

# Trinity Valley Community College

## 2023–2024 Employee Handbook



If you have difficulty accessing the information in this document because of a disability, please e-mail Melinda Berry at [disability@tvcc.edu](mailto:disability@tvcc.edu).

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# Introduction

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information that will help with questions and pave the way for a successful year. Not all college policies and procedures are included. Those that are, have been summarized. Suggestions for additions and improvements to this handbook are welcome and may be sent to [Human Resources](#).

This handbook is neither a contract nor a substitute for the official college policy manual. Nor is it intended to alter the at-will status of noncontract employees in any way. Rather, it is a guide to, and a brief explanation of, college policies and procedures related to employment. These policies and procedures can change at any time; these changes shall supersede any handbook provisions that are not compatible with the change. For more information, employees may refer to the policy codes that are associated with handbook topics, confer with their supervisor, or call the appropriate college office. College policies can be accessed online at <http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/623>.

# College Information

## Accreditation

*Policies AA, AB, AC Series*

Trinity Valley Community College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate and baccalaureate degrees. Trinity Valley Community College also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of Trinity Valley Community College may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling (404) 679-4500, or by using information available on [SACSCOC's website. \(www.sacscoc.org\)](http://www.sacscoc.org) SACSCOC is to be contacted only if there is evidence that appears to support the College's significant non-compliance with a requirement or standard. All other inquiries about TVCC, such as admission requirements, financial aid, educational programs, etc., should be directed to the College at 100 Cardinal Drive, Athens, Texas 75751 or by calling 903-675-6200. TVCC received initial accreditation to award associate degrees from SACSCOC in 1952 and received its last reaffirmation of accreditation in 2017 and has no sanctions or negative actions.

The Department of Education (DOE) recognizes the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing for TVCC's Associate Degree Nursing Program that received its last reaffirmation of accreditation in 2017 and has no sanctions or negative actions.

## History

Henderson County Junior College was founded by a group of Athens civic leaders headed by J. P. Pickens, Orval Pirtle, and public-school administrators in late 1945 and early 1946. The creation of Henderson County Junior College was formally approved by voters in the election of May 4, 1946. The first registration was conducted in temporary facilities at Athens High School on June 3, 1946, and three days later, classes began there. The Board of Trustees provided Henderson County Junior College with its own facilities at the present location of the Athens campus on June 24, 1946. The college moved to its new campus for the beginning of the fall semester, 1946.

Henderson County Junior College began its development into a multi-campus institution with the initiation of an off-campus instructional program at the Texas Department of Corrections, Coffield Unit, in the spring of 1969. Course offerings were subsequently expanded to the following correctional units: Beto I, Powledge Unit, and the Michael Unit. The campus in Palestine was established in 1972 and moved to its present facility three miles north of Palestine in 1975. The Terrell campus was established in 1973 to serve the northern portion of what had become an enlarged Henderson County Junior College District. The present campus opened in the fall of 1986. In May of 1983, a new Health Science Center complex was completed in Kaufman for the purpose of providing various health occupation programs. The M.L. Risinger LRC building was added to the campus in 2006.

As a result of the continued regional expansion of the college, the Board of Trustees authorized and approved a name change from Henderson County Junior College to Trinity Valley Community College in September 1986.

Trinity Valley Community College has a proud heritage of service to the people within the region and is currently engaged in continuing growth and development toward realization of its full potential in higher education.

## **Mission Statement**

Transforming lives through affordable and accessible education.

## **Vision**

Trinity Valley Community College will be a leader in providing quality education, innovative programs, and purpose for our students, employees, and communities.

