State Community College Police Department (LSCCPD)—please call 205-925-3587.
- The Dean of Student Services Office—please complete this [online Student Conduct Hazing Reporting Form](#). Reports using this Student Conduct Hazing Reporting online form may be done anonymously.
- The College's Hazing & Harassment Hotline (LSCCPD 24/7)—please call (205)9253587. Reports to the Hazing & Harassment Hotline may be made anonymously.

Penalties/Sanctions

Individuals who are victims of hazing and who truthfully report violations of this Policy will not be subject to penalties or sanctions for violations of this Policy.

The penalties and sanctions for individuals who are found to violate this Policy may include the following:

1. In addition to any significant criminal charges or civil liability that may occur, an individual will be subject to immediate termination from employment or suspension/expulsion if:
 - a. They are found to have engaged in or contributed to hazing that results in serious physical injury, which is defined as physical injury that creates a substantial risk of death, or that causes serious or protracted disfigurement, protracted impairment of health, or protracted loss or impairment of the function of any bodily organ or extremity;
 - b. They are found to have engaged in or contributed to hazing that results in someone's death; or
 - c. They are found to have engaged in or contributed to hazing that involves forced alcohol and/or drug consumption.
2. An individual who engages in any other form of hazing will be subject to penalties and sanctions up to and including termination from employment or suspension/expulsion.
3. An individual who has a duty to report potential hazing incidents as outlined herein but fails to make reasonable efforts to immediately report that knowledge may be subject to penalties and sanctions up to and including termination from employment or suspension/expulsion.
4. An individual who attempts to or does dissuade or prevent an individual from reporting potential or actual hazing or takes an adverse action against an individual in retaliation for a good faith report of hazing will be subject to penalties and sanctions up to and including termination from employment or suspension/expulsion.

This is not an exhaustive list of potential sanctions/penalties for violating this Policy. Each situation will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

An organization that is found to have violated this Policy may also be subject to sanctions/penalties, including, but not limited to, removal from campus, suspension of operations, social event restrictions, or block seating revocation.

A third-party who is found responsible for hazing may be removed from campus and barred from returning.

An individual may not avoid hazing charges or sanctions by arguing that the hazing victim consented, whether express or implied, to the conduct. In short, a person cannot consent to being hazed.

If an individual or organization is found responsible for violating this Policy and a criminal or civil proceeding relating to the conduct arrives at an alternative conclusion, the College's finding will not be subject to change.

Making an intentionally false accusation of hazing is prohibited. Any member of the campus community who is found to have engaged in this conduct will be subject to penalties and sanctions up to and including termination from employment or suspension/expulsion.

Prohibition on Retaliation

It is a violation of this Policy for a member of the campus community to retaliate against another individual who has made a good faith report of hazing.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of the campus community, which includes faculty and staff, contractors, residents, students, advisors, visitors, alumni, and guests.

DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

As required by Section 22 of the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 (Public Law 101-226) and in recognition of this institution's responsibility to serve as a beneficial influence on its students, its employees, and the community at large, Lawson State Community College is designated as a drug and alcohol-free campus and will comply with all the provisions of Public Law 101-226:

1. Lawson State Community College prohibits the unlawful or unauthorized manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, use or sale of alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, and illegal drugs on campus. The impairment by alcohol or drugs of any student or employee while participating in the academic or workplace setting is also prohibited. Lawson State Community College employees, students and visitors are required to abide by all federal and state laws, local ordinances, and other related state and federal requirements regarding the consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages, controlled substances and illegal drugs.
2. Lawson State Community College has contracted with E-Verify Services to provide individual education to students, faculty and staff concerning drug and alcohol education and prevention of abuse. The Human Resources Department also provides periodic group programs that have been designed to respond to the needs and empower the wellness of all members of the college community. The program includes a continuum of activities and services, which can be categorized into the three areas listed below:
 - a. Prevention/Education-increase awareness, knowledge, skills, and practice of healthier alcohol and other drug choices.
 - b. Policy and Procedures-review and revise college policies and procedures regarding alcohol and other drug (AOD) use and abuse, to ensure fair and consistent implementation, supportive of the mission of the college as well as federal, state and local guidelines
3. Drug and alcohol education and abuse prevention training can be found at

<http://el.lawroom.com/SHIB/jssc>. Campus Police will provide training upon request.

4. Resources

A. The following is a list of drug, alcohol and mental health resources for students:

1. Jefferson County

- a. Addiction Research Foundation
Address: 4126 Autumn Ln, Birmingham, AL 3524
Phone: (205) 970-4110
- b. Alcohol & Drug Abuse Treatment
Address: 601 Princeton Ave SW, Birmingham, AL 35211
Phone: (205) 785-5787
- c. Alethia House
Address: 201 Finley Ave W, 201 Finley Ave W, Birmingham, AL 35204
Phone: (205) 324-6502
- d. Birmingham Get Clean Addiction Center
Address: 3315 Vicksburg Dr, Birmingham, AL 35213
Phone: (205) 255-3975
- e. Pearson Hall
Address: 2701 Jefferson Avenue SW
Birmingham, AL 35211
Phone 923-6552
- f. Olivia's House
8017 2nd Avenue S
Birmingham, AL 35206
Phone: (205) 833-5708

2. Shelby County

- a. Shelby Alabaster AFG
Address: 10903 Highway 119, Alabaster, AL
Phone: (757) 563-1600
- b. Bradford Health Services
Address: 101 Aviators View Drive, Alabaster, AL 35007
Phone: (205) 621-4429
- c. Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center Address: 54 Kelly Ln, Columbiana, AL 35051
Phone: (205) 669-3835
- d. Shelby County Treatment Center
Address: 750 US-31, Alabaster, AL 35007
Phone: (205) 216-0200

3. St. Clair County Resources

- a. Breaking the Chains
Address: 4206 Cogswell Ave (rear building), Pell City, AL
Phone: (800) 230-5109

- b. Bridge Outpatient Counseling
Address: 795 10th St, Ashville, AL 35953
Phone: (205) 594-3111
 - c. Freedom AFG
Address: 1508 Bunt Drive, Pell City, AL
Phone: (757) 563-1600
 - d. Pathway to Joy AFG
Address: 2200 3rd Avenue N., Room 206, Pell City, AL
Phone: (757) 563-1600
4. Chilton County Resources
- a. Chilton County Treatment Center
Address: 2100 Holiday Inn Dr, Clanton, AL 35046
Phone: (205) 755-4300
 - b. Turning Point Foundation
Address: 1881 County Road 627, Thorsby, AL 35171
Phone: (205) 646-3650

Students that need more information concerning drug, alcohol or mental health counseling may contact enrollment services at any campus.

Student Possession, Use and Sale of Alcoholic Beverages

Lawson State Community College promotes a drug-free campus. The college has a vital interest in maintaining a safe, healthy, and productive work and academic environment for its employees, students, and the public. As such, Lawson State Community College complies with the federal Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, the Drug Free Schools and Campuses Regulations, the Drug Free Workplace Act, the Controlled Substances Act, the drug regulations mandated by the federal highway administration of the US Department of Transportation, and other applicable federal state and local laws and regulations. Lawson State Community College prohibits the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, use and/or sale of any controlled substance, including illicit drugs, marijuana, of any kind or any amount.

Employee's that violate this policy are subject to the following disciplinary action upon completion of due process hearings:

- Probation
- Suspension from college
- Expulsion from college
- Criminal Prosecution
- Ban from college property
- Recognized Student Organizations

Employee Possession, Use of Alcohol and Drugs at Lawson State Community College

Lawson State Community College promotes a drug-free campus. The college has a vital interest in maintaining a safe, healthy, and productive work and academic environment for its employees, students, and the public. As such, Lawson State Community College complies with the federal Drug

Free Schools and Communities Act, the Drug Free Schools and Campuses Regulations, the Drug Free Workplace Act, the Controlled Substances Act, the drug regulations mandated by the federal highway administration of the US Department of Transportation, and other applicable federal state and local laws and regulations. Lawson State Community College prohibits the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, use and/or sale of any controlled substance, including illicit drugs, marijuana, of any kind or any amount.

Employee's that violate this policy are subject to the following disciplinary action upon completion of due process hearings:

- Probation
- Suspension
- Termination of employment
- Criminal Prosecution
- Ban from college property

Federal Drug Offenses and Penalties

Possession of Controlled Substances: Federal drug possession penalties generally consider only the drug violation history of the offender. With one exception (when the possession is for personal use for which a civil penalty up to \$10,000 may be imposed if first offense), federal penalties for a person convicted of possession of any type or amount of a controlled substance can be:

- up to one year in prison and a minimum fine of \$1,000 for a first offense;
- a minimum of 15 days and a maximum of two years in prison and a minimum fine of \$2,500 for a second drug offense; and
- a minimum of three months and a maximum of three years in prison and a minimum fine of \$5,000 for a third drug offense.

Persons convicted of possession of certain amounts of a mixture or substance containing cocaine base such as crack cocaine face much stiffer penalties under mandatory minimum sentencing, including at least five years in prison, not to exceed 20 years and fined a minimum of \$1,000 or both, if:

- a) first conviction and the amount of crack possessed exceeds five grams;
- b) second crack conviction and the amount of crack possessed exceeds three grams; or
- c) third or subsequent crack conviction and the amount of crack possessed exceeds one gram (21 U.S.C. 844(a)).

Federal Drug Trafficking: Federal drug trafficking penalties consider the type and amount of the drug involved, the offender's drug violation history, and other factors. The US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) maintains a list of penalties for federal trafficking offenses, a copy of which is incorporated below. Generally, for each drug, there is a threshold amount that brings the offender under the mandatory minimum sentencing structure. When death or serious bodily injury results from use of the drugs, first time offenders are subject to a sentence of 20 years to life, and repeat offenders are subject to a mandatory life sentence. A first offense of distributing to persons under age 21 may be punishable by twice the maximum sentence, and three times for second offenses (21 U.S.C. §859). If the trafficking is on premises in which a person under age 18 is present or resides, an additional penalty up to 20 years imprisonment may be imposed (21 U.S.C. § 860a). Persons convicted of trafficking within 1,000 feet of a school or college face penalties twice as high as the

maximum penalties, with a mandatory one-year prison sentence for first offenses, and three times as high for second offenses (21 U.S.C. § 860).

Drug Paraphernalia: Any person who sells, offers to sell, transports, exports or imports drug paraphernalia is subject to three years imprisonment (21 U.S.C. § 863).

Other Penalties: A federal drug conviction may result in the loss of federal benefits, including school loans, grants, scholarships, contracts, and professional and commercial licenses for up to one year for a first offense and up to five years for subsequent offenses (21 U.S.C. § 862). Federal drug trafficking convictions may result in denial of federal benefits for up to five years for a first conviction; possession convictions may result in denial of federal benefits for up to one year for a first conviction and up to five years for subsequent convictions (21 U.S.C. § 862). In addition, for crimes punishable by more than one year in prison, the person will forfeit personal or real property related to the violation, including houses, cars, and other personal belongings (21 U.S.C. § 853 (a)(2) & 881(a)(7)), or vehicles, boats, or other conveyance used to transport or conceal controlled substances (21 U.S.C. § 881(a)(4)). Finally, persons convicted are ineligible to receive or purchase a firearm (18 U.S.C. 922(g)).

SMOKE-FREE AND TOBACCO-FREE CAMPUS

The Lawson State Community College Smoke-Free and Tobacco-Free Policy provides for a healthy working and learning environment by eliminating second-hand smoke and provides an environment that encourages people to explore health-related behaviors.

The Smoke-Free and Tobacco-Free Policy, effective April 15, 2013, prohibits all forms of tobacco or similar products outside of designated areas on the grounds and facilities under the jurisdiction of Lawson State Community College. It further prohibits smoking in any vehicle outside of the same designated areas. This supports Alabama Board of Education policy 514.01 (Use of Tobacco Products).

Furthermore, no person or company shall offer any tobacco products for free or of low cost, nor shall any party distribute coupons, coupon offers, gift certificates, gift cards, rebate offers or other similar offers for tobacco or nicotine products on campus property. No tobacco or nicotine samples shall be distributed at Lawson State Community College at any time. This policy applies to all students, faculty, staff and visitors on the properties of Lawson State Community College.

All visitors, employees, and students at Lawson State Community College are prohibited from the use of tobacco, in any form, in all indoor areas and public areas on campus. Smoking is inhaling, exhaling, burning or carrying any lighted or heated cigar, cigarette or pipe or any other lighted or heated tobacco or plant product intended for inhalation, in any manner or in any form. Indoor and public areas include, but are not limited to, restrooms, all campus buildings and college owned housing, private offices, vestibules, entrances, exits, stairwells and college-owned vehicles. Tobacco use is limited to the designated smoking areas. Receptacles are provided for the proper disposal of cigarettes.

Designated Smoking Areas

- Birmingham West Campus:
 - a. the perimeter of the parking lot northeast of The Arthur Shores Fine Arts Building
 - b. the eastern perimeter of the main parking lot, outside Kennedy Student Center
- Birmingham East Campus:
 - a. the northern perimeter of the One-Stop Career Center parking lot
 - b. the eastern end of the Facilities and Planning parking lot
 - c. the eastern perimeter of the A.G. Gaston Building parking lot
- Bessemer Campus:
 - a. the western perimeter of the Diesel Mechanics building parking lot
 - b. the northeastern perimeter of the Millsap Industrial Training Center parking lot
 - c. the western perimeter of the Student Center parking lot
 - d. the eastern perimeter of the North Campus parking lot

Cessation and Education Programs

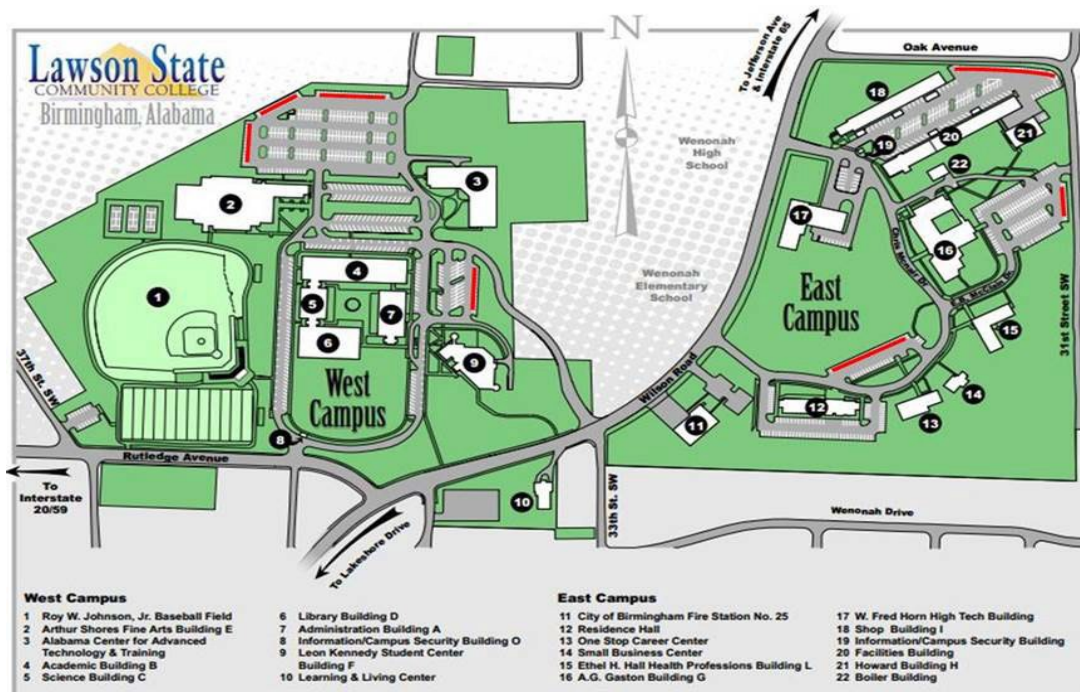
Students, faculty and staff can receive information and individual counseling in smoking education and cessation through the Alabama Department of Public Health by visiting the website: <https://quitnowalabama.com/>

Fines

While education and smoking cessation programs are the preferred interventions, violators may be subject to fines and disciplinary actions as identified in the Lawson State Community College Code of Conduct. Those smoking in inappropriate areas of campus will be directed to dispose of their cigarettes in the appropriate receptacles provided within each smoking area. Disciplinary measures are reserved for repeat infractions and infractions that interfere with the College's academic or workplace needs or responsibilities.

