UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

General Criteria for Employment

CITATION REFERENCE

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VOLUME	HUMAN RESOURCES
RESPONSIBLE OFFICE	USG HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE
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Policy Statement

This policy ensures that appropriate hiring and employment standards, which are considered conditions of employment with the University System of Georgia (USG), are met in compliance with Board of Regents (BOR) policies, and state and federal laws and regulations.

Applicability

All units of the USG are covered by this policy.

Who Should Read This Policy

All USG Human Resources staff, hiring managers, and employees should be aware of this policy.

Definitions

The following definitions apply to terms as they are used in this policy:

- **Actively Employed individuals:** Is defined as an individual who is employed by any USG Institution and who is currently engaged in the performance of assigned duties. For the purposes of this policy, a USG employee on continuous Family and Medical Leave (FMLA) (excluding intermittent FMLA leave), military leave, or other extended leave shall not be deemed to be an actively employed individual until that employee has returned to work.
- **Board of Regents:** The governing body of the USG.
- **Position of Trust:** Is defined in the HRAP provision on Background Investigation.

Process and Procedures

General Requirements

The following requirements, standards and expectations apply to all USG employees (including faculty, staff, and student employees).

Institutional Requirements:

- All USG employees must meet the terms and conditions of employment required for successful performance on the job. Such standards may include specific job-related qualifications (e.g., valid license/ certification), safety protocols, required training, and other employment standards required to meet USG business needs. (See also HRAP provisions on Background Investigation, and Conformity with Federal Grants; and BOR policies 8.3.1 Faculty Employment and 6.15.5 Campus Security)

- In addition to meeting the USG's terms and conditions of employment, a USG employee whose job duties include working with a third-party organization that has an active contract with the USG must meet the requirements for successful performance on the job as established by that third-party organization. For example, some clinical faculty may need to work at a hospital that requires vaccination. Accommodations may be required as applicable and in compliance with laws and regulations. USG Institutions must establish internal procedures to ensure compliance with third-party requirements. For additional guidance reference the appendix to this policy, titled "*Guidelines on Conformity with Third-Party Employment Requirements for USG Employees."*

- Prior to completing the selection process, the Institution's Office of Human Resources or designated official must complete the following actions:

    - Review (1) any credentials the candidate is required to possess as terms and conditions of employment; (2) the reasons for the candidate's separation from previous employment; and (3) responses to whether the candidate has ever been fired or forced to resign or whether the candidate resigned in lieu of potential disciplinary measures that may have been taken (see HRAP provisions on Eligibility for Rehire).

    - Conduct appropriate reference checks as necessary to verify employment and/or obtain job related information that will assist in determining the candidate's qualifications and suitability for the intended position. Before making a reference inquiry, obtain permission from the candidate so as not to jeopardize the individual's current employment status.

    - Complete an academic and professional credentials check for applicable positions in accordance with accreditation and professional standards

and requirements. For employees with a job-related professional license or certifications, the Institutional Office of Human Resources or official designee should also review any related disciplinary actions, including suspensions and/or revocations of required licenses or certifications.

- Employment of Nonresident Foreign Nationals must comply with all applicable federal laws, stipulations, and restrictions.
- Employing individuals under the age of eighteen (18) years must comply with the U.S. Department of Labor regulations. (See also HRAP Provision on Age Criteria).

New employees' requirements:

- All new employees must meet the qualifications for the job and terms and conditions of employment.
- Successfully complete a background investigation appropriate to the position to which the individual is being hired. Reference HRAP provision on Background Investigation.
- Complete and sign the Security Questionnaire and Loyalty Oath as required by Georgia law (O.C.G.A. Section 15-11-5 et seq., O.C.G.A. Section 45-3-11). This form shall be prepared in original copy only, notarized, and filed appropriately at the relevant Institution.
- File Federal and Georgia tax withholding forms.
- Enroll in a USG retirement program or the Georgia Defined Contribution Plan as required based on employment status.
- Complete Form I-9 within three (3) days of employment. Employees are required to maintain authorization to work in the United States. for the duration of their employment, including re-certification, as necessary.
- Complete required training as required by the USG and the employee's Institution within the specified timeframe.
- Complete all other forms that may be required per USG or Institutional policy.
- Disclose actual or apparent conflicts of interest.