## **Statement of Purpose**

The TVCC Statement of Purpose is determined in statute identified in the Texas Education Code, Section 130.003, which states that the charge of each public community college shall be to provide the following:

- Technical programs up to two-years in length leading to an associate degree or certificates;
- Vocational programs leading directly to employment in semi-skilled or skilled occupations;
- Freshman and/or sophomore courses in arts and sciences;
- Continuing adult education programs for occupational or cultural upgrading;
- Compensatory education programs designed to fulfill the commitment of an admissions policy that allow the enrollment of disadvantaged students;
- A continuing program of counseling and guidance designed to assist students in achieving their individual educational goals;
- Workforce development program designed to meet local and statewide needs;
- Adult literacy and other basic skills programs for adults; and
- Other purposes as may be prescribed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for post-secondary education in Texas

## **Strategic Planning Goals**

The plan for TVCC identifies three overarching goals:

- Enhance the Student, including Student Engagement, Student Success, Academic Success, Workforce Success, and Learning Resources



- Enhance the College, including Business Operations, Finance, Facilities, Technology, Human Resources, and Institutional Effectiveness
- Enhance Communities, including Institutional Advancement, Outreach, and Community Service

## Values

Trinity Valley Community College adopted “The Cardinal Way” as its service standards. The Cardinal Way is to be a leader, and these are the actions of a leader.

- Courageous
- Accountable
- Respectful
- Driven
- Inspirational
- Networker
- Authentic
- Life-long learner

## Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board provides leadership and coordination for the Texas higher education system. Since being created by the Texas Legislature in 1965, the Board has worked to achieve excellence for the college education of Texas students. The Board meets four times a year. Meetings occur in Austin but are usually also broadcast on the Web. Additional information is available on the THECB website, [www.thecb.state.tx.us](http://www.thecb.state.tx.us). The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s mission is to work with the legislature, governor, governing boards, higher education institutions and other entities to help Texas meet the goals of the state’s higher education plan. [60x30](#) was launched in 2015, and thereby provide the people of Texas the widest access to higher education of the highest quality in the most efficient manner. In its leadership and coordinator roles, the THECB routinely calls upon college faculty and administrators to prepare or review procedural or implementation documents, as well as actively implement grant activities.

## Board of Trustees

Policies BA series and BB series

Consistent with Texas law and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges standards, the board of trustees has the power to govern and oversee the management of the college. The board is the policy-making body for the college and has overall responsibility for the curriculum, taxes, annual budget, facilities, and appointment of the president or other chief executive, dean, faculty, and other employees. The board has complete and final control over college matters within limits established by state and federal laws and regulations.

The board of trustees is elected by the citizens of the college district to represent the community's commitment to a strong educational program for students. Board members are elected and serve six-year terms. Board members serve without compensation, must be qualified voters, and must reside in the college district.

Current board members include:

- Steve Grant, Vice President, Athens, District 1
- VACANT, Kaufman, District 2
- Michael Hembree, Member, Athens, District 3
- Dr. Clayton Gautreaux, Member, Kemp, District 4
- David Monk, Member, Chandler, District 5
- Charlie Risinger, MD, Member, Terrell, District 6
- Jerry Stone, Member, Malakoff, District 7
- Ron Day, Member, Mabank, District 8
- Dr. Terry Eason, Member, Kaufman, District 9

## **Board Meetings**

Policies BD series

The board usually meets the fourth Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. Special and emergency meetings may be called when necessary. A written notice of regular and special meetings will be posted on the college website and Henderson County Court House at least 72 hours before the scheduled meeting time. The written notice will show the date, time, place, and subjects of each meeting. In emergencies, a meeting may be held or addition to the board agenda made with a two-hour notice.

The board meeting schedule, agendas, notices, and minutes are posted on the college website <https://www.tvcc.edu/board-of-trustees/?d=270>.

All meetings are open to the public. In certain circumstances, Texas law permits the board to go into a closed session from which the public and others are excluded. Closed session may occur for such things as discussing prospective gifts or donations, real-property acquisition, certain personnel matters including employee complaints, security matters, student discipline, or consulting with attorneys regarding pending litigation.

## **College Calendars**

### **Academic Calendar**

Academic Calendars for each semester is found in the front pages of the [College Catalog](#) and is located at <https://coursecatalog.tvcc.edu>. Faculty should refer to the published calendar and be familiar with important faculty administrative dates that occur throughout the semester.

### **Personal Calendar**

Meetings are scheduled through the Outlook Calendar. Please keep your calendar in Outlook up to date with all “occupied/busy” times, such as appointments, class times, office hours, departmental meetings, committee meetings, professional development, etc.