Anyone noticing an individual who is smoking in a non-smoking area may inform the subject(s) of the Smoke-Free and Tobacco-Free Policy and refer them to one of the designated smoking areas, or contact the College Police at (205) 925-3587 (BHM) or (205) 426-3654 (BESS).

Designated Smoking Areas



NO TRESPASS POLICY AND APPEALS PROCESS

Lawson State Community College is a public institution of higher education that is open to the general public. However, the College retains the right to restrict access to College property and College-sanctioned activities due to safety considerations relating to its students, faculty, staff and visitors. This policy describes the circumstances under which access to or presence on College property or at College-sanctioned activities or events may be restricted and the procedures for issuing a No Trespass Notice.

When it is determined that an individual presents an ongoing threat to the College, the College may issue a No Trespass Notice restricting that person from any property owned or controlled by the College.

Consistent with their responsibility to ensure that College property remains safe, all Police Officers are authorized to issue a No Trespass Notice to anyone under the following circumstances:

- An individual has committed a crime;
- An individual has violated a College policy or procedure;
- An individual is engaged in threatening or disruptive behavior;
- An individual is found in a location at a time or under circumstances that causes concern for the safety of persons and/or property on campus;
- An individual is the subject of an existing Protection Order or Restraining Order;
- Following a request from a College administrator or other member of the College community where, after review by the Chief of Safety & Security, the request is deemed to be warranted.

A No Trespass Notice advises a person that he/she is not authorized to be on College property, or any portion thereof, or at a College-sanctioned event or activity and may be subject to arrest without further warning if he or she refuses to leave the property or returns at any time in the future. **No Trespass Notices are permanent and remain in full force and effect unless revoked by the appeal process.**

Appeals Process

A person who has been issued a No Trespass Notice may appeal the decision to the Chief of Safety & Security. The appeal process is not applicable to any criminal charge(s), which are resolved through the appropriate court system.

- I. The Notice must be appealed in writing to the Chief of Safety & Security. Appeals should be mailed to:

Chief of Safety & Security Lawson
State Community College 3060
Wilson Road, SW Birmingham,
AL 35221

Appeals should include:

- A. Appellant's contact information, including address, telephone number and email.
 - B. Date of issuance of the Notice and location.
 - C. Reason for being on College property at the time of the incident.
 - D. Future need to be on College property.
 - E. Any other information to be considered to demonstrate that his/her presence on Campus or at College-sanctioned activities will not be disruptive or a threat.
 - F. Whether a hearing is requested.
- II. Upon receipt of an appeal, the Chief of Safety & Security will gather all appropriate information and forward all documents and information to the appropriate supervisor (Dean of Students) for review.
- III. Whether to hold a hearing is within the Dean's discretion. In the event that a hearing is held, a committee designated by the Dean of Students, will conduct a hearing within 3 days for an enrolled student or current employee and within 10 days for a non-enrolled student or civilian. If a hearing is held, the appellant will be given an opportunity to present or dispute relevant information. Appellants should report to the Safety and Security office to be escorted to the hearing.
- IV. The appointed committee will sustain, rescind, or modify the No Trespass Notice in a written decision that will be mailed to the address provided in the written appeal.
- V. If an appeal is filed, the restrictions set forth in the No Trespass Notice will remain in effect until the appeal process is completed. If the No Trespass Notice is sustained and the subject of the Notice returns to a restricted area, he or she will be subject to arrest.
- VI. If, after following the procedure outlined above, the individual does not agree with the committee's decision, he/she may appeal directly to the President of the College. This appeal to the President must be in writing, must set forth the reason(s) for the appeal, and must be submitted within (3) days of receipt of notice by the Committee.
- VII. The decision of the President is final. The President may approve, overturn, or amend the prior decisions(s). The President shall notify all parties, in writing, of the decision(s) rendered.

CAMPUS SECURITY

Emergency Contact Numbers:

205-925-3587 (Birmingham Campus) or 205-426-3654 (Bessemer Campus)

Please click on the link below to view policies:

https://www.lawsonstate.edu/campus_life/student_safety/default.aspx

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

It is the policy of Lawson State Community College to reasonably accommodate current employees and qualified individuals with disabilities. Lawson State Community College to not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application of procedures, hiring, advancement, employment separation, salary, or any other conditions of employment.

Current employees who pose a direct threat to the health or safety of the other individuals in the workplace will be placed on appropriate leave until a decision has been made in regard to the employee's immediate employment situation to include the determination of an accommodation than can reasonably be made.

Definitions

As used in this policy, the following terms will be adhered to in relation to the ADA policy.

“Disability” means a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of the individual; a record of such an impairment; or being regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating and working.

“Qualified individual” means an individual who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the position.

“Reasonable accommodation” may include making existing facilities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, job restructuring, part-time or modified work schedules, reassignment to a vacant position, acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, appropriate adjustment or modifications of examinations, training materials or policies, the provision of qualified readers or interpreters, and other similar accommodations for individuals with disabilities.

“Essential functions of the job” refers to those job activities that are determined by the College to be essential or core to performing the job; these functions cannot be modified.

Confidentiality

Information about an employee's documented disability will be kept in a file separate from the personnel file in HR. This file will be kept confidential to the extent practicable and will only be shared with individuals within the College on an as-needed basis.

Employee Accommodations Procedure

Employees should notify their immediate supervisor of their need for accommodations by submitting a completed *Request for Accommodations Form*. Some requests may require documentation from a physician and should include:

- the nature of the impairment/disability;
- its severity;
- the duration;
- the activities limited by the impairment(s)/disability;
- the extent to which the impairment(s)/disability limits the employee's ability to perform the essential duties/functions of the job, and;
- recommendations for the reasonable accommodation

If the accommodations request is not addressed at the supervisory level the employee may request a meeting with the Director of Human Resources.

The College may require further testing or evaluation by qualified professionals to verify or further establish the impairment/disability and the need for accommodation. The Human Resources Director and the Vice President of the respective area or designee will determine when/if a physician's statement is required.

1. **Documentation of Disability:** When submitting a Request for Disability Accommodation Form, the employee must provide documentation of the disability from an appropriate health care provider, unless otherwise approved. The employee will be required to sign a Medical/Health Care Information Release Form, so that the health care provider can provide the College with the appropriate documentation.

Upon request, the department chair, supervisor, or Human Resources Staff will provide a written description of the essential functions of the job, which may include the mental and physical demands of the employee's job.

It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that the medical documentation/information requested is provided.

2. **Temporary Accommodations:** After consultation with the employee, department chair, supervisor and/or Vice President, temporary accommodation may be provided pending receipt and evaluation of the documentation of the disability.
3. **Evaluation of Documentation:** Upon receipt of documentation from an employee's health care provider, a determination will be made as to whether the employee has a disability as defined by the ADA, and if the employee can perform the essential functions of the position, with or without reasonable accommodation.
4. **Final Determination and Notification to Employee:** The College has the authority to make the final determination regarding what accommodation, if any, is appropriate. When a final determination is made, the Director of Human Resources will send

written notification to the employee of the determination to include what accommodation, if any, has been granted. Notification will also be given to the department chair, supervisor and/or Dean.

5. **Right to Appeal:** If an accommodation is denied, the employee may submit a notice of appeal to the Human Resources Office within seven (7) working days of receipt of the written accommodation decision.

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT

It is the policy of Lawson State Community College to comply with the applicable provisions of the *Fair Labor Standards Act*.

Information regarding the Fair Labor Standards Act may be viewed at:

<https://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/hrg.htm>

THE FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

It is the policy of Lawson State Community College to comply with the applicable provisions of the *Family Medical Leave Act*. LSCC's FMLA leave year is September 1-August 31.

The FMLA entitles eligible employees of covered employers to take unpaid, job-protected leave for specified family and medical reasons with continuation of group health insurance coverage under the same terms and conditions as if the employee had not taken leave.

Eligible employees are entitled to:

1. Twelve workweeks of leave in a 12-month period for:
 - the birth of a child and to care for the newborn child within one year of birth;
 - the placement with the employee of a child for adoption or foster care and to care for the newly placed child within one year of placement;
 - to care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition;
 - a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his or her job;
 - any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a covered military member on "covered active duty;" **or**
2. Twenty-six workweeks of leave during a single 12-month period to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the eligible employee is the service member's spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin (military caregiver leave).

Procedures for requesting FMLA

Lawson State Community College requires eligible employees to follow the steps listed below to request approval of FMLA leave:

1. Complete a “request for leave form” which can be obtained from Human Resources Office.
2. Submit the leave request form to your immediate supervisor and/or the Human Resources Department at least 30 days in advance of the leave start date when practicable. Otherwise, the form should be submitted as soon as the employee becomes aware of the need for leave.
 - a. Receive notification of eligibility from the Human Resources Office
3. Provide certification from medical provider, if required. A note from the medical provider may be acceptable in some instances.
4. Submit appropriate leave on the Leave Report via the Banner Employee Self-Service portal.

Supervisors are required to contact the Office of Human Resources when an employee requests FMLA leave, or is absent from work for five (5) or more days due to an FMLA qualifying reason.

The College reserves the right to designate leave as FMLA if there is sufficient information to show that the leave is covered under the Family Medical Leave Act. The College will provide the employee with a designation notice within 5 days of receiving notice of the employee’s need for leave if leave is designated as FMLA.

Additional information regarding FMLA may be viewed at:

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla>

LACTATION POLICY

Purpose

Lawson State Community College is committed to supporting nursing individuals by providing a private, safe, and hygienic space for breastfeeding or expressing milk. In compliance with federal and state laws, the College ensures accommodations for nursing parents who wish to express breast milk during their time on campus.

Policy Statement

Lactating students and employees are entitled to reasonable break periods and access to private lactation facilities to express milk during the day.

Lactation Room Locations

- **Birmingham Campus:** First Floor, B Building
- **Bessemer Campus:** A Building

These Lactation PODs are equipped to offer privacy, comfort, and a clean environment for milk expression.

Access Procedures

- **Students** should contact **Counseling Services** to schedule access to a Lactation POD.
- **Employees** should contact the **Office of Human Resources** to arrange usage times.

Use Guidelines

- Use of the Lactation PODs is available during normal campus operating hours.
- Users are expected to maintain the cleanliness of the space after use.
- Personal belongings should not be left in the Lactation PODs.
- The rooms are not for general use or other purposes outside of lactation support.

Contact Information

- **Counseling Services:** 205-929-2113/counseling@lawsonstate.edu
- **Office of Human Resources:** 205-929-3408/humanresources@lawsonstate.edu

Lawson State Community College is proud to support its nursing students and employees and will continue to foster a campus environment that values health and family.

TRAVEL POLICY

Lawson State Community College adheres to the Alabama Laws relating to travel guidelines for employees traveling on college related business.

TRAVEL GUIDELINES

All travel on behalf of the College must have prior approval by the President of the College. Approval to travel must be obtained by preparing a Travel Request Form with all pertinent information regarding reason for travel and estimated costs. The Travel Request is submitted to the President with a completed requisition for the total of all reimbursable cost. The requisition and Travel Request Form must be submitted to the President through the same signature process for all requisitions. Once the Travel Request Form and requisition has been approved, the employee may proceed to travel.

State Board Policy allows the College to prepay some travel costs such as hotel expense and registration fee, if an invoice can be obtained from the vendor. The College does not prepay or provide advanced payments to employees, and these invoices should be submitted under separate

requisitions.

In-State travel expenses incurred outside of the College area is reimbursed based on the allowable per diem rate in effect from time to time (See per diem rate).

Travel costs incurred from use of private automobiles will be reimbursed at the existing mileage rate in effect from time to time. The State Legislature provides the mileage for using personal automobiles and will reimburse based on Federal guideline.

A statement of official In-State travel must be completed upon return to the College for full reimbursement of travel expenses. The Statement of official In-State travel must be submitted to the President's Office for signature and notarized before being forwarded to the Business Affairs Office for payment.

Out-of-State Travel Request should be submitted in the same manner as the travel request for In-State travel. Out-of-State travel should be submitted for the President's approval at least four (4) weeks in advance of travel time.

Out-of-State travel expenses are reimbursed based on actual costs incurred and paid. An employee must submit an expense reimbursement form with required receipts attached for all claims for reimbursement. An expense reimbursement form must be submitted to the President's Office for signature and be notarized before being forwarded to the Business Office for payment. For meal reimbursement, the daily cap on meals as established by the State of Alabama Comptroller shall be presumed to be necessary and reasonable. To determine the daily meal cap, enter the city and state of your destination as instructed at this link:

<https://comptroller.alabama.gov/>

The individual meal caps are provided, but the "M&IE Total" is your daily cap. This total cap includes all taxes and tips associated with your meals. If a meal is provided by a conference or other host, the dollar amount of that individual meal shall be deducted from your daily cap. A daily meal cost that exceeds the total daily cap limit will not be reimbursed without written justification by the traveler that explains why the cost is necessary and reasonable, and is approved by the president of the institution. This documentation must be retained with the travel reimbursement request. A copy of the meal cap calculation must also be submitted with each travel and reimbursement request.

Single-Day Travel

No travel allowance shall be paid for a trip of less than six hours' duration. For single-day travel, the traveler shall be paid a meal allowance of \$12.75 (15% of the regular per diem rate of \$85.00) for a trip of six to twelve hours' duration. For travel in excess of twelve hours' duration, the traveler shall be paid \$34.00, which represents one meal allowance and one-fourth of the per diem allowance. In the event the meeting, including travel, can reasonably be attended in a singular workday, then overnight travel will not be allowable without prior written approval from the division director and agency head.

Overnight Travel

Except as otherwise stated herein, the maximum reimbursable amount will be limited to the current

per diem rates for the traveler's destination, as established by the United State General Services Administration, to include the maximum daily lodging rates. The most current per diem rates for Alabama can be found at this website: www.gsa.gov. Travelers should request the current government lodging rate for non-conference related travel when reserving lodging. A traveler may stay at the hotel that is hosting a conference or event for which the travel occurred and should obtain the government or conference lodging rate. A traveler may choose a less expensive hotel, provided travel to and from would not substantially increase transportation costs. Incurring lodging costs that exceed the government or conference rate must be justified in writing and approved by the agency head prior to travel.

In the absence of a hotel receipt, the employee may seek in-state per diem at the current approved rate of \$85 per day for one-night, two-day travel and \$100 per day for trips longer than one-night, two-day travel.

DRESS CODE

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish basic guidelines for appropriate work dress which will promote a positive image of the institution and give due consideration to safety and sound business practice.

Grooming

- Personnel shall be neatly groomed and dressed for their respective program area.
- Each employee shall exercise daily hygiene practices conducive to a social environment.
- Hairstyles shall be clean, and neatly groomed and shall not distract from the learning environment nor be a safety factor for any of the school's curricular offerings.

Attire

- Employee attire will be based on industrial guidelines and professional standards. The nature of each position may influence the attire for work. All personnel are expected to dress in a manner to distinguish themselves as role models while performing college duties.
- Suitable attire is required on campus at all times and also off campus when representing the college.
- Employee attire should be consistent with the safety and environmental conditions in the institutional workplace.
- All faculty members shall dress appropriately for their respective discipline.
- All office personnel shall dress appropriately for the business environment. The attire is considered "business casual."
- Employees who are assigned uniforms should wear their uniforms at all times during work hours.
- Student workers must follow the dress code policy for faculty, staff, and administration.
- Employees should use professional judgment with regards to the length of dresses and skirts worn on campus and while representing the college.
- Shirts should always be fitting within the standards of dignity for a business and educational setting.

- Use of offensive, obscene, or abusive words or symbols on clothing is not permitted.
- Tank tops, halter tops, tube tops, or other garments shall only be worn as part of professional attire (underneath jackets, sweaters, shirts, etc.).
- Footwear must follow the regular safety guidelines of the employee's position.
- Shorts, t-shirts, coveralls ball caps, sweat pants/shirts, spandex or exercise clothing, jogging suits, flip flops, worn, tattered, cut-off ripped clothing are not acceptable attire in the workplace. This list is not all-inclusive but is meant to represent the types of apparel considered inappropriate.

Spirit Days

- The purpose of designated "Spirit" days on Lawson State Community College campuses is to cultivate and nurture teamwork and unity among the staff and faculty. "Spirit" days will be implemented by the President and Vice President.
- Any recognized group on campus can make a request to the appropriate VP for an approved spirit day.

No dress code can cover all contingencies so employees must exert a certain amount of judgment in their choice of clothing to wear to work. If you experience uncertainty about acceptable, professional business casual attire for work, please ask your supervisor.