Current Employee have the following ongoing obligations:

- Maintain all terms and conditions of employment.
- Institutions must complete background investigations on current employees being transferred, reassigned, reclassified, or promoted into "positions of trust" and take any appropriate actions based on the investigation outcome.
- Any current employee charged with a crime (other than a minor traffic offense) shall report being charged with such crime to the employee's Institutional Office of Human Resources within 72 hours of becoming aware of such a charge. Failure to report being charged with such a crime may result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment. Human Resources will review the nature of the crime and make a determination on what, if any, action should be taken regarding the employee's employment status until resolution of the charge.
- Any current employee convicted of a crime (other than a minor traffic offense) must report such conviction to the employee's intuitional Office of Human Resources within 24 hours of the conviction. The Office of Human Resources will review the nature of the crime for which the employee was convicted and make a determination on the appropriate employment action to take.
- Failure to report being charged or convicted may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
- An employee who prior to arrest for an offense involving a controlled substance, marijuana, or a dangerous drug, voluntarily discloses use of such substance to their immediate supervisor and is receiving or agrees to receive treatment under an approved drug abuse and education program may be retained by the Institution under the conditions set forth in BOR policy on Voluntary Disclosure of Drug Use (8.2.17).
- Employees should follow the procedures established at their Institution to disclose potential, actual, or apparent conflicts of interest and gain approval for compensated outside activities. Reference HRAP provision on Conflicts of Interest, Conflicts of Commitment and Outside Activities.

Training Requirements for new and current employees

All Actively Employed Individuals are required as a condition of that individual's employment with the USG to complete the following training as part of orientation and ongoing within the established timeframes as required. It is strongly encouraged that all required training be completed before the employee reports to their assigned unit. All such training must be completed no later than 30 days from the employee's hire date.

USG Required Training

Right to Know Training

As an employee of the State of Georgia, we are required to ensure you know about hazardous chemicals in the workplace. This right is guaranteed under Georgia's "Public Employee Hazardous Chemical Protection and Right to Know Act of 1988" (O.C.G.A. 45-22-2). This training will typically be coordinated through the Institution's Office of Human Resources.

USG Cybersecurity Awareness Training Requirements

Cybersecurity Awareness training will provide information on how to identify and report cyber threats to protect the integrity of the organization. In addition to completing the initial cybersecurity awareness training at orientation, all USG employees are also required to complete the cybersecurity awareness training at a minimum of twice annually. This training will typically be coordinated through the Institution's Office of Human Resources or Cybersecurity Department. Employees who do not complete the required cybersecurity awareness training may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. See also BOR on Cybersecurity (10.4.2).

USG Ethics Training and Certification Requirements

Ethics Training and Certification will typically be coordinated through the Institution's Office of Human Resources, or the appropriate Department as designated by the institution. Additionally, the USG may require periodic "refresher" ethics training and related certification courses. If any employee refuses to complete any required Ethics training and certification, the Institution shall follow the process as outlined below:

Employees

In the event an Actively Employed Individual fails to complete USG Ethics training and certification or other required training, the employee shall be subject to disciplinary action consistent with BOR Policy up to and including termination of employment. Upon the employee's initial failure to complete the training in accordance with the published deadline, the Institution shall have 30 days to obtain the employee's compliance with the required training and certification using disciplinary procedures consistent with Institutional policies and procedures and BOR Policy up to and including termination of employment. If the employee does not remediate the requirement within 30 days, then the disciplinary process outlined as follows shall be implemented. Nothing in the following process shall be construed as preventing the Institution from taking measures that it deems necessary to obtain compliance prior to the end of the 30-day period. Upon an employee's failure to complete the required training and certification, the employee's immediate supervisor of the employee shall convene a meeting and issue a verbal warning. If the employee does not remediate this requirement within three (3) business days of having received the verbal warning, then the employee will be relieved of any supervisory or budgetary responsibilities until such time as that the employee has successfully completed the required training and certification.

In the event that a tenured or non-tenured Actively Employed Individual with faculty rank continues to fail to complete the training and certification, the President of the relevant Institution shall remove the faculty member for cause consistent with the policy and procedures outlined in BOR policy on Discipline and Removal of Faculty Members (8.3.9.) If the faculty member is tenure-track, non-tenure, or part-time and/or adjunct and refuses to complete the training and certification, the faculty member shall also be subject to non-renewal of contract or non-reappointment.

All non-faculty Actively Employed Individual shall have a total of ten business days from the date of the verbal warning to complete the required training and certification. If the employee still fails to complete the training and certification at the end of the ten-business day period, then the employee shall receive a final written warning and will be given ten additional business days to complete the required training. If the employee continues to fail to complete the training by the regular close of business on the tenth day after the issuance of the final written warning, then their employment shall be terminated.

The USG Vice Chancellor for Human Resources and/or the Office for Ethics and Compliance may periodically require reports from Institutions with respect to their completion of ethics certification and training requirements. These reports will periodically be summarized and presented to the Board of Regents' Committee on Internal Audit, Risk, and Compliance.

Student Employees

Student employees shall be subject to the ethics training and certification requirements and associated disciplinary procedures as outlined in the "Employees" section above unless the Institution has decided to deliver an alternate ethics training and certification process. Institutions may deliver ethics training and certification to student employees using alternative means with approval from the Institution President. Alternative means for delivery of ethics training shall minimally include:

- The student employee's review of the USG Ethics Policy.
- A physical and/or electronic signature indicating the student employee's understanding of and compliance with the USG Ethics Policy; and,
- Periodic re-review and recertification of the USG Ethics Policy by the student employee.