## **College Hours**

### **Work Schedule**

All administrative, secretarial support and other campus services will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday thru Friday, except for holidays designated by the official College District calendar. All full-time employees of these offices will discharge a 37.5-40.0-hour workweek. Exceptions may be posted as approved by the College President.

### **Summer Work Schedule**

The College may observe a summer work schedule. Please refer to the current college catalog for exact dates for effective start date and end date. Summer work schedule is 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday thru Thursday with a 30 min lunch period.

## **Helpful Contacts**

From time to time, employees have questions or concerns. If those questions or concerns cannot be answered by supervisors or at the campus or department level, the employee is encouraged to contact the appropriate department as listed on [www.tvcc.edu](http://www.tvcc.edu):

- [TVCC Catalog](#)
- [Continuing Education website](#)
- [Adult Education website](#)
- [TEXAS Higher Education Data](#)
- [Financial Aid](#)
- [TVCC Police](#)
- [TVCC Admissions](#)
- [Campus Housing & Dining](#)

- [TVCC Bookstore](#)
- [TVCC Organizational Chart](#)

# Employment

## Equal Employment Opportunity

Policies DAA series, DIAA, DIAB

Trinity Valley Community College does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), gender, national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, or on any other basis prohibited by law. Additionally, the college does not discriminate against an employee or applicant who acts to oppose such discrimination or participates in the investigation of a complaint related to a discriminatory employment practice. Employment decisions will be made based on each applicant's job qualifications, experience, and abilities.

In accordance with Title IX and 34 C.F.R. part 106, the college does not discriminate on the basis of sex and is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. The prohibition against discrimination extends to employment. Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the college's Title IX coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.

The college designates and authorizes the following employee as the Title IX coordinator to address concerns or inquiries regarding discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment: Dr. Janene Dotts, Director of Human Resources, 100 Cardinal Dr. #AD214, 903-675-6215, orjanene.dotts@tvcc.edu.

The college designates and authorizes the following employee as the ADA/Section 504 coordinator to address concerns regarding discrimination on the basis of a disability: Mrs. Melinda Berry, Director of Student Access and Counseling, 100 Cardinal Dr. #AT324, 903-675-6224, mlberry@tvcc.edu.

Questions or concerns relating to discrimination for any other reason should be directed to the college president or chancellor. Reports of discrimination may be made as described in the Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation sections.

## Job Vacancy Announcements

Policy DC

Announcements of job vacancies by position and location are posted on a regular basis to the college website and at various location on each campus. Current employees who have a minimum of three months continuous service in their present positions may apply for vacancies

for which they have appropriate qualifications. Employees seeking to transfer must first go to Human Resources and complete the proper form. Once completed, Human Resources will forward the requests to the appropriate personnel. Immediate supervisors will be notified when an employee applies for an internal position. Requesting a transfer does not automatically guarantee a transfer.

## **Employment after Retirement**

Policy DC

An individual receiving retirement benefits from the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) may be employed by the college if the board determines that the employment is in the best interests of the college and the person has been retired for at one full calendar month before the effective date of employment. An individual who retired under the Texas Optional Retirement Program also may be rehired and is not subject to a waiting period. Failure to Follow TRS rules may result in a reduction or loss of annuity.

## **Contract and Noncontract Employment**

Policies DCA, DCB, DCC

College employees are either issued a contract or are considered employed at will.

**Term Contracts.** Only the College President and faculty will be employed by contract for a term of up to one year. The terms and conditions of employment are detailed in the contract and employment policies. All contract employees will receive a copy of their contract. Employment policies can be accessed online, or copies will be provided upon request.

**At-Will Employment.** Employees that are not issued a contract are employed at will. Employment is not for any specified term and may be terminated at any time by the employee or the college.

## **Recertification of Employment Authorization**

Policy DC

At the time of hire, all employees must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form (Form I-9) and present documents to verify identity and employment authorization.