Standard Operating Procedure for Non-Compliance with above Dress Code Policy

Discipline

WARNING (1ST Offense): If clothing fails to meet the above standards as determined by the employee's supervisor, the employee will be asked not to wear the inappropriate item to work again.

WRITE-UP (2nd Offense): If the problem persists, the employee may be sent home to change clothes and will receive an official write up that will become a part of his/her personnel file. LSCC leave policies regarding personal time use will apply if employee must be sent home to change clothing.

SUBSEQUENT Offenses: Progressive disciplinary action as outline in LSCC's Progressive Discipline Policy will be applied if dress code violations continue.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All LSCC employees are subject to disciplinary action by the College, including official oral or written communications requesting a call for corrective action. This action may be imposed as a warning, suspension with or without pay, and/or dismissal, for misconduct occurring on any property owned or controlled by the College or off campus at any function which is authorized, sponsored, or conducted by the College, or in which Lawson State is participating. An employee may be terminated for the commission of, or conviction of a felony or of a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, regardless of whether or not the offense occurred at the College or at a College event, if the nature of the offense is such that it brings or has a tendency to bring disrepute to the College, or if the nature of the offense is such that it results in the imprisonment of the employee, or if the nature of the

offense is such that it can be reasonably construed to relate to the ability or the likelihood of the respective employee to properly carry out his/her official duties. For example, if a college financial officer commits or is convicted of a securities fraud charge (even if the charge had nothing to do with the College's business), it could be reasonably interpreted that the nature of the offense is such that it has a bearing on the employee's ability and/or likelihood to properly carry out his/her duties as a college financial officer.

Conduct that shall be defined as misconduct for which disciplinary action may be taken shall include, but not be limited to, the commission of or the attempt to commit any of the following offenses:

1. Any form of dishonesty (i.e., theft, embezzlement, misappropriation of College funds or property, cheating, plagiarism, fraud, misrepresentation, or furnishing false information to the College or any educational or governmental institution or agency on behalf of the College).
2. Any form of forgery, alteration, destruction, or misuse of any College document, record, or identification.
3. Intoxication, or the display, possession, sale, or use of an alcoholic beverage or any non-prescribed controlled substance or illicit drug, to include marijuana plant or part of a marijuana plant, on any area of the College campus, at any College function, or elsewhere if it brings or has a tendency to bring disrespect to the College.
4. Use, possession, or distribution of firearms, ammunition, any other weapon, fireworks, or any combustible or explosive device or material on any area of the College campus, any College function, or elsewhere if it brings or has a tendency to bring disrespect to the College.
5. Disorderly or disruptive conduct including rioting, inciting to riot, assembling to riot, raiding, inciting to raid, or assembling to raid College property. This offense also includes intentional damage to College property or the private property of another person, as well as physical or verbal damage or abuse to another person. It also includes any threat of violence toward any other person or any property of the College or of other persons.
6. Lewd, indecent, obscene, or unduly offensive behavior or expression, including an oral, written or symbolic expression that would be offensive to a reasonably sensitive person.
7. Unauthorized entry to or use of a College facility or College equipment.
8. Insubordination toward a supervisory College official.
9. Failure to perform assigned duties and responsibilities.
10. Violation of any State or Federal law, any local or county ordinance, on any policy, rule or regulation of the State Board or Lawson State Community College.
11. Violation of any provision of the employee's employment contract.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Employees are not authorized to create Social Media sites using Lawson's name without the express permission of Lawson State. For more information, contact the Director of Public Relations at 205-929-6303 or in-person at Building M. Employees can be subject to disciplinary actions up to and including termination if engaged in social networking behavior that negatively impacts the reputation or mission of the college or violates or promotes crime or has implications of federal or state laws.

MEDIA CONTACT

It is the policy of Lawson State Community College that requests for media interviews are coordinated through the Public Relations Department in coordination with the President or his/her designee.

In the event a Lawson State Community College employee is contacted by the media, i.e. newspaper, radio, television, etc. in reference to Lawson State Community College, or any issue related to the College or one's employment, refer them to the Director of Public Relations, at 205-929-6303 (office), 205-789-5211 (cell phone) or gtowns@lawsonstate.edu (email). The Director will in turn clarify and confirm the nature of the request and make the necessary referral to the President or his designee.

OPEN RECORDS REQUEST POLICY

Effective October 1, 2024, Lawson State Community College shall provide copies of public records that are received or created in the normal course of the institution's business operations when requested under Alabama's Open Records Act found at Alabama Code 36-12-40, unless exempted from disclosure. Records and document content that are exempted from disclosure include:

- Information received by a public officer or public official in confidence;
- Information which contains sensitive personnel records;
- Pending criminal investigations
- Information received in anticipation of litigation or likely litigation;
- Records which, if released, would be detrimental to the best interests of the public; and
- Other statutorily exempted records; and
- Records and information protected under the attorney-client privilege.

PROCEDURE

Effective October 1, 2024, every ACCS entity shall task at least one employee with responding to public records requests and designate them as the ACCS entity's public officer for purposes of complying with Alabama Code 36-12-40 through 46. This public officer may be designated as a public records clerk or assistant, public records officer, public records specialist, or public records coordinator, depending on other tasks assigned and agreed by the ACCS System Office, or they may continue with their current title as long as their job description is updated to reflect this public officer task. Effective October 1, 2024, every ACCS entity shall adopt this written procedure (or a substantially similar procedure in accordance with Alabama Code 36-12-40 through 46) and post the written procedure on the ACCS entity's website, along with the Open Records Form (which template shall be provided by the Chancellor's Office).

COLLEGE PROCEDURE FOR OPEN RECORD REQUESTS

The Director of Public Relations and Community Affairs is designated as the Public Records Officer for Lawson State Community College. This procedure for Open Record Requests shall be posted on our

College's website. The Open Records Request Form, with instructions, shall also be posted on our website. We have no obligation under the law to respond to a public records request that is not made in accordance with these written procedures and instructions.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS:

Any Alabama resident desiring to inspect or take a copy of a public record shall submit a public records request on the Open Records Request Form. Once complete, this Open Records Request Form must be submitted to the public officer, either by: • hand-delivery addressed to the public officer above at the address provided; or • mailing addressed to the public officer above at the address provided; or • emailing to the public officer at the address provided. Receipt of a hand-delivered, mailed, or emailed public records request occurs when the request is actually received by the public officer. A read email receipt, certified mail receipt, or similar signed postage receipt shall be prima facie evidence of receipt by the public officer.

GENERAL RULE:

Every Alabama resident has a right to inspect and take a copy of any public record of this state, unless exempted from disclosure under law or unless he/she fails to follow these procedures/instructions.

EXEMPT FROM DISCLOSURE:

Public records and document content that are exempt from disclosure under the law, include but are not limited to: • Information received by a public officer or public official in confidence; • Information which contains sensitive personnel records; • Pending criminal investigations; • Information received in anticipation of litigation or likely litigation; • Records which, if released, would be detrimental to the best interests of the public; • Other statutorily exempted records (FERPA is example). • Records and information protected under the attorney-client privilege; and • Records subject to legal discovery methods provided under applicable rules of court procedure, from any party to a pending or threatened action, suit, or proceeding (see Alabama Code 36-12-46); • Registration and circulation records from any ACCS college and information concerning the use of any ACCS college library. But, any parent of a minor child (student below the age of 19) shall have the right to inspect (but not take a copy) the registration and circulation records of any college or college library that pertain to his or her child. • Records concerning security plans, procedures, assessments, measures, or systems, and any other records relating to or having an impact upon the security or safety of persons, structures, facilities, or other infrastructures, including without limitation information concerning critical infrastructure defined at 42 U.S.C. § 5195c (e) and critical energy infrastructure information, defined at 18 C.F.R. § 3S8.113(c), the public disclosure of which could reasonably be expected to be detrimental to the public safety or welfare.

DEFINITIONS:

ALABAMA RESIDENT is defined as: An individual who is permanently domiciled in Alabama with an expectation to remain in Alabama as demonstrated by reasonable proof of residency such as but not limited to an Alabama driver license or voter registration.

STANDARD REQUEST is defined as: A public records request that seeks one or more specifically and discretely identified public records that the public officer determines would take less than eight hours of staff time to process considering the time needed to identify and retrieve any responsive records and to redact or take other measures to withhold legally protected information. A standard request should require no or minimal clarification by the requester.

SUBSTANTIVE RESPONSE is defined as: A response to a public records request that sets forth the public officer's ultimate position on the substance of the request. The term includes, but is not limited to, the following, in whole or in part: a. A statement that the public records are provided as attached or enclosed. b. A statement that access to the requested public records will be provided at a set time, place, and location during regular business hours or at a time, place, during regular business hours or at a time, place, and location mutually agreeable to the public officer and the requester. c. A statement that the public officer is

prepared to provide the requested public records to the requester upon payment of a reasonable, specified fee. d. A statement that denies the request with reasons stated therefor. e. A statement that denies the request on the grounds that the requested public record does not exist within the government agency. f. A statement that denies the request for failure to substantially complete a standard request form. g. A statement that denies the request for failure to substantially comply with the written procedures established by the public officer for such request. h. A statement that denies the request because the records sought are not public or exempted or not subject to disclosure.

TIME-INTENSIVE REQUEST is defined as: A public records request that the public officer determines would take more than eight hours of staff time to process considering the time needed to identify and retrieve any responsive records and any time needed to redact or take other measures to withhold legally protected information.

RESPONDING TO STANDARD REQUEST

For a standard request, the public officer, or his/her designee, shall: (1) acknowledge a proper request by email or address to the requestor within 10 business days of receiving the request and may require the requester to pay a reasonable fee set by the public officer before the requester may receive any public records, if any. If the public officer elects to charge a fee, the public officer shall notify the requester of the estimated fee and withhold any public records until receipt of payment; and then (2) provide a substantive response either fulfilling or denying a proper request within 15 business days of acknowledging receipt. The public officer may extend this period in 15 business-day increments upon written notice to the requester, but the public officer should process a standard request as expeditiously as possible considering the requester's time constraints, the public officer's workload, and the nature of the request. There shall be a rebuttable presumption that a proper standard request has been denied by the public officer if (a) a substantive response is not provided to the standard request within the earlier of 30 business days or 60 calendar days following acknowledgment of receipt by the public officer; or (b) the public records are not produced within the earlier of 30 business days or 60 calendar days following the payment of the estimated fees to the public officer. There shall be no presumption that a proper standard request has been denied if (a) the public officer has responded in part; or (b) the public officer and requester have reached an agreement regarding the time or substance, or both, of the response; or (c) good faith negotiations are ongoing between the public officer and the requester; or (d) the public officer has reasonably communicated the status of the request to the requester. (Effective October 1, 2024)

RESPONDING TO TIME-INTENSIVE REQUEST

For time-intensive requests: (1) At or around the time of designating the request as time-intensive, the public officer shall make a record in a log maintained for keeping track of currently pending time-intensive requests. For each such currently pending request, the log shall identify the name of the requester, the general subject matter of the request, and the date of acknowledgment; the log shall be a confidential document that is not subject to disclosure except pursuant to proper discovery methods provided discoverable pursuant to proper discovery methods provided under applicable rules of procedure. (2) The public officer may require the requester to pay a reasonable fee set by the public officer before providing a substantive response to the requester. The public officer shall notify the requester in advance of any likely fees and shall withhold any substantive response until receipt of payment. (3) The public officer shall acknowledge the request within 10 business days of receiving the request. (4) The public officer shall notify the requester within 15 business days after acknowledging receipt that the request qualifies as a time-intensive request. At that time, the public officer shall notify the requester of any likely fees and allow the requester to withdraw the time-intensive request and submit a new request that is not a time-intensive request. If the requester elects to proceed with a time-intensive request, the public officer shall provide a substantive response fulfilling or denying the request within 45 business days after the requester elected to proceed with his or her time-intensive request. The public officer may extend this period in 45-business-day increments by notifying the requester in writing. There shall be a rebuttable presumption that a proper time-intensive request has been

denied by the public officer if: (a) A substantive response is not provided within the earlier of 180 business days or 270 calendar days following the requester's election to proceed with a time-intensive request; or (b) The records are not produced within the earlier of 180 business days or 270 calendar days following the payment of the estimated fees to the public officer. There shall be no presumption that a proper time-intensive request has been denied if (a) the public officer has responded in part; or (b) the public officer and requester have reached an agreement regarding the time or substance, or both, of the response; or (c) good faith negotiations are ongoing between the public officer and the requester; or (d) the public officer has reasonably communicated the status of the request to the requester .

REASONABLE COSTS

The College may charge reasonable costs associated with the requests, such as: • copying fees (.50 cents for the first 100 and .25 cents after 100) and/or (Effective October 1, 2024) • actual digital storage cost (disc, drive, or other similar item) and/or • actual mailing costs if not picked up by requestor, and/or • research fees (\$25 per single or individual record request) and/or • personnel cost (When staff time and other resources would impose an undue burden on the institution's financial resources or available staff time, additional charges may be assessed when the search for requested documents and/or reproduction consumed more than two hours of employee's time.) Any of these fees which are estimated must be paid in advance prior to the production of the records requested.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If a public officer responds to a request by seeking clarification or additional information to a standard request or time-intensive request, the timelines established in this section shall be tolled and shall restart once the public officer receives the requested clarification or additional information as if the requester had submitted a new request. A public officer's decision to seek clarification or additional information with respect to any particular request shall not operate as a waiver of the public officer's right to seek clarification or additional information in response to other, future requests. A request made pursuant to the Open Record Act must identify the requested public record with reasonable specificity. A public officer shall not be obligated to respond to a public records request that is vague, ambiguous, overly broad, or unreasonable in scope. A public officer shall not be required to create a new public record if the requested record does not already exist. An ACCS entity is not required to create documents, compile data, or prepare reports that have not already been created, compiled, or prepared in the normal course of business. A public officer shall not be required to respond to requests that seek information or other materials that are not public records. No ACCS entity is required to respond to oral or written questions under Alabama's Open Records laws. No ACCS entity is required to respond to requests for interviews under Alabama's Open Records laws. No original records may be removed from the ACCS entity. An ACCS entity is not required to reproduce information published or otherwise generally available to the public, such as on the institution's website or other state agency websites. The public officer, or his/her designee, will make a reasonably diligent search for the records requested. Visit the website for more information and for form(s): www.lawsonstate.edu/hr.

EMPLOYMENT

POSTING AND HIRING

It is the policy of Lawson State Community College to adhere to the posting and hiring policy (602.02) as outlined by the Chancellor and the Alabama Community College Board of Trustees.

- I. Posting: The President of each institution shall post notices for all personnel vacancies, full-time and part-time, temporary, and non-temporary, for all salary schedules, except those for President.

All vacancy notices shall be posted on the institution's website for a minimum of seven (7) days before the position is filled, and a minimum of fourteen (14) days when the vacancy is supervisory, managerial, or newly created.

- II. Notice of Vacancy: The vacancy notice shall include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - A. Job description;
 - B. Title;
 - C. Required qualifications;
 - D. Salary schedule;
 - E. Amount of Pay;
 - F. Information on where to submit an application;
 - G. Information on any deadlines for applying;
 - H. A contact telephone number for questions;
 - I. Any other relevant information.
- III. Internal Posting: Internal postings are permitted to fill a current institutional position with a current institutional employee. These notices must be posted in accordance with Section I before the position is to be filled.
- IV. Continuous Posting: For adjunct instructors, clinical instructors, tutors, and part-time, on-call, or hourly employees only, a continuous vacancy notice may be posted on the institution's website and may state "open until filled." However, if a continuous vacancy notice has not been posted at least 7 days prior to hiring, these positions must be posted in accordance with Section I.
- V. Temporary/Interim Positions: Temporary/interim positions may be selected at the discretion of the President but must be for a duration for one year or less. No extension beyond one year may be granted without the written approval of the Chancellor. Notices for temporary/interim positions must be posted in accordance with Section I.
- VI. Hiring: The President is responsible for all searches and documentation thereof and retains all hiring authority for positions at the college, except the Presidency.
- VII. Transfers or Reorganizations: Transfers or Reorganizations of existing personnel are not intended to be covered under this Policy.

APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

In accordance to Board of Trustees policy 204.01

1. The President appoints all faculty and staff at the local level.
2. The President is directed to obtain prior approval from the Chancellor for all dean-level administrators or vice-presidents whom the President intends to appoint at the institution and provide the Chancellor with the name and the curriculum vitae of all dean-level administrators or vice-presidents whom the President intends to appoint at the institution.
3. Effective July 1, 2024, any Vice-President newly hired, reorganized, or transferred to that position

at any ACCS college shall enter into an employment contract with the President in the form prescribed by the Chancellor's Office. Vice-Presidents cannot achieve or maintain non-probationary/tenure status under the Students First Act. Their employment will be governed solely by the terms of the contract.