Institutions that elect an alternative means to train student employees shall submit their proposed student employee ethics training and certification program to the USG Vice Chancellor for Human Resources and the USG Vice Chancellor for Organizational Effectiveness for review and approval prior to the Institution President approving an alternative delivery method.

Alternative Delivery Methods

Institutions may, with approval from the Vice Chancellor for Human Resources and the USG Office for Ethics and Compliance, choose alternative means to deliver USG Ethics Policy training and certification requirements. Alternative means for delivery of ethics training shall minimally include:

- Training, e.g., discussion groups, classes, online training, seminars, convocations, etc., that addresses the tenets of the USG Ethics Policy and current USG ethics issues as defined in published guidance;
- Review of the actual USG Ethics Policy; and,
- A physical and/or electronic signature indicating the Actively Employed Individual's understanding of and compliance with the USG Ethics Policy.

Scheduling of alternative delivery methods shall be consistent with the training deadlines established in this HRAP provision for completion of the USG Ethics Policy periodic training and certification requirements. Additionally, Institutions shall enforce compliance with the alternative delivery methods as outlined under the "Employee" section above.

Institutions choosing an alternative means to deliver USG Ethics Policy training and certification requirements shall submit their proposed employee ethics training and certification program to the USG Vice Chancellor for Human Resources and the USG Office for Ethics and Compliance for review and approval prior to the Institution President approving an alternative delivery method.

Institution Level Training

In addition to completing USG training requirements, actively employed individuals are required to complete role specific training as established and required by their respective Institutions (i.e., role specific training).

All mandatory training required by the Institution must be approved by Institution's Chief Human Resources Officer ("CHRO") and the Institution's President. No Institution training may include affirmations, ideological tests, or oaths (including diversity statements). BOR policy provides that faculty are to be hired and evaluated based on their achievement and the success of students. Additionally, individual units and departments are not permitted to mandate training for departmental employees beyond that approved by the Institution's president and CHRO as outlined above.

Mandatory employee training should be limited to that which complies with Board of Regents (BOR), state, and federal policies, regulations, and laws.

Examples of appropriate topics for training include:

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.
- Functional training required for the performance of an individual job.
- Best practices related to an employee's engagement and communication.
- Any requirements encompassed with this HRAP on General Criteria for Employment.

Institutions are expected to maintain training records for all employees which may include sign-in sheets, electronic attendance records, or certificates of completion. Reference HRAP on Employee Recruitment for guidance on required training to employees responsible for recruiting and hiring faculty and staff to ensure that Institutional procedures are appropriately and consistently followed.

Responsible Parties and Contact Information

Party	Responsibility	Phone/Email/URL
USG Office of Human Resources	Ensure compliance with policy; maintain up-to-date list of required forms; provide guidance on meeting requirements. Approve alternative means of obtaining policy compliance with respect to the USG Ethics Policy training and certification requirements for faculty and staff.	404-962-3235 or email usg-hr@usg.edu
USG Office of Ethics and Compliance	Provide counsel and guidance on an as-needed basis regarding USG Ethics Training and Certification. Approve alternative means of obtaining policy compliance with respect to the USG Ethics Policy training and certification requirements for faculty and staff.	Wesley.Horne@usg.edu usg.edu/audit/compliance
Institution Chief Human Resources Officers	Ensure compliance with policy, establish Institutional processes to comply.	See University System HR Officer Listing
USG Office of Cybersecurity Awareness	Provides guidance on an as needed basis regarding USG Cybersecurity Training	706-583-2400 or email cybersecurity@usg.edu

Website Address for This Policy

- HRAP General Criteria for Employment

Appendices (Internal Documents, Forms and Web Links)

- Guidelines on Conformity with Third-Party Employment Requirements for USG Employees
- BOR University System of Georgia Ethics Policy 8.2.18
- HRAP Employee Orientation
- HRAP Employment Application
- HRAP Employee Recruitment (New)
- HRAP Background Investigation
- HRAP Eligibility for Rehire
- HRAP Age Criteria
- HRAP Conformity with Federal Grants
- BOR Faculty Application 8.3.10
- BOR Faculty Employment 8.3.1
- Board Policy on Cybersecurity (10.4.2)
- USG Information Technology Handbook (5.9) Cyber Security
- Right to Know (Hazardous Chemicals in the Workplace) Training Resource
- BOR Voluntary Disclosure of Drug Use 8.2.17
- BOR Immunization 4.8
- HRAP Appendix: Guidelines on Conformity with Third Party Requirements

Related Documents and Resources (External)

- None

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