Employees whose immigration status, employment authorization, or employment authorization documents have expired must present new documents that show current employment authorization. Employees should file the necessary application or petition sufficiently in advance to ensure that they maintain continuous employment authorization or valid employment authorization documents. Contact [Human Resources](#) if you have any questions regarding reverification of employment authorization.

## Searches and Alcohol and Drug Testing

Policy CR, DHA

Non-investigatory searches in the workplace including accessing an employee's desk, file cabinets, or work area, or college-owned technology to obtain information needed for usual business purposes may occur when an employee is unavailable. Therefore, employees are hereby notified that they have no legitimate expectation of privacy in those places. In addition, the college reserves the right to conduct searches when there is reasonable cause to believe a search will uncover evidence of work-related misconduct. Such an investigatory search may include drug and alcohol testing if the suspected violation relates to drug or alcohol use. The college may search the employee, the employee's personal items, and work areas including college-owned technology resources, lockers, and private vehicles parked on college premises or work sites or used in college business. Disciplinary action, up to and including termination, may result if an employee refuses to submit to testing or is found to violate college policy.

**Employees Required to Have a Commercial Driver's License.** Any employee whose duties require a commercial driver's license (CDL) is subject to drug and alcohol testing. This includes all drivers who operate a motor vehicle designed to transport 16 or more people counting the driver, drivers of large vehicles, or drivers of vehicles used in the transportation of hazardous materials. Faculty, coaches, or other employees who primarily perform duties other than driving are subject to testing requirements if their duties include driving a commercial motor vehicle.

Drug testing will be conducted before an individual assumes driving responsibilities. Alcohol and drug tests will be conducted when reasonable suspicion exists and at random. Return-to-duty and follow-up testing will be conducted if an employee who has violated the prohibited alcohol conduct standards or tested positive for alcohol or drugs is allowed to return to duty. Testing may be conducted following accidents.

All employees required to have a CDL or who otherwise are subject to alcohol and drug testing will receive a copy of the relevant policy, the testing requirements, and detailed information on alcohol and drug abuse and the availability of assistance programs.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to alcohol and drug policies and related educational material should contact [Janene Dotts, Director of Human Resources](#), 903-675-6215.

## Workload and Work Schedules

Policies DEA, DJ

**Exempt Employees.** Faculty, administrators, and other professionals may be exempt from overtime pay and are employed according to the work schedules set by the college.

**Nonexempt Employees** Nonexempt employees may be compensated on an hourly basis or on a salary basis. Employees who are paid on an hourly basis shall be compensated for all hours worked. A nonexempt employee shall have the approval of his or her supervisor before working overtime.

## **Breaks for Expression of Breast Milk**

Policies DG

The college supports the practice of expressing breast milk and makes reasonable accommodations for the needs of employees who express breast milk. A place, other than a multiple user bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from other employees and the public where the employee can express breast milk will be provided.

A reasonable amount of break time will be provided when the employee has a need to express milk. For nonexempt employees, these breaks are unpaid and are not counted as hours worked. Employees should meet with their supervisor to discuss their needs and arrange break times.

The Providing Urgent Maternal Protections of Nursing Mothers Act (PUMP Act) requires an employee notify the college if they believe the college is out of compliance in providing breaks for a nursing mother. The employee must give the college 10 days to come into compliance before making any claim of liability against the district. An employee with concerns should contact Human Resources at (903)670-6308.

## **Pregnant Workers Fairness Act**

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) provides consideration of accommodations to employees who have known limitations related to pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. An employee seeking a PWFA accommodation should contact TVCC Human Resources Department at (903)670-6308 to begin the interactive process.

## **Outside Employment**

Policy DBD, DBF

Employees are required to disclose in writing to their immediate supervisor any outside employment that may create a potential conflict of interest with their assigned duties and responsibilities or the best interest of the college.

A faculty member shall give full-time service to the College District. Any non-school employment by a faculty member shall be permitted only upon the approval of the College President. Non-school employment that interferes with the regularly assigned duties of the faculty member shall not be permitted.

A faculty member shall be allowed to engage in non-school employment during extended holidays or other such periods so long as the work is generally in keeping with the commonly accepted standards of dignity and social station for faculty