4. Effective July 1, 2024, any executive and administrative management personnel including but not limited to a Dean, Assistant or Associate Dean, Executive Director, Director, Deputy, or Chief hired by an ACCS college on or after July 1, 2024 (including by reorganizations or transfers) shall be employed on a contract basis in the form prescribed by the Chancellor in the accompanying procedures. Their employment will be governed solely by the terms of the contract.

Posting and Hiring Process

Adjunct, part-time and temporary positions (working no more than 9 credit hours per semester or 19 hours per week) are posted on the college's website as a "continuous posting". Application can be made on the College's Website, under the Human Resources webpage. Qualified applicants will be added to the college's applicant pool for 36 months. The Human Resources Office or the Department Chair will contact qualified applicants to fill a vacancy.

Employment is not authorized until clearance is received from the Human Resources Office.

Procedure for Hiring Part-Time Faculty

Part-time faculty are hired based on need. When it is necessary to hire a new part-time faculty member, the Department Chair/Dean must review the application packet via the human resources information system (NEOED). Interview the desired candidate(s) and contact Human Resources to provide the selected candidate with the faculty credentials forms. The candidate will be responsible for completing his/her portion of the approval form and providing unofficial copies of his/her transcripts to the Human Resources Department (this is typically done via electronic means). Human Resources will route the credentialing packet for approval as follows:

1. The Department Chair will evaluate the transcript(s) and sign the form indicating that the applicant is qualified to teach in the discipline. The form is then forwarded to the following for signature/approval:
 - a. Assistant/Associate Dean, if applicable
 - b. Dean
 - c. Vice President of Instruction
 - d. Human Resources (this form should not be submitted to HR until all signatures have been obtained).
2. Human Resources will contact the potential employee to complete the employment process. Employment is not official until the applicant has completed the hiring process and received an assigned employee number. No duties should be assigned until clearance has been received from Human Resources.

Procedure for Hiring Part-Time Staff

1. Supervisors should update/revise job descriptions and request approval to hire, in writing to the appropriate Vice President and/or Dean.
2. Once approved, the supervisor should contact Human Resources to complete the Request to Fill for approval to post the vacancy announcement.
3. The supervisor will recommend an Advisory Committee for approval to screen and interview the applicants.
4. Following the interview, the Advisory Committee will make a recommendation to the President for consideration.
5. Employment is not authorized until clearance is received from the Human Resources Office.

Supervisors and Department Chairs must inform the Human Resources Office when a part-time employee is no longer working.

Adjunct Instructors and Part-time employees with a break in service must report to the Human Resources Office for reinstatement before reporting back to work.

Employment is not authorized until clearance is received from the Human Resources Office.

Procedure for Hiring Law Enforcement

In accordance with the Alabama Legislature Act 2021-268 and Board Policy 510.01, requirements for hiring law enforcement include but are not limited to:

Effective February 1, 2022, each College of the Alabama Community College System shall, prior to the appointment of a law enforcement officer:

- Conduct a finger-print based state and national criminal background check.
- Review the current and prior law enforcement employment history.
- Review available social media accounts of the law enforcement officer.
- Review professional references provided by the law enforcement officer.
- Review disciplinary actions taken against the law enforcement officer while in secondary and post-secondary school confirmed by telephone, electronic, or other means.
- Review a full report of the law enforcement officers credit history provided by the law enforcement officer.
- Review the law enforcement officer's residential address history.
- Review the law enforcement officer's motor vehicle history.
- Complete a polygraph exam with satisfactory results.
- Complete a psychological evaluation with satisfactory results.
- Complete a drug screen with satisfactory results.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST/OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

An employee is prohibited from using his or her official position and influence for personal gain or that of his or her family or associates, or from engaging in a conflict of interest. Full-time employees may engage in outside employment provided that such activity: (a) does not interfere with the performance of other responsibilities as a LSCC employee; (b) does not require use of institutional resources or facilities.

Procedure for Notifying the College of Outside Employment

Employees must complete a notification of secondary employment form (located on the L drive) to obtain written approval from the President to participate in outside consulting activities. Activities that might interfere with the performance of job responsibilities or that diminish the value or inhibit the operation of the institution are prohibited.

Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy will be considered as a disregard for the College's authority and may be considered as insubordination which could lead to disciplinary actions ranging from a written request for corrective action to dismissal.

NEPOTISM

It is the policy of Lawson State Community College that the President shall not employ any relative within the fourth degree of kinship by either birth or marriage to work in the institution, and any relative of the President within the aforementioned relationship now employed in the institution as of August 1, 2013 shall not be assigned to any position which reports directly to the President, or in which the employee makes final decisions concerning expenditures of funds.

EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES

This policy shall not apply to persons actively employed as of January 1, 2007, so long as they occupy the position occupied as of January 1, 2007. Should an employee who began service prior to January 1, 2007 change positions, the employee is subject to all rules and requirements of this policy. Should an employee's circumstances change due to election results, marriage, etc., the employee is subject to these rules and requirements, and any accommodation of unusual circumstances shall be determined by the Board of Trustees.

The Nepotism Statute (*Code of Alabama* Section 41-1-5) takes precedent over all ACCS Board policies regarding employment. However, The Nepotism Statute applies specifically to relatives of any member of the Board of Trustees only for the positions in the Alabama Community College System in which the Board makes the employment decision, namely the chancellor, the college presidents, and the directors of applicable System entities such as the Alabama Technology Network.

The Ethics Statute (*Code of Alabama* Section 36-25-5(a)) states: "(a) No public official or public employee shall use or cause to be used his or her official position or office to obtain personal gain for himself or herself, or family member of the public employee or family member of the public official, or any business with which the person is associated unless the use and gain are otherwise specifically authorized by law. Personal gain is achieved when the public official, public employee, or a family member thereof receives, obtains, exerts control over, or otherwise converts

to personal use the object constituting such personal gain.”

DEFINITIONS

Employing Authority. For the purposes of this policy, Employing Agency includes: The Chancellor of the Alabama Community College System, a member of the Board of Trustees, a President of an Alabama Community College System college, a System-level Director of any other Alabama Community College System agency, entity, or System office and Alabama Technology Network.

Relative. For the purposes of this policy, Relative includes any person related within the fourth degree of affinity or consanguinity to any job, position, or office of profit with the state or with any of its agencies.

DISCLOSURE OF EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES

As a part of the employment process, within 15 calendar days of the employment of an individual by the Employing Authority of an Alabama Community College System office, agency, entity, or institution, regardless of placement on salary schedule, position, or compensation, and regardless of whether the employment is temporary or the result of a search process, the individual shall complete a Family Relationship Disclosure Form. Such form shall contain the name of the individual; the name of the Alabama Community College System office, agency, entity, or institution employing the individual; the position and/or title for which the individual is employed; the salary schedule, rank, step, and annual salary of the individual; and the date on which employment commences. Such form shall also contain a statement by the individual regarding whether the individual is a relative of any Alabama Community College System Employing Authority and shall identify such Employing Authority and such relationship.

REPORTING

Upon completion of the Family Relationship Disclosure Form, it shall be forwarded immediately to the Employing Authority of the Alabama Community College System agency, entity, institution or System office employing such individual. The Employing Authority, within 15 calendar days of receipt of a form disclosing the employment of a relative of any Alabama Community College System Employing Authority, shall provide a copy to the Chancellor of the Alabama Community College System. The division of Human Resources of the Alabama Community College System office shall upon receipt of such disclosure form ensure that such hiring is in compliance with the *Code of Alabama* Section 41-1-5. The Chancellor shall provide a notice of such disclosure to the members of the Board of Trustees on a monthly basis.

VERIFICATION OF IDENTITY

All employees of Lawson State Community College must be authorized to work in the United States. In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, it is a condition of employment for all persons hired on or after November 7, 1986, to provide specific documents

which verify identity and authorization to work in the United States.

An employee must provide the required documents and must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification form (I-9) within three work days of starting work. An employee who is unable to provide the required documents within three work days must present a receipt for the application of the required document(s) within three work days and present the original required document(s) within twenty-one days of hire. An employee who is unwilling or unable to provide the required document(s) will not be continued in employment.

A Human Resources Official or designee must view the document(s) provided by an employee to ensure that they are original and authentic. Both the employee and department official must complete the I-9 form to certify, under penalty of perjury, that the document(s) verify the employee's identity and authorization to work in the United States.

If an individual's employment eligibility document expires, the employee must present a document that either shows continuing employment eligibility or is a new grant of work authorization. The HR Official will review the document, and if it appears to be genuine and to relate to the individual, a new I-9 form will be completed.

Former employees rehired more than three years after completion of the I-9 form must provide the required document(s) and prepare another original I-9 form for submission.

Lawson State participates in E-Verify, a web-based official government verifying system that allows enrolled employers to confirm the eligibility of employees to work in the United States.

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

It is the policy of Lawson State Community College to conduct a State and Federal background check, prior to employment or volunteering through a vendor selected by the Chancellor, on all new hires, volunteers, and contract educators/trainers at the college. A criminal background check may also be conducted for selected internal candidates or if the institution has reasonable suspicion that a current employee, volunteer, or contract educator/trainer has been convicted of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude. Individuals convicted of a felony or crime involving moral turpitude will not be eligible for employment or volunteering except with the Chancellor's approval. Adjunct or temporary employees are subject to random background checks.

PROCEDURE FOR CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK

Employment and volunteer service is and shall remain contingent upon an acceptable background check as determined by the College President or his designee in accordance with ACCS Policy 623.01.

By or before July 1, 2024, every New Hire or New Volunteer at the College shall undergo a background check, unless exempted under this policy.

New Hires or New Volunteers for whom background checks are to be completed will be required to sign an ACCS- provided standard Consent, Release, and/or Authorization Form (hard copy or electronic form

in NeoEd).

Further, any New Hire or New Volunteer under the age of 18 shall require parental/guardian consent on the Consent, Release, and/or Authorization Form for a background check.

New Hires or New Volunteers, at the College, who:

- Work/Volunteer in the Law Enforcement or security department
- Do not meet the definition of an **Alabama Resident/Georgia Resident/Exempted State Resident**
- Have unescorted access to criminal justice records

will be subject to a more detailed fingerprint-based background check prior to employment/ volunteering as determined by the ACCS Safety and Security Office.

Vendors must perform background checks of their employees that have or will have regular contact with students.

EXEMPTIONS FROM BACKGROUND CHECKS

Previous Hires and Previous Volunteers (as defined above) are exempted from background checks at the College under this policy unless the college has reasonable suspicion that an employee or volunteer has been convicted of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude.

CONVICTION OF FELONY OR CRIME INVOLVING MORAL TURPITUDE

Employees or Volunteers, whether new or previous, convicted of a felony or crime involving moral turpitude will not be eligible for new or continued employment or volunteering except with the President's approval. Factors to be considered by the President in determining whether the individual is suitable for employment or volunteering include, but are not limited to:

- a. The proximity or remoteness in time of the conduct.
- b. The risk of harm to persons or property of the institution.
- c. The nature of the crime and likelihood of recurrence
- d. The nature of the job.
- e. Any extenuating circumstances.

Within five (5) calendar days, any employee or volunteer, whether new or previous, convicted of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude must report the conviction to the President. An unreported conviction will be subject to disciplinary measures for failure to report, up to and including termination.

REASONABLE SUSPICION OF CONVICTION OF FELONY OR CRIME INVOLVING MORAL TURPITUDE

A background check may be conducted on any person if the institution has reasonable suspicion that an employee or volunteer has been convicted of a felony or any crime involving moral turpitude.

ADJUNCTS AND OTHER TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES

Adjuncts and/or other temporary employees who may not receive consistent or routine pay or who may be on hiatus from campus for months at a time are not required to have background checks every time they return, but they are subject to annual or return background checks as determined by the College.

REPORTING PROCESS

Background findings that may affect the ability to be hired will be discussed by the ACCS Safety and Security Office with the applicant who will have an option to appeal the finding. Once that process is complete, the President of the College will be notified. Once the President decides whether the applicant will be considered for hiring, the College's Human Resources Office will be notified.

DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this policy and procedure, the following definitions are utilized:

Alabama Resident –a person with a current Alabama address and a current/unexpired Alabama issued State ID (such as a driver's license or State of Alabama issued ID Card), or an Exempted State Resident.

Georgia Resident –a person with a current Georgia address and a current/unexpired Georgia issued State ID (such as a driver's license or State of Georgia issued ID Card).

Exempted State Resident – The ACCS Safety and Security Office has the authority to grant certain state residents an exemption from a more detailed fingerprint background check in some cases where the state resident's court information becomes available electronically, and those individuals will be treated as Alabama Residents for purposes of this rule.

New Hire: An employee hired in any position with the College on or after July 1, 2024, to include current employees who apply for and are rehired into a different position. Examples of a New Hire include but are not limited to: a new adjunct, an internal candidate who moves to a different position, a new temporary employee, a new part-time employee, a new work-study student employee, a new grant employee, a new employee hired on Salary Schedule H, E, D, C, B, or L, or a new contract employee.

New Volunteer: a person the College seeks to allow to volunteer at the College on or after July 1, 2024, regardless of whether the person volunteers at another ACCS institution.

Previous Hire: a current employee at the College who has not changed position or separated from the College since being hired in some capacity prior to July 1, 2024.

Previous Volunteer: a current volunteer at the College who began volunteering in the same position at the College before July 1, 2024.

COLLEGE WIDE COMMITTEES

Governance at Lawson State is extremely important and is managed by a committee structure. As such, all employees are required to participate on a college-wide committee.

MAILING ADDRESS

Employees are required to notify the Office of Human Resources and The Alabama Teachers Retirement System of their current mailing address.

OFFICIAL METHOD OF COMMUNICATION

Lawson State Community College uses its email system as the main communication mechanism at the institution. All employees, full and part-time, are expected to check email daily and

respond to all email requests (from employees and students) in a timely fashion (within 24 hours Monday-Friday). Employees are not expected to respond to email over the weekend unless they are Mid-Level administrators (Directors, Associate/Assistant Deans), Senior Level administrators (Executive Directors, Deans), or Executive Level (Vice President/President), or if they teach an eCollege (online course). eCollege instructors wishing not to check email over the weekend must alert their students of this communication exception. If no such announcement is posted in the class, then the eCollege instructor is expected to respond to distance education students over the weekend.

If an employee fails to use email, and as such, causes disruptions in College processes and operations (e.g., submitting attendance reports, submitting grades, requesting information), such behavior can lead to discipline or termination.

The Human Resources Office sends notices via email to faculty & staff of the need to sign important documents, letters of appointment, etc.. It is the employee's responsibility to check e-mail and respond appropriately to the request. Failure to sign appointment letters may lead to discipline or termination.

All employees are expected to communicate professionally via email. No person employed by the College should assume confidentiality or privacy when using or transmitting messages via the College's email server.

Lawson State email should never be used to solicit commercial business or to intimidate, threaten, or commit cyberbullying. Such behavior may lead to discipline or termination. Email is subject to search and is considered a permanent record in legal cases. Employees are also responsible for all messages they transmit through the College's computer, networks and systems and should exercise caution to prevent introducing computer viruses into the College's computers and/or networks.

CANVAS

Lawson State adopted Canvas as its main delivery system for all course content at the college. As such, all faculty (both full and part-time) are required to use Canvas. Canvas training is provided by the supervisor or designee, and is open to all faculty by request to the Department Chair or Dean.

Use Requirements: Lawson State faculty members are required to use Canvas in all courses taught at the college. At a minimum, students registered in a Lawson State class should be able to gather the following from the Canvas:

- Grades
- PowerPoint presentations or recorded mini-lectures
- YouTube videos or other videos
- Assignments
- Classwork
- Homework directions
- Calendar
- Instructor contact information

- Instructor office hours information
- Announcements
- Syllabus, etc.

MyLAWSON Employee Self-Service (Faculty & Staff)

MyLAWSON Employee-Self Service is the main "hub" of your employee information and processes. The Self-Service is designed to provide key employment records and support the majority of internal processes at the college to include:

- Payroll Stubs
- Employment
- Records
- W2 forms
- Attendance Recording (for faculty)
- Requisition Requests and Approvals
- Leave Requests and Approvals

Training on how to access and use MyLAWSON Employee Self-Service is provided by Human Resources at Onboarding or upon request.

How to Access MyLAWSON

Visit the College's website:

https://www.lawsonstate.edu/faculty_and_staff/mylawson_employees.aspx

TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT

Employees may be full-time, temporary, part-time, or permanent part-time.

Permanent part-time employees are employed on a semester, nine-month, or twelve-month basis and usually on a schedule that represents a fractional part of the full-time employees' schedule. These employees accrue leave on a pro-rated basis. Participation in the retirement system depends upon the part-time ratio worked.

Temporary part-time employees are hired for less than the normal contract period. Part-time instructors are classified as temporary since employment is on a per-course basis and only for one semester at a time. Temporary part-time employees do not accrue leave or qualify for other staff benefits. However, part-time faculty and staff who contribute to the Teachers' Retirement System through their full-time employer are required to contribute.

EMPLOYMENT CLASSIFICATION

It is the intent of Lawson State Community College to clarify the definitions of employment classifications so that employees understand their employment status and benefits eligibility.

Fair Labor Standards Act Job Classifications

All employees are designated as either nonexempt or exempt under state and federal wage and hour laws:

- **Nonexempt employees** are employees whose work is covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). They are *not* exempt from the law's requirements concerning minimum wage and overtime.
- **Exempt employees** are generally executives or managers or professional, administrative or outside sales staff who are exempt from the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the FLSA. Exempt employees hold jobs that meet the standards and criteria established under the FLSA by the U.S. Department of Labor.

OFFERS OF EMPLOYMENT

It is the policy of Lawson State Community College to offer employment for one semester, two semesters, a summer term, or a full calendar year as appropriate to librarians, counselors, instructors, and other employees provided there is sufficient enrollment and funds are available. The President of the College is the only authorized hiring official.

NEW EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING

All new employees are required to complete a New Employee Onboarding process within 2 weeks of hire. For full-time employees, Onboarding may be conducted in-person and via electronic means for part-time.

LETTERS OF APPOINTMENT

Written Letters of Appointment will be issued before the beginning of the employment period covered unless an unforeseen issue arises. Employees who do not sign appointment letters within 5 days of the scheduled pay day may be required to report to the Human Resources Office to sign appointment letters before their pay check is released. Failure to sign letters of appointment could result in disciplinary action.

Full-Time Employees

- Full-time faculty Letters of Appointment are for one semester or 9 months
- Summer employment for faculty is determined by student need
- Letters of Appointment for administrative and support personnel are for the period September 1 through August 31, unless otherwise specified.

Part-Time Employees (19 hours or less)

Employment and Letters of Appointment are on a semester-to-semester basis. Adjunct faculty appointment letters are prepared after the drop/add period. Part-time faculty/staff appointment letters are prepared once the Human Resources Office receives a request for contract from the supervisor. Employees are notified, when appointment letters are available for signature via their LSCC e-mail account or other method as approved by the College.

Substitute Instructors

Substitute instructors shall be paid on an hourly or prorated basis consistent with the prevailing part-time salary rate. All substitute instructors are approved by the Vice President of Instruction, based upon the recommendations of division chairpersons and the appropriate Dean. Substitute instructors are required to have the same qualifications as regular full-time instructors.

Employment is not authorized until clearance is received from the Human Resources Office.

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT POLICY

This policy is designed to enable Lawson State Community College to accept volunteers, reduce volunteer risk, and protect the interests of the College, its volunteers, and the College Community.

College volunteers are expected to abide by all College policies, procedures and external laws and regulations that govern their actions. These may include, but not be limited to, those relating to ethical behavior, safety, confidentiality, protected health and student information, computer use, financial responsibility, and drug use.

College volunteers are not eligible for compensation or any College benefit as a result of their volunteer association with the College. Additionally, volunteers may not replace employee positions at the College. Volunteer services are not authorized until background check clearance is received from the Human Resources Office.

Definition

A “College Volunteer” is defined as any uncompensated individual whose services are offered freely to support the activities of the College.

Eligibility

To qualify as a College volunteer, an individual must be willing to provide services according to the procedures in this policy. The individual must have adequate experience, qualifications, and training for the task(s) he or she is volunteering at the College.

A current employee may not become a College volunteer at the College in any capacity in which he or she is employed at the College, or which is essentially similar to or related to the individual’s regular work at the College. A current employee may volunteer for special events, programs, or in any capacity that differs from his or her employment.

Prohibited Activities

College volunteers are prohibited from performing the following activities:

- Operating heavy equipment including vehicles
- Any activity considered inappropriate for an employee
- Entering into any contract or agreement on behalf of the College
- Working with hazardous materials, environments or related areas which may otherwise place the volunteer at risk for physical harm

PROCESS

When selecting a College volunteer, it is the department/division’s responsibility to ensure that the individual has adequate experience, qualifications, and training. Before any volunteering is performed, a Volunteer Agreement and background check must be completed.

ADJUNCT/PART-TIME EMPLOYEES EMPLOYED WITH OTHER ACCS INSTITUTIONS

Adjunct Faculty and Part-time employees must report employment with other Alabama Community College System institutions through submission of the *Employment Certification Form* prior to employment and at the beginning of each semester thereafter. Human Resources will provide the employee with the certification form before the employment date and at the beginning of each semester. This information is utilized to make certain that the college is in compliance with mandates established by the Chancellor. Failure to report employment within the ACCS may result in immediate termination.

TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENTS

The President or designee may assign employees to temporary assignments which require them to be absent from their regular duties. Employees on temporary assignment will receive their regular salary and may be allowed remuneration for their expenses in accordance with institution and Board of Trustee policy. Temporary assignments may not be made for the purpose of earning college credit.

INTERNAL TRANSFERS

The President is responsible for all internal College transfers and is responsible for complying with Alabama's Students First Act found at Alabama Code §16-24C-7.

The President has the authority to transfer or reassign any employee, at any time, as the needs of the college require, to any position or work location within the college, which the employee is qualified.

Transfers are appropriate as permitted under the Students First Act or when moving an existing college employee to a previously-existing college position.

Internal posting rules are appropriate and may be used for transfers.

Notice must be provided to affected employees as stated in the Students First Act.

REORGANIZATIONS

Reorganizations are modifications to positions that both currently exist at the institution and have been filled previously through a regular search process. Reorganizations may involve shifting duties that currently exist within positions at the College or adding new duties to a current position at the College. The reorganization may include changes of title, salary schedule placement, job duties, or level of responsibility, but it cannot create a fundamentally new position or an entirely new set of duties or responsibilities.

INSTRUCTOR LOADS AND HOURS

The president is authorized to approve instructor load and hours for faculty.

SUMMER EMPLOYMENT FOR D SCHEDULE EMPLOYEES

A full-time instructor, counselor, or librarian on Salary Schedule D who is employed by Lawson State Community College shall have first option (over part-time and temporary employees) for employment during the summer term provided that:

1. there is sufficient student enrollment;
2. there is sufficient funding available;
3. the employee is qualified to provide the service scheduled;
4. the employee meets the criteria of the institution's local summer employment policy; and
5. instructors may be given priority for summer teaching only in courses taught by the employee in the most recent fall and/or spring semesters.

No full-time faculty member, regardless of years of service, is guaranteed summer employment.

Faculty members that do not wish to teach or wishes to teach a reduced load during the summer term must submit written notification to their director/department chair and the Human Resources Office before the end of the spring term.

A full (summer) teaching load for an academic instructor is twelve (12) to thirteen (13) credit hours per term or the equivalent, as determined by the President. Faculty teaching less than the full teaching load will be compensated at a pro-rated amount, based on their current placement on the salary schedule.

If an instructor becomes unable to perform the essential functions of the job, his/her summer term employment will be pro-rated and/or terminated.

Seniority Rotation Principle

Teaching assignments will be made using a system of seniority and rotation:

1. After the director/division chairperson, second priority will be to assign at least one summer course or contact hours equivalent to one-fourth of a full-time teaching load to every faculty member who desires summer employment, regardless of seniority.
2. Once all faculty have one-fourth of a teaching load, the remaining courses/contact hours will be assigned in order of seniority (every other summer) until all courses are assigned or all faculty have at least one-half of a full-time teaching load.
3. If all faculty have one-half of a teaching load, the remaining courses/contact hours will be assigned in order of seniority (every other summer) until all courses/contact hours are assigned or all faculty have at least three-fourths of a full-time teaching load.
4. If all faculty have three-fourths of a full-time teaching load, the remaining courses/contact hours will be assigned in order of seniority (every other summer) until all courses/contact hours are assigned or all faculty have a full-time teaching load.
5. Senior faculty will alternate yearly with non-senior faculty for a full-time summer

teaching load. Example: Full time teaching load summer, senior faculty (current year) will go to the bottom of the list for full time teaching load (next year) and the non-senior faculty who did not receive a full-time summer teaching load in (current year) will move to the top of the list for full time teaching load (next year).

Seniority will be determined first by experience and effectiveness in teaching the specific course(s) and then by years of full-time teaching service to the College.

First priority for teaching will be to assign courses to directors/division chairpersons because of the administrative duties expected of them in addition to their teaching.

If a class must be cancelled, reassignment of class sections will be determined by the Dean/Department Chairperson based on the faculty member's qualifications to teach other courses.

INSTRUCTOR OVERLOADS

1. The president is authorized to approve overloads for faculty.
2. The overload course must be taught outside the instructor's normal 35-hour work week.
3. Compensation for the overload course will be paid at the prevailing adjunct compensation rate.
4. Request for overloads with pay will be approved only for instructors who teach at least the minimum fulltime load of 15-16 credit hours for a Fall or Spring semester and at least 12-13 credit hours for a Summer term.
5. Full-time instructors will receive additional compensation for the number of credit hours in the overload course as approved by the President.
6. The College reserves the right to assign extra duties for the 16th or 13th hour of the normal load, respectively, for a Fall/Spring semester or a Summer term, or to have one hour of the overload applied to the normal instructional load.

Procedure for Faculty Overloads

Faculty department chairs must submit a request for overload contract, in advance, for approval by the Dean, Vice President, and the President. Approved request for contract forms are submitted to the Human Resources Office for processing.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR DEVELOPMENTAL AND RELATED SUBJECTS FACULTY

Developmental and Related Subjects faculty teaching non-transferable courses that are under Level 100 are required to have a Bachelor's degree in the discipline or a related subject (to include Education and Reading) and at least 12 undergraduate credit hours in the discipline they are teaching or 12 credits hours in a related discipline. Qualifications can also be assessed using teaching experience with preference being given to secondary educators who have been previously

certified to teach English, reading or mathematics.

Developmental tutors are not required to hold a degree. They are assigned tutoring lab responsibilities only. They do not award grades.

ECAMPUS FACULTY

Faculty members teaching online courses should contact their immediate supervisor to get an overview of online orientation, education, policies and procedures or may be referred to the Director of Distance Education.

FACULTY PROFESSIONAL GROWTH PLAN

A Professional Growth Plan must be reviewed and approved in advance by the Vice President of Instructional Services if the employee plans to use the training for advancement on the salary schedule. Training activities pursued for professional growth and advancement are paid for by the instructor and are pursued on the instructor's own time. All activities pursued from postsecondary institutions must be from institutions accredited by nationally recognized accrediting bodies. Faculty members should consult with the appropriate Dean (Career Technical or Academic) or the Vice President of Instructional Services for guidance in selecting an appropriate institution.

An approved Faculty Growth Plan will be the only means by which an instructor can advance in rank. Instructors must meet the required credentials standards to advance in rank.

Instructor rank changes may only occur at the beginning of the academic year. The instructor must provide documentation to the Vice President of Instruction no later than July 15th in order to be considered for a rank change for the upcoming academic year. If the instructor does not meet the deadline, the approved faculty growth plan will be effective the following academic year.

Faculty members seeking advancement should complete the Faculty Growth Plan approval form located on the L drive under Campus Forms and Information.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

It is the policy of Lawson State Community College to create a job description for each full-time and part-time position at the college.

Job descriptions are to be reviewed annually by the supervisor and employee during the annual performance evaluation. Supervisors/Department Heads are responsible for writing job descriptions within their department and supplying the Human Resources Office with current job descriptions as required.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

It is the policy of Lawson State Community College to evaluate all College personnel annually. Evaluations will be conducted via the Human Resources Information System (NEOED),

beginning with the 2022 – 2023 evaluation period. All employees of Lawson State are evaluated annually. Full-time employees are provided with two assessments during the school year. The first evaluation (the Mid-term Evaluation) is designed to assess the employee overall effectiveness at mid-year and provide the employee with encouragements and recommendations for improvement, if warranted. It is conducted annually, every December. The second and final phase of the evaluation process is the annual performance evaluation. Annual evaluations are conducted every Spring (no later than May of each year) and are more comprehensive and are designed to evaluate the employee from a holistic standpoint.

Evaluation Instruments

There are three separate evaluation instruments used as part of Lawson State's Annual Evaluation Process: Supervisor, Faculty and Staff.

The Supervisor's evaluation instrument has 18 key criteria in which all supervisors are measured. The Faculty evaluation instrument has 18 key criteria in which all faculty are measured, and the Staff evaluation instrument has 15 key criteria in which all staff members (regardless of duties) are evaluated.

End-of-the-year evaluations have several key elements imbedded in the instruments:

- 1) for faculty evaluations, student evaluation results are included as part of the overall evaluation of a faculty member as well as other factors to include the level of student complaints, classroom management, student engagement and more;
- 2) professional development activities are included in the evaluation of supervisors, faculty and staff. It was determined that each year faculty, staff and administrators need to acquire a total of 100 professional development points. Points are accumulated by participating in professional development activities (both internally and externally). Employees can track their progression towards the achievement of their 100-point professional development points through the Professional Development Tracking Guide form. The Professional Development Tracking Guide lists various acceptable Professional Development activities that employees can engage in and outlines how many points each activity is worth.

Evaluation Criteria and Scoring Guidelines:

Under the state-wide evaluation criteria, all employees, supervisors, faculty, and staff, are evaluated based on a 4-scaled performance index:

- Consistently Exceeds Performance (requires documentation to support this score)
- Sometimes Exceeds Performance
- Meets Expected Performance
- Does NOT Meet Expected Performance (requires documentation to support this score)

Supervisors electing to score employees at either the highest level of performance ("Consistently Exceeds Performance") or at the very lowest level of performance ("Does NOT Meet Expected Performance") MUST provide documentation to support the score. All other scores do not require

documentation.

Evaluation Cycle

As previously noted, Performance Evaluations are conducted annually at Lawson State and run on a 11-month cycle. The evaluation period always begins in July (of every year) and ends in May (the following year). In December of every year, Mid-year Evaluations are conducted on all full-time employees (supervisors, faculty and staff). Part-time faculty are evaluated annually only (every Spring); they are not given Mid-year evaluations. Below is a chart that depicts the Performance Evaluation Cycle at Lawson State. Evaluations can be submitted from March 1st (of every year) through May 31st.

Scoring and Employee Improvement Plans (EIP's):

An employee receiving four (4) or more “Does Not Meet Expected Performance” scores within the annual Performance Evaluation, will be placed on an Employee Improvement Plan (EIP). For Supervisors (Administrators) this is also true; however, Supervisors will also be placed on an Improvement Plan if they receive 2 out of 3 “Does Not Meet Expected Performance” under the “Supervisors Only” section within their evaluation instrument.

- Supervisors will schedule a time to meet with the employee to discuss the evaluation and provide feedback. The employee’s job description should also be reviewed and revised (if necessary) during this process.
 - o If an employee is identified (via the performance tool) as needing additional support, he or she can be placed on an Improvement Plan which fosters more specific and targeted support for improvement. Typically, Improvement Plans run in increments up to a year, unless it is determined that more time is needed to provide the faculty and staff member with additional support (See Perform Guide).

The EIP outlines what specific criteria the employee failed to “meet” as it relates to job expectations and outlines a plan for improvement. EIP’s are issued by direct supervisors and cannot run beyond a full calendar year. Regardless of when issued during any given school year, EIP’s MUST be evaluated at the end of each evaluation cycle, annually. Supervisors are responsible, during the time of the annual evaluation, to outline whether or not the employee has improved and must indicate whether or not an employee has or has not been released from the EIP. If the EIP is being continued, the supervisor must indicate for how long.

Improvement Plans (External to College Evaluation Cycle)

In addition, Improvement Plans, outside of the evaluation cycle can be administered at any time by a supervisor and can be limited to an employee not performing one aspect of their job satisfactorily. Such Improvement Plans can be implemented during any time during the regular school year. Specific conditions must be met prior to a supervisor implementing an Improvement Plan as follows:

- 1) The supervisor has provided the employee with a verbal warning or notification of the job performance deficiency.
- 2) The supervisor has provided the employee with a written notification of the job performance deficiency (via email or via a formal letter of notice).
- 3) The supervisor has provided the employee with reasonable time to address the

discrepancy in job performance and improve.

If the supervisor has cleared all steps outlined above and the employee has not improved, the supervisor can implement an Improvement Plan (on any single deficiency or more).

Improvement Plans that are implemented outside of the college evaluation cycle must be cleared within 1 year of implementation. All Improvement Plan results must be reported at the end of the evaluation cycle.

Job Performance and Dismissal:

Employees should never expect or anticipate that supervisors will continue to place employees on Improvement Plans to meet job expectations. If a second Improvement Plan is needed, supervisors should seek other disciplinary measures in keeping with progressive discipline best practices in order to address performance deficiencies and document such deficiencies.

Employees must meet their job responsibilities and all criteria as outlined within job performance evaluations. Continuing to fail to meet job expectations and/or performance criteria may lead to dismissal.

The Human Resources Staff will track evaluations to ensure that each employee is evaluated. The Human Resources Office will notify the appropriate Vice President and the President of any outstanding evaluations after the deadline.

Note: Evaluation instruments are located in the Human Resources Information System (NEOED).

EVALUATION OF SYSTEM PRESIDENTS, PURSUANT TO POLICY 607.01:

Every three years, each President shall submit the following documentation to the Chancellor:

- A. A Presidential Evaluation Self-Review
- B. Goals for the next three years, and
- C. Any documents requested by the Chancellor

The Chancellor will review and provide comments as he deems necessary in the Chancellor's Evaluation Report.

From time to time, the Chancellor may conduct or initiate additional evaluations or reviews of the performance of any President, whether formal or informal, written or oral, and with or without the assistance of others, as the Chancellor may determine.

This procedure may be modified by the Chancellor at any time.

PERSONNEL RECORD INFORMATION

LSCC is subject to State laws on the disclosure of public information. However, there are certain personnel items, including applicant and search records, the disclosure of which can be limited for reasons of confidentiality or because their disclosure would create a detrimental effect on the operations of the institution or a "chilling" effect on the ability of the institution to attract qualified applicants. For additional details regarding personnel or applicant record information, see ACCS

Board of Trustees Policy 616.01. It is the practice of the HR Office to protect the privacy of its employees. To guard the privacy of employees, the following procedures will be followed for personnel files:

1. The following persons may view a personnel file:
 - a. President
 - b. Vice President/Dean
 - c. HR staff member
 - d. Individual employee
2. No one may remove a personnel file from the HR Office.
3. An employee wishing to view his or her personnel file must make a request in writing to the President, with a copy to the Director of Human Resources.
4. An HR staff member must be present when an employee views his or her personnel file.

TIMESHEETS

Non-Exempt employees are required to complete a timesheet to be submitted to their immediate supervisor at the end of each payroll period. The timesheet should accurately reflect time in and time out, scheduled lunch breaks, leave taken, earned compensatory time and total hours worked.

Employees paid on Grants and Contracts must prepare and submit a time and attendance/time and effort form that documents the percentage of time worked on grant funds. Time and Attendance Forms/Time and Effort forms should be submitted to the Office of Sponsored Programs as well as the Payroll Office each month.

Procedure:

1. Non-exempt employee accurately records hours worked, leave taken, etc. daily.
2. Non-exempt employee signs and submits timesheet to his/her immediate supervisor.
3. The supervisor is responsible for reviewing timesheets for accuracy and approving the timesheet by affixing his/her signature.
4. The supervisor should submit the approved timesheet to the payroll office and the Office of Sponsored Programs, if applicable, by the due date indicated on the Vice President of Administrative and Fiscal Services monthly calendar.

ATTENDANCE

Exempt, non-exempt and student employees are expected to report to work on time and ready to begin duties. The appropriate supervisor must be informed prior to the beginning of the work period, or as soon as practical, of any absence or variation from the established work schedule.

Supervisors should address unsatisfactory attendance in a timely and consistent manner. If an employee demonstrates a pattern or practice of excessive absenteeism, tardiness, thereby affecting business operations, disciplinary action may be taken. Consecutive unexcused absences of three work days may be considered voluntary termination.

PAY PERIODS

Employees are paid on the last working day of each month. Employees are strongly encouraged to use direct deposit. Employees that choose not to participate in direct deposit may pick up their paycheck from the Business Affairs Office. Employees must have proper identification to pick up payroll checks.

LUNCH PERIODS

Employees are granted a 1-hour (unpaid) lunch break. Lunch periods should be coordinated with the immediate supervisor to ensure that each office remains covered during normal hours of operation. Ideally, lunch hours should be between the hours of 11:00am and 2:00pm unless otherwise approved by the supervisor. Employees may not elect to skip his/her lunch hour in order to shorten the work day unless approved by the immediate supervisor.

I.D. BADGES and Parking

The College requires all employees wear, or have readily available, employee ID badges while on duty. ID badges are worn for security, identification, and customer service purposes. Badges should be displayed for ease of visibility. Upon termination of employment, the ID badge should be returned to the employee's immediate supervisor or the Human Resources Office during the exit interview process.

PARKING DECAL

Place your parking decal in the lower left-hand corner of your front car window. See picture above with depicts this window placement.

Rules to Remember When Parking on Campus (to avoid parking fines)

- Only park in employee parking (designated by green curbs or signage on campus)
- Do not park in VISITOR zones
- Do not park in DISABLED (ADA) /wheel chair accessible driver locations unless you have a disability and you have the appropriate tag/decal.
- Display your PARKING DECAL in the left-hand bottom corner (of your front window)
- Secure a NEW Parking Decal at the beginning of each school year
- Never back into a parking space. Always pull in (front first) into a parking space on campus.
- Park within the parking lines. Never take up two spaces with one vehicle.
- Never park in emergency lanes or create your own parking space on campus
- If issued a parking ticket or moving violation on campus, pay your fine. Unpaid fines can lead to additional fees and possible warrants being issued by the City of Birmingham
- Follow all speed limit rules on campus
- Never hold up traffic when dropping off passengers. Drive to drop off zones on campus.
- Pedestrians ALWAYS have the right-of-way on the campus of Lawson State Community College

DISCIPLINARY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Lawson State, in accordance with Alabama's Students First Act, has a proactive and supportive

approach to handling employee discipline and follows a progressive discipline plan. The central focus is to (1) identify the problem; (2) address the problem directly; (3) work out a shared plan to remedy and resolve the situation in the least punitive way; (4) monitor progress. Given that all situations differ, all disciplinary action is handled on a case-by-case basis. Discipline imposed depends upon the seriousness of the performance/behavioral issues and the impact such behavior or lack of performance is having on the College.

The College values all employees and will seek several other remedies prior to recommending termination unless the offense is so great that termination is the first option. The college always seeks to resolve employee issues first before seeking termination.

The College uses the following five-step, progressive discipline process in the management of employee behavior. However, the College elects the right to skip steps in this process depending on the seriousness and impact of the behavior.

Disciplinary Steps:

Step 1: Verbal warning(s)

Step 2: Written notice outlining specific problem with the employee and outlining desire for the employee to improve.

Step 3: If the problem persists, suspension without pay may be sought depending on circumstances; Suspensions require the President's approval.

Step 4: Improvement Plan.

Step 5: Termination of employment, if Improvement Plan is not successful; Terminations require the President's approval.

Suspensions:

Upon recommendation from the supervisor and the Senior Personnel Officer, the President may suspend an employee, without pay, for up to 20 days. Employees do not have appeal rights for suspensions unless the suspension is in excess of 20 days. Before a suspension is imposed, the employee will receive adequate notice of reasons for proposed suspensions.

Administrative Leave:

The President may place an employee on Administrative Leave in order to make reasonable and customary employment decisions.

The Complaint Process

Lawson State Community College takes all concerns and complaints seriously. Employees are strongly encouraged to resolve conflicts under the informal process first before advancing to the formal complaint process. Once a complaint has been fully vetted and all steps have been followed and a resolution to the complaint has been issued (by the College), an individual can move beyond the college if displeased with the result. All complaints then can move forward to the Chancellor's office within the Alabama Community College System (ACCS). Follow these steps to resolve all complaints from informal to formal complaints.

Informal Complaint Process:

Step 1: Address the Matter Informally (one-on-one)

First, address the complaint or concern with the parties involved one-on-one unless you feel uncomfortable approaching the individual. Most concerns and conflicts can be resolved on this level, so start here first. If unsuccessful, move to Step 2.

NOTE: If your complaint deals with a **Title IX** offense (sexual assault, sexual harassment) file a complaint immediately using the online complaint system or contact the Title IX Coordinator at 205-929-6361 or cvance@lawsonstate.edu or Title IX Deputy Coordinator at 205-929-6313 or ebell@lawsonstate.edu.

Step 2: Speak with a Supervisor

If Step 1 was not successful, speak with the individual's direct supervisor to attempt to resolve the issue. If you are uncomfortable speaking with the supervisor and/or the issue cannot be resolved at this level, file a formal complaint using the online complaint system.

Formal Complaint Process:

Step 3: File a Formal Complaint Online

Once a complaint is filed via the online complaint system, a committee will be appointed to review the complaint and conduct an investigation. The committee will be charged with the following:

1. Review the complaint
2. Schedule date(s) to hold interviews
3. Interview complainant, accused, and witnesses provided by the complainant and the accused.
- 4.
5. Provide a detailed (written) report outlining their findings.

Use the link below to file a complaint:

http://www.lawsonstate.edu/faculty_and_staff/faculty_staff_home_page/complaintconcernincident.aspx

Step 4: File a Grievance Online

If you disagree or want to challenge the resolution, you would then file a Grievance. A Grievance Committee will review your complaint and the challenges you have made regarding the proposed resolution. (See Grievance Policy for additional information)

Step 5: Grievance Hearing

This is the final step in the Complaint process. Grievance Committee Decisions are final and end the complaint process at Lawson State Community College.

Step 6: External Complaints Following a Grievance Hearing: Only use this step if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of a Grievance Hearing and have exhausted the complete complaint process.

Lawson State takes all complaints seriously and will work diligently to resolve any and all matters. If an individual is dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint, he or she should report the complaint to the proper external agency that governs the college.

Lawson State, as are all community colleges in the state of Alabama, are governed by the Alabama Community College System (ACCS). Thus, if an individual goes through the entire complaint process at Lawson State (including the grievance hearing process) and is still dissatisfied with the handling of their complaint, he or she can file a complaint in the Chancellor's Office. External complaints should never be sought if the individual has NOT allowed the college to properly investigate and take action against a complaint in order to resolve such a complaint.

Thus, Step 6 (reporting of an external complaint) should only be sought after the College has vetted the complaint and issued a resolution to the complaint. The final step to all complaints at Lawson State is a Grievance Hearing. All complaints should first be reported to the College in order for the College to respond and settle all complaints first before reporting matters to an external agency.

How to Report Your Complaint to the Chancellor's Office

Note: Before filing an external complaint, be sure you have completed all of Lawson State's internal complaint processes (to resolve your complaint) before filing an external complaint.

ACCS FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

The Alabama Community College System (ACCS) Board of Trustees and Chancellor provide oversight of the State's public two-year community and technical colleges, Marion Military Institute (MMI) and the Alabama Technology Network (ATN). While most complaints should be handled at the local college level, or with the applicable entity, the ACCS System Office, through the Legal Division, also renders assistance to resolve complaints after all local avenues of resolution have been fully exhausted. If the local avenue of resolution included appeal rights to the ACCS Chancellor, then the Chancellor's decision is deemed final and a complainant may not file a complaint using this process. Each college, MMI and the ATN are charged with providing effective and efficient avenues for employees, community members, and other interested parties to address complaints. The ACCS Formal Complaint Process is not intended to supersede or replace existing processes in place at the local college level. Complainants seeking to file a report of noncompliance of federal or state law, or system policy should first address the problem by utilizing the local complaint process prior to initiating the ACCS Formal Complaint Process. Complaints of allegation of fraud, malfeasance, presidential misconduct, or other case specific instances, where the local grievance process may not result in an unbiased evaluation, may be filed using the ACCS Formal Complaint Form and will not be required to follow the local complaint process stated above. Complainants may submit a formal complaint using this process if there is dissatisfaction with the results at the local level, or the complaint deals with allegations of fraud, malfeasance, presidential misconduct, or other case specific instances that necessitate a direct filing through this process. Formal complaints must be submitted on the required ACCS Formal Complaint Form. Complaints may be mailed to: Alabama Community College System Legal Division-Confidential Formal Complaint, Post Office Box 302130 Montgomery, AL 36130-2130. The Legal Division will only review completed, signed and dated complaint forms. The Legal Division will issue a written response within a reasonable time usually between 30-45 business days. The identity of the complainant will be kept confidential and will be withheld from any information submitted to the ACCS entity identified in the complaint.

The ACCS Formal Complaint Form may be found at:
https://www.accs.cc/default/assets/File/dpe_lgl/Formal%20Complaint.pdf

EMPLOYEE GREIVANCE POLICY 620.01

This policy is intended to cover grievances between and amongst employees of an ACCS entity about general workplace issues, conduct, or professionalism. This policy does not apply and cannot be used against a President. This policy is not intended to cover complaints regarding discrimination, harassment, hostile work environment, ethical concerns, or other legal-related matters, which are covered under Policy 620.02.

Any employee who claims a grievance (or who is reporting an observed grievance) must file a written statement within 10 calendar days from the date of the alleged incident, otherwise the grievance will not be reviewed under this policy. Oral grievances do not comply with this policy. The written statement must be filed with the complaining employee's direct supervisor, unless the direct supervisor is the person about whom the grievance is lodged. In such cases, the employee must file the statement with the next supervisor in line. The supervisor (or other person receiving a written grievance) will notify HR personnel and/or the President as appropriate.

The supervisor, or other person appointed to address the grievance, must review the written statement and conduct an investigation of the claims within 45 calendar days (or as otherwise agreed), and then make a written report of findings with recommendations within 60 calendar days of receipt of the grievance. The report must be given to the President, the complaining employee, and the person about whom the grievance is lodged. The complaining employee or the person about whom the grievance is lodged has 5 calendar days from receipt of the written report to provide specific written objections to the report of findings with recommendations to the President, which will be considered by the President or his/her designee before issuing a final decision. This decision shall be final.

An employee who brings a good faith grievance under this policy shall not be retaliated against in any manner. Any employee who retaliates against an employee for making a good faith grievance under this policy will be disciplined.

The President's decision will be final.

NOTE: If the last day for filing a notice of appeal falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or a legal holiday, the appealing party will have until 5:00 p.m. the first working day following to file.

SEVERANCE FROM EMPLOYMENT

Employment is severable by resignation, termination or retirement. Employees are required to return all college owned property, including keys, identification tags, cell phones and laptops. All personal property should be removed from campus on or before the last day of work.

Resignations, Terminations and Retirement

All instructional personnel shall give written notice of resignation at least 30 calendar days prior

to the beginning of the term. Each instructional staff member shall complete all instructional duties and be cleared by the Academic Dean/Vice President of Instruction for any term started, except by mutual agreement by the employee and the President.

All other personnel shall give written notice of resignation at least 30 calendar days prior to the effective date of resignation, except by mutual agreement of the employee and the President.

Procedure for Submitting Resignation and Notification of Retirement Letters

Resignation and intent to retire letters should be addressed to the President. Employees may submit the letter to their immediate supervisor, the Human Resources Office or directly to the President's Office. A copy of the letter will be filed in the employee's personnel file.

Termination

Probationary (staff) and non-tenured (faculty) will receive written notice at least 15 calendar days prior to the effective date of termination.

The college will adhere to the Students First Act when issuing termination notices to non-probationary and tenured employees.

Exit Interview

All terminating employees must participate in a scheduled exit interview with their immediate supervisor and/or the Human Resources Office. The employee should be prepared to return all company issued property during the exit interview.

Abandonment of Position

All absences from work shall be approved in accordance with procedures established by the College. Any employee who is absent from work without approved leave or without appropriate notification to his or her supervisor shall forfeit compensation and shall be subject to disciplinary action. Any employee who is absent from work for three (3) consecutive workdays without approval shall be considered to have abandoned the position and to have resigned from the College.

Retirement

Full-time employees (Salary Schedules A, B, C, E and H) and part-time employees who are active participants through another participating employer are required to contribute to the Alabama Teachers' Retirement System.

Tier 1

- Regular employees hired before January 1, 2013 are required to contribute 7.5% of their salary.

- Firefighters, Law Enforcement Officers and Correctional Officers hired before January 1, 2013 are required to contribute 8.5% of their salary.

Tier 1 employees may retire after 25 years of service **or** upon attaining age 60 with at least 10 years of service.

Tier 2

- Regular employees hired on or after January 1, 2013 are required to contribute 6.20% of their salary.
- Firefighters, Law Enforcement Officers and Correctional Officers hired on or after January 1, 2013 are required to contribute 7.2% of their salary.

Tier 2 employees may retire after 10 years of service **and** the attainment of age 62.

Employees have vested status in the TRS after accumulating 10 years of creditable service. Additional information may be located at: www.rsa-al.gov

Disability Retirement

If the career of a TRS member is cut short because of permanent disability, the member may qualify for monthly disability benefits. To qualify for a disability benefit, the member must meet all the following conditions:

1. The member must have 10 years of creditable service.
2. The member must be in-service. A member is considered in-service if currently working or on official leave of absence for one year, which may be extended for no more than one additional year. A member will not receive service credit for periods of leave without pay.
3. The RSA Medical Board must determine the member to be permanently incapacitated from further performance of duty. The Medical Board bases its determination upon information provided by the member's physician. Monthly disability retirement benefits are calculated identically to those for service retirement, except that additional credit for sick leave cannot be converted to retirement credit.

To apply for disability retirement, request a Report of Disability Packet and Retirement Application Packet Part I from the TRS or the Human Resources Office. Both forms are on the TRS website. The Statement by Examining Physician (included in the Report of Disability Packet) and the retirement application must be received by the TRS office no less than 30 days nor more than 90 days prior to the effective date of retirement, which is the first day of a month. The member is responsible for notifying the TRS regarding disability retirement.

REDUCTION IN FORCE

Lawson State Community College will implement a reduction-in-force (RIF) action under the

required conditions should such an action become necessary and appropriate under Alabama's Students First Act of 2011 found in Alabama Code §16-24C-6(h)(3) with the written consent of the Chancellor.

A reduction in force (RIF) is defined as:

Layoffs or other personnel actions that are unavoidable reductions in the workforce beyond normal attrition due to extraordinary circumstances such as but not limited to decreased student enrollment, shortage of revenues, programs or courses are impractical or economically unreasonable, or changes in academic mission, administrative or ministerial function that necessitates significant organizational changes.

COMPENSATION, WORK SCHEDULE, DUTY DAYS AND HOLIDAYS

COMPENSATION FOR EMPLOYEES

With the exception of college presidents, personnel employed at System institutions and entities shall be paid according to salary schedules adopted by the Alabama Community College System Board of Trustees and from local salary schedules adopted by the respective college or entity.

OVERTIME AND COMPENSATORY TIME

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines to comply with Federal and State laws regarding overtime and compensatory time off. The concept of hours worked is a crucial determining factor in complying with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). Employees may not agree, even voluntarily, or otherwise to waive their rights to the FLSA's protection.

To comply with the Fair Labor Standards Act, College employees, including temporary, intermittent and student employees, who hold non-exempt positions must be paid overtime at a rate of not less than one and one-half (1.5) times their regular hourly rate of pay or must be given compensatory time off at a rate of not less than one and one-half (1.5) hours for each hour of overtime worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek. Effective July 1, 2024, certain salaried employees earning less than \$844 per week (\$43,888/year) will become eligible for overtime pay. It is the policy of Lawson State Community College to provide compensatory time, at time and a half, in lieu of paid overtime.

Employees exempt from the FLSA are not paid overtime. Exempt employees within the College are expected to work the hours required to do their job in an effective and efficient manner.

Procedure:

Under the FLSA, overtime is defined as time worked by a non-exempt employee that exceeds 40 hours in a workweek -- a workweek being defined as 7 consecutive days (168 hours). The standard workweek at Lawson State Community College begins at 12:01 a.m. on Sunday and ends at 12:00

midnight on the following Saturday. Days off may not be shifted from one week to another in order to avoid or increase overtime compensation.

Overtime pay is based on time actually worked and is calculated at the rate of one and one-half times the employee's regular hourly rate for each hour worked beyond 40 hours during each workweek from 12:01 a.m. on Sunday to 12:00 midnight on the following Saturday. In determining total overtime hours worked, hours of leave time with pay, compensatory time off and hours taken on approved College paid holidays during the workweek are not counted as time worked in computing overtime pay. For example, employees who work 10 hours each day for three days, and take one eight-hour holiday, and take personal leave of eight hours one day during a workweek actually work 30 hours, not 46. Employees, therefore, have not worked 6 hours overtime. Employees do, however, receive their regular hourly rate of pay for all 46 hours in that workweek.

Overtime should be requested using the overtime approval request form found on the L drive. Overtime must be approved, in advance, by the immediate supervisor. Non-exempt employees may not decide to work without the supervisor's written approval. Failure to follow the overtime policy may result in disciplinary action.

WORK SCHEDULE, DUTY DAYS, HOLIDAYS

Lawson State Community College operates at least forty (40) hours per week. The President has the authority to determine work schedules and work days for all employees of the institution.

1. Employees shall be allowed the following official holidays on which days the institution shall be closed:

New Year's Day
Martin Luther King/Robert E. Lee Birthday
National Memorial Day
Juneteenth
Independence Day
Labor Day
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Day
Day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day

2. In addition, the President shall designate five other days on which the institution will be closed in the official, approved calendar of the institution.

3. The normal work week for full-time, non-instructional personnel employed by Lawson State Community College is at least forty (40) hours, exclusive of lunch. Days that the institution is officially open are duty days for full time, non-instructional employees of the college. Normal operating hours are Monday through Friday (8:00am-5:00pm), unless otherwise approved.
4. Full-time non-instructional employees shall work the equivalent of 260 days or 2080 hours.
5. The normal work week of a full-time instructor, librarian, or counselor shall be a minimum of 35 clock hours, exclusive of lunch. This does not mean that each instructor is to be on duty seven hours per day, but it does mean that each instructor is to have a regular schedule of instruction, office hours, advising, planning, and institutional duties.
6. Full-time instructors, librarians, and counselors employed on an academic year contract (fall and spring semesters) shall work the equivalent of 175 days or 1225 hours. Those employed full-time for the summer shall work the equivalent of 54 days or 378 hours.

LEAVE

A leave year for earning, accrual, and use of leave is September 1 through August 31. Employees on paid leave will continue to accrue leave as long as the employee is in paid status.

Annual Leave

Employees eligible to accrue annual leave are those compensated from Salary Schedules A, B, C, E, and H (pro-rated). Employees compensated from Salary Schedule H shall receive annual leave under the same terms and conditions as other eligible employees, except a “day” of annual leave shall be as follows: four (4) hours for employees compensated from Schedule H-20, five (5) hours for employees compensated from Schedule H-25, six (6) hours for employees compensated from Schedule H-30, and seven (7) hours for employees compensated from Schedule H-35.

Employees paid from schedule(s) A, B, C, and E will accrue leave based on the table below:

Years of Experience	Annual Leave Earned
0-4	1.00 day per month (8 hours)
5-9	1.25 days per month (10 hours)
10-14	1.50 days per month (12 hours)
15-19	1.75 days per month (14 hours)
20-above	2.00 days per month (16 hours)

A maximum of 60 days (480 hours) of annual leave may be accrued and carried forward into the new leave year (beginning September 1). Annual leave may exceed 60 days (480 hours) during a year; however, annual leave in excess of 60 days (480 hours) as of September 1 is forfeited. Annual leave must be requested by the employee and approved by the immediate supervisor before the leave is taken. Failure to follow proper procedure may result in disciplinary action.

Employees must request leave, in advance, via the online faculty/staff suite. Department heads and supervisors are responsible for scheduling and approving annual leave of their staff prior to the occurrence of the absence. Every effort will be made to schedule leave as requested by the employee. In scheduling leave, however, the effective continuation of the normal work routine will be the primary consideration.

Jury Duty and Court Subpoenas

Full-time employees of Lawson State Community College who are required by a court to attend such court in the capacity of a juror or witness under subpoena will be granted special leave with pay to attend. The supervisor must be notified within 3 days of the employee receiving the notice from the courts. Once approved, the jury duty form or court subpoena should be submitted to the Human Resources/Payroll Office for file/processing. Failure to follow proper procedure may result in disciplinary action.

Emergency Leave

A maximum of three (3) days with pay may be granted to full-time employees compensated from Salary Schedules A, B, C, and E during any leave year if, in the judgement of the President, it is essential that the employee be absent. Support personnel on Salary Schedule H may be granted a maximum of three (3) days of emergency leave based on their respective leave accrual rate.

Emergency leave will not be paid on termination or resignation of employment.

Procedure

Eligible employees must request emergency leave using the appropriate leave form. The leave form must be submitted, along with an explanation for the leave, to the immediate supervisor and the appropriate Vice President. The approved leave form must be submitted to the Human Resources Office. Failure to follow proper procedure may result in a delay of approval or denial of the request.

Military Leave

Full-time employees are eligible for paid military leave of up to 168 hours per calendar year in the event of being called to active duty. During the period of paid military leave, the respective employee shall continue to accrue all employment benefits, including sick and annual or personal leave, as well as paid medical insurance benefits. Once available paid military leave is exhausted, the employee may take available annual or personal leave and continue to receive all employment benefits.

Full-time employees eligible for paid military leave shall also receive up to a maximum of 168 hours of paid military leave each time such eligible employee is called by the Governor or the State of Alabama to duty in the active service of the state.

Eligible employees must request military leave, in advance, using the appropriate leave form. The leave form must be submitted, along with a copy of the official order, to the immediate supervisor and the appropriate Vice President.

Failure to provide notice could result in a denial of the protection of USERRA.

Maternity Leave

A full-time employee may be granted up to a maximum of six months of maternity leave without pay. Persons on maternity leave without pay resulting from pregnancy will be paid for earned sick leave on request. A person who resigns instead of taking maternity leave cannot be paid for accumulated sick leave. Employees on paid leave will continue to accrue leave as long as the employee is in paid status.

Procedure for Requesting Maternity Leave

Employees must notify their immediate supervisor of the need to use maternity leave as soon as practicable. If the employee wishes to use paid leave in lieu of unpaid leave, the employee is responsible for submitting leave via the online faculty/staff suite. Employees requesting maternity leave should also apply for FMLA leave (see FMLA policy).

Personal Leave

Up to two (2) days of personal leave will be granted annually to each full-time employee compensated from Salary Schedule A, B, C, E and H. Personal leave is granted based on the number of hours worked (see annual leave accrual rates). Personal leave is noncumulative. Up to five (5) days of personal leave will be granted annually to each full-time employee compensated from Salary Schedule D.

Personal leave must be requested by the employee and approved by the immediate supervisor prior to the occurrence of the absence. Failure to follow proper procedure may result in disciplinary action. Personal leave not taken at the end of the leave year (August 31) will be converted to sick leave. Personal leave will not be paid on termination or resignation of employment.

Procedure for Requesting Personal Leave

Employees must request leave, in advance, via the Leave Report in MyLAWSON Employee Self-Service. Department heads and supervisors are responsible for scheduling and approving personal leave of their staff prior to the occurrence of the absence. Every effort will be made to schedule leave as requested by the employee. In scheduling leave, however, the effective continuation of the normal work routine will be the primary consideration.

Sick Leave

Full-time employees compensated from Salary Schedule A, B, C, E and H shall earn one (1) day of sick leave per month of employment. One day of sick leave for Schedule H employees are as follows: four (4) hours for employees compensated from Schedule H-20, five (5) hours for employees compensated from Schedule H-25, six (6) hours for employees compensated from Schedule H-30, and seven (7) hours for employees compensated from Schedule H-35.

Full-time employees compensated from Salary Schedule D shall earn one (1) day of sick leave which is equivalent to seven (7) hours per month of employment to a maximum of nine (9) days or 63 hours during the academic year (fall and spring semesters) and up to a maximum of three (3) days or 21 hours during the summer term. For any full-time Schedule D employee working less than full-time during any semester or term, sick leave earned will be pro-rated. See ACCS Fiscal Procedure Manual. To calculate eligible sick leave earned take the calculated percent x 1 day (7 hours).

Schedule D example of pro-rated sick leave earned per month:

Work Time Status = Day of Accrual = Leave Hours Earned

100% = 1 day = 7 hours earned leave per month

75% = $\frac{3}{4}$ day = 5.25 hours earned leave per month

50% = $\frac{1}{2}$ day = 3.50 hours earned leave per month

25% = $\frac{1}{4}$ day = 1.75 hours earned leave per month

Employees on Schedule D will be required to request 35 hours for sick leave for absences totaling an entire work week.

Any unused sick leave accumulated at the end of the leave year will be carried forward to the next succeeding year.

All employees must be in paid status for one-half of the work days in the month of employment to accrue a day of sick leave (except those on FMLA leave).

Sick leave may be utilized during the employment period. However, sick leave may not be utilized to extend the employment period.

The employee's immediate supervisor may request that an employee provide a medical certification by a licensed healthcare provider at the expense of the employee. After three (3) consecutive absences due to illness or after five (5) occurrences due to illness, within a thirty (30) calendar-day period, the president or designee may require that an employee furnish a medical certificate by a licensed healthcare provider. This is to be done at the expense of the

employee. Request for sick leave may be denied if the medical certification is not provided.

Sick leave may not be paid upon separation of employment.

For purposes of applying accrued sick leave as credit for retirement purposes, an employee is limited to the amount allowed by law and the Teacher's Retirement System.

Procedure for Requesting Sick Leave

Employees must notify their immediate supervisor of the need to use sick leave as soon as practicable. It is understandable that employees may not be able to request sick leave in advance. Also, employees are responsible for submitting leave on the Leave Report via the MyLAWSON Employee-Self Service and notifying their supervisor as soon as possible.

Sick Leave Definitions

Sick leave is defined as the absence from regular duty by an employee for one of the following reasons:

- Personal illness or doctor's quarantine;
- Routine physical examinations, dental appointments, eye examinations, etc.;
- Personal injury which incapacitates the employee;
- Attendance on an ill member of the immediate family (husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister) of the employee or an individual with a close personal tie to the employee;
- Death of a member of the family of the employee family (husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, nephew, niece, granddaughter, grandson, grandfather, grandmother, aunt, uncle);
- Illness, injury or death of an individual not legally related to but having a unique relationship with the employee. (Where unusually strong personal ties exist due to an employee's having been supported or educated by a person, or some relationship other than those listed, this relationship may be recognized for leave purposes.);
- Persons on maternity leave will be paid for earned sick leave on request.

Absences Due to Illness

After five (5) days of absence due to illness, within a thirty (30) calendar-day period, the president or designee may require that an employee furnish a medical certificate by a qualified physician acceptable to the institution. This is to be done at the expense of the employee. Employees may also be required to submit a fit for duty form/statement to return to work.

Transfer of Sick Leave

Sick leave earned while employed by a local Alabama public school system, higher education public institution in Alabama, or the Alabama Community College System may be transferred into a two-year college upon employment.

Sick Leave Bank

The Lawson State Community College Sick Leave Bank was established to benefit its employees and assist them through difficult personal situations. All loan applications must be completed and submitted for the Committee's consideration prior to the payroll date for which leave is required. Bank members will be allowed to borrow up to fifteen (15) days from the bank once all other earned leave has been exhausted. The Committee is empowered to investigate any incident of suspected abuse of sick leave loan requests. Any findings of misconduct will be reported to the respective Vice President and the President.

The Committee shall vote on or ask for a volunteer to serve as committee secretary. The secretary will be responsible for recording minutes at committee meetings and documenting findings of investigations regarding abuse of the sick leave bank.

If any bank member has borrowed the maximum number of days from the bank, but remain unable to return to work, the member may request sick leave donations from other bank members under the catastrophic illness provisions of the Sick Leave Policy. Both the donating and receiving employee must be members of the sick leave bank. A catastrophic event is defined as any illness, injury, or pregnancy or medical condition related to childbirth certified by a licensed physician which causes the employee to be absent from work for an extended period of time. Alabama Code 16-22-9(a)(1).

Beginning January 1, 2019, no employee may be awarded more than forty-five (45) workdays of catastrophic leave during any five-year period of employment.

Documentation from a licensed physician or professional certifying the nature of the condition may be required. The Sick Leave Bank Committee must apply the definition of catastrophic illnesses as described in the *Code of Alabama 16-1-18.1*. A member may donate up to thirty (30) days to any one individual sick leave bank member. All unused leave will be returned to the account of the donor.

Procedure

1. Donations and loan applications must be submitted to the Human Resources Office at least 5 days prior to payroll processing.
2. The Director of Human Resources or designee will be responsible for contacting committee members to schedule a meeting prior to the completion of the payroll process.
3. Committee decisions will be forwarded to the employee and the payroll office; original documents will be filed in the Human Resources Office.

PARENTAL LEAVE

Beginning July 1, 2025, paid parental leave for eligible employees may be available pursuant to the Alabama Public Employee Paid Parental Leave Act of 2025 in conformance with Alabama Code Section 36-6A-1, et seq., under the terms and conditions set forth in this policy.

A. Definitions. Unless stated otherwise herein, terms in this Policy shall have the same definition as provided in Alabama Code 36-6-1, et seq.

1. Base Pay is defined as the eligible employee's current, ordinary rate of pay as reasonably determined by the college. Any supplement/stipend awarded for additional duties (such as \$400 monthly division chair supplement, head librarian supplement, second-in-command pay, or extra duty pay of any kind) will not be considered part of base pay and shall not be paid while the eligible employee is on paid parental leave. Any supplement that is not tied to additional work (such as doctorate degree supplement) will be a part of base pay.

2. Healthcare Professional is defined as a physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or midwife who is licensed to practice in his or her respective field in the State of Alabama.

3. Miscarriage is defined as "[t]he loss of an unborn child at or after 12 weeks gestation and is confirmed in writing by a healthcare professional." The term does not include an abortion as defined in Alabama Code Section 26-23H-3 unless necessary to prevent a serious health risk to the unborn child's mother as permitted under Alabama Code Section 26-23H-4.

4. Qualifying Event is defined as the birth, stillbirth, or miscarriage of an eligible employee's child, or certain adoption placements which meet the requirements for parental leave.

5. Stillbirth is defined as "[t]he loss of an unborn child at or after 20 weeks gestation that is confirmed in writing by a healthcare professional." The term does not include an abortion as defined in Alabama Code Section 26-23H-3 unless necessary to prevent a serious health risk to the unborn child's mother as permitted under Alabama Code Section 26-23H-4.

B. Parental Leave. An eligible employee shall be entitled to the following:

1. 8 weeks of paid parental leave for a mother in connection with the birth, stillbirth, or miscarriage of her child;

2. 2 weeks of paid parental leave for a father in connection with the birth, stillbirth, or miscarriage of his child;

3. 8 weeks of paid parental leave in connection with the placement of a child with an eligible employee for adoption, provided the child is three years of age or younger at the time that he or she is placed with the eligible employee.

If parents who jointly adopt a child are both eligible employees of either ACCS, a community college, a local education agency, or a state agency, one parent shall be entitled to eight weeks of parental leave and one parent shall be entitled to two weeks of parental leave in connection with the adoption. Coordination and documentation between the two employing entities will be required.

C. Eligible Employee

1. An employee is eligible for Parental Leave if the employee is both:

a. Full-time with entitlement to leave benefits with the college (such as those on Schedules B, C, D, E, H and some contract employees who earn leave like a Schedule B, C, D, E, H

employee) and

b. Has been employed with the college in a full-time position with leave benefits for at least 12 consecutive months immediately preceding the occurrence of a qualifying event.

2. An employee is not eligible for Parental Leave if the employee is an adjunct, part-time employee who is not on Schedule H, or an on-call, seasonal, hourly, or temporary employee. In addition, most Schedule L employees and some contract employees also do not meet this definition.

D. Establishing Eligibility

1. Prior to granting parental leave, the college requires the employee to complete a Parental Leave certification form, as provided by the college.

2. In addition to the certification form, the college shall require an employee requesting parental leave to provide acceptable proof in support of the request for parental leave.

a. For birth/stillbirth, acceptable forms of proof would include but are not limited to a birth or stillborn certificate with the employee's name listed as parent.

b. For stillbirth/miscarriage, acceptable forms of proof would include appropriate healthcare professional certification with employee name listed as parent.

c. For adoption placement, acceptable forms of proof include but may not be limited to a birth certificate for adoptee, formal placement documentation such as affidavits or government agency letters, and formal adoption proceeding documentation.

3. An eligible employee may not take parental leave under this policy unless he or she meets all of the following requirements:

a. Submits a completed certification as set forth in Paragraph and

b. At least 30 calendar days prior to the use of the parental leave, the eligible employee shall provide by email to the immediate supervisor and head personnel in Human Resources a written plan regarding his or her intended use of the parental leave and any other leave he or she intends to take in connection with a qualifying event, in conjunction with or on any form required by the college; and

c. The eligible employee shall agree in writing that he or she will not separate from employment with the college for a period of at least eight weeks following the conclusion of any leave taken in connection with a qualifying event, in any form or agreement required by the college.

i. Any periods of leave, whether paid or unpaid, or other periods of non-duty status (e.g., use of accrued leave balances, use of unpaid leave, compensatory time, college closures, holidays) will not count toward the 8-week work obligation.

ii. The 8-week obligation will not start running or being counted and calculated until after

all intermittent or reduced schedule leave, as well as any other leave associated with the qualifying event, has been completed.

iii. The term "separate from employment" in this subparagraph refers to any form of employment separation, including an involuntary termination.

4. In the event of an emergency that prevents an eligible employee from completing the requirements of paragraph (D)(3) prior to taking parental leave, the eligible employee shall complete the requirements as soon as practicable, and in no event later than 14 calendar days, after the emergency has ended, including providing sufficient documentation to establish a qualifying condition and emergent event.

E. Leave Prior to Qualifying Event. In the event an employee desires to take paid parental leave prior to the occurrence of a qualifying event, the employee must comply with all of the requirements of Paragraph (D) above, and the employee must provide acceptable proof in support of the early request for parental leave.

1. Prior to the qualifying event, "in connection with the birth" shall mean the eligible employee is (a) attending prenatal appointments or other visits to a Healthcare Provider due to the expected birth of a child; (b) has been hospitalized in expectation of the birth of a child or due to a condition caused by or related to the expected birth of a child; or (c) otherwise requires leave due to a Healthcare Provider's order requiring the mother to limit her physical activity prior to the expected birth of a child.

2. Prior to the qualifying event, "in connection with the placement of a child with an eligible employee for adoption" shall mean the eligible employee is utilizing leave for one of the following: (a) meeting with an attorney regarding the adoption of the child; (b) hosting in-home visits necessary for the completion of the adoption; (c) attending judicial proceedings regarding the adoption of the child; (d) attending counseling sessions regarding the adoption; (e) submitting to a physical examination for adoption purposes; or (f) traveling to another country to complete an adoption.

3. The term "in connection with the placement of a child with an eligible employee for adoption" shall not include foster care or the placement of a child with the employee for any other temporary or non-adoption purpose.

F. Compensation. Parental leave under this policy shall be paid at 100 percent of the eligible employee's base pay and shall remain at 100 percent of the employee's base pay as if the eligible employee worked continuously from the date that parental leave commenced until the eligible employee's return to work.

G. Duration

1. Parental leave under this policy is available for use only during the 365 days following the commencement of a qualifying event or within 365 days of the eligible employee taking parental leave, whichever occurs sooner.

2. Parental leave under this policy may be used continuously, intermittently, or on a reduced scheduled basis. Eligible employees utilizing intermittent or reduced schedule leave under this rule

shall be subject to the following limitations:

- a. Eligible employee shall maintain a continuing parental role with any child whose birth or adoption was a qualifying event (this means that intermittent leave is reserved only for time spent bonding with, caring for, or fulfilling a parenting role and it is a violation to use parental leave in birth or adoption context to work second jobs, vacation without the child, or otherwise not parent); and
- b. Any intermittent or reduced scheduled leave must be agreed to by the college prior to the start of the leave.

H. Restoration to Position. Upon the expiration of parental leave, the college shall restore the eligible employee to the position that he or she held at the time of the qualifying event or to an equivalent position with equivalent seniority, status, employment benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment, including fringe benefits and service credits, that the eligible employee received or was entitled to prior to the commencement of his or her parental leave.

I. Failure to Comply. Any failure of the employee to abide by this policy may result in the college denying paid Parental Leave. The college may recover any improperly granted paid Parental Leave, whether it be through the substitution of other available leave, leave without pay, offset, or otherwise. Specifically, if an employee fails to comply with any return-to-work agreement, the College shall recover from the employee, by offset or otherwise, an amount equal to the eligible employee's hourly rate of pay multiplied by the number of hours the eligible employee failed to work in compliance with the return to-work agreement. Any such recovery shall comply with the federal Fair Labor Standards Act, as applicable.

J. Limitations

- 1. Approved parental leave does not require the employee to exhaust his or her sick leave, annual leave, or any other leave or paid time off.
- 2. An eligible employee may only use parental leave in connection with one qualifying event during a 365-day period, even if more than one qualifying event occurs.
- 3. After an eligible employee exhausts all available parental leave, any additional leave an employee wishes to take shall be taken in accordance with college policies.
- 4. Eligible employees using parental leave under this policy shall follow the college's customary leave practices that are not contradicted by this policy.
- 5. Any leave taken under this policy shall run concurrently with any leave granted under Alabama Code S 25-1-61 and the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.
- 6. Parental leave has no cash value. Any unused parental leave may not be used to calculate an eligible employee's retirement benefits. Unused parental leave shall not roll over, be reserved for use during a subsequent qualifying event, or be paid to the eligible employee.

7. The President of the college may waive the return-to-work agreement set forth in paragraph (D)(3)(c) in circumstances where the eligible employee is unable to return to work due to their own serious health condition or a serious health condition of an immediate family member. However, the college has no obligation to do so.

8. This parental leave policy is not effective until July 1, 2025. If a qualifying event occurs prior to this date, the employee will not be eligible for parental leave under this policy.

REPORTING LEAVE

All employees of Lawson State are responsible for seeking approval (via their immediate supervisor) for sick, annual, personal, military, jury duty and professional leave. All leave, with the exception of sick leave, must be requested and approved in advance. Sick leave requests for planned absences such as scheduled doctor's visits should be requested in advance. Unplanned absences should be submitted as soon as practicable. Employees who are absent from work without submitting leave are in violation of policy and can be subject to disciplinary action. If an employee fails to notify the College of his/her absence for three consecutive workdays, it will be considered job abandonment and may constitute termination of employment.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that employees submit leave for paid time off.

Procedure

The employee must submit a leave request via the employee portal in MyLAWSON for approval by their immediate supervisor.

ON THE JOB INJURY

The Safety & Security department should be notified of all incidents resulting in an on the job injury, regardless of the severity of the injury, so that documentation of the incident can be recorded. The Alabama Workers' Compensation Act does not apply to employment with post-secondary state agencies and institutions. In accordance with State Law §16-1-18.1, Code of Alabama 1975, amended, College employees may be awarded paid leave and benefits for up to ninety (90) days when absences are subsequent to on the job injuries.

If approved by the President, such absences will not be charged against the employee's accrued sick or vacation accrual; rather, absences related to a work-related injury should be recorded on the employee's leave report or timesheet under the "Admin" category. The 90-day mandatory salary and benefit period may be extended on a case by case basis. Determining factors for the extension shall include, but not be limited to, the duties of the employee, severity of the injuries, and supporting medical documentation.

BENEFITS

Insurance

A. Basic Hospital/Medical Plan

The Public Education Employee's Health Insurance Plan (PEEHIP) is a plan option

available to employees of LSCC. Insurance premiums are deducted monthly from the employees' payroll checks. New employees may be required to pay the 1st month's premium directly to PEEHIP. Additional information is available at <http://www.rsa-al.gov/>.

C. Hospital Indemnity

This is an optional plan offered through PEEHIP. This plan provides a per day benefit when the insured is confined to the hospital. It also provides a per day benefit for intensive care and convalescent care. There is also coverage for supplemental accident. The reimbursement for an accident is limited for each contract year for each covered individual. Additional information is available at <http://www.rsa-al.gov/>.

D. Cancer Plan

This is an optional plan offered through PEEHIP. Benefits are provided regardless of other insurance. Benefits are paid directly to the insured. Benefits are also provided for Hospice care, anesthesia, blood and plasma, nursing services, attending physician, prosthetic devices and ambulance trips. Additional information is available at <http://www.rsa-al.gov/>.

E. Dental Plan

This is an optional plan offered through PEEHIP. This plan covers diagnostic and preventative services, as well as basic and major medical services. Diagnostic and preventative services are not subject to a deductible and are covered at 100 percent (based on reasonable and customary charges), oral examinations, cleaning of teeth, fluoride applications for children, space maintainers, x-rays and emergency official visits. Routine cleaning visits are limited to two times per plan year. Basic and major services are covered at 80 percent for individual coverage and 60 percent for family coverage with a deductible for family coverage (based on reasonable and customary charges), fillings, general anesthetics, oral surgery not covered under a Group Medical Program, periodontics, endodontics, dentures, bridgework and crowns. Additional information is available at <http://www.rsa-al.gov/>.

F. Vision Care Plan

This is an optional plan offered through PEEHIP. This plan provides coverage for one examination in any 12-month period, one new prescription or replacement prescription for lenses per year (up to a designated maximum amount), one new prescription or replacement contacts per year (up to a designated maximum for contact lenses), and one new or replacement set of frames per year (up to a designated maximum). The policy will pay for either glasses or contacts, but not both in any plan year. Additional information is available at <http://www.rsa-al.gov/>.

G. Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) Insurance

All LSCC employees who are covered under the PEEHIP group health insurance have the right to choose continuation coverage if the employee loses his or her group health coverage because of a reduction in hours of employment or because of a resignation or termination of employment (for reasons other than gross misconduct on the part of the employee). LSCC must notify the PEEHIP office within thirty (30) days when an employee loses group health coverage. The PEEHIP office will then notify the employee of his/her COBRA rights. If the eligible member does not choose continuation coverage, his or her PEEHIP group health insurance coverage will end. Additional information is available at <http://www.rsa-al.gov/>.

H. Life Insurance

The beneficiary or estate of a deceased active member of the Teachers' Retirement System who dies in active pay status will be eligible to receive a death benefit. For the first year of employment, the life insurance-benefit will be \$15,000 if the member is employed on a full-time basis or a pro-rata share of the \$15,000 benefit if the member was employed less than full-time (i.e., the beneficiary of a member employed half-time would be entitled to a \$7,500 life insurance benefit). After the first full year of employment, the policy benefit shall be the equivalent of one year's salary. Additional information is available at <http://www.rsa-al.gov/>.

TUITION ASSISTANCE

The tuition waiver program is a benefit for full-time and salary schedule H35 employees of the Alabama Community College System with at least one full academic or calendar year of employment (whichever is less restrictive) prior to the first scheduled day of class for the applicable term.

Eligibility for employees and their dependents (to include the spouse of any full-time employee, the unmarried, natural or adopted children of any full-time employee, residing in the household of the employee or the employee's former spouse; and/or the unmarried stepchildren of any full-time employee, residing in the household of the employee), as verified by the College's Human Resources Office, will remain in effect for the duration of the qualified employee's employment in The Alabama College System.

All eligible employees and their dependents will be allowed a prorated waiver of the normally-charged tuition based on their years of service (see waiver information below). Expenses for supplies, books, and fees are not covered. Application and tuition waiver information are available electronically on the "Local Drive" and in the Human Resources Office.

Tuition Waiver Benefits Chart

After 1 year of employment	1/3 tuition waived
After 2 years of employment	2/3 tuition waived

After 3 years of employment	full tuition waived
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NOTARY PUBLIC SERVICE

Services of a Notary Public for official College business are provided at no cost in the Human Resources and Vice President's Office.



Acknowledgement of Receipt of Employee Handbook

The Lawson State Community College Employee Handbook contains important information pertaining to my employment at Lawson State Community College. I understand that the employee handbook is a snapshot of the policies and procedures, which the full policies are located on the ACCS, Alabama Community College System website. It is my responsibility to understand the information contained within the policies for both the institution and the ACCS system. I understand that I should consult with my supervisor or Human Resources if I have any questions about information contained in the Employee Handbook.

I understand that the information, policies, and benefits described in the Employee Handbook are subject to change, and that is my responsibility to review and comply with the policies contained in this handbook and any revisions made to it. Revisions/updates will be communicated through official notices. I understand that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies.

Furthermore, I acknowledge that this Employee Handbook is neither a contract of employment nor a legal document. I understand that this handbook is not intended to cover every situation that may arise during my employment, but is simply a general guide to the goals, policies, practices, benefits, and expectations of LSCC.

Employee's Name (print): _____

Employee's Signature: _____ Date: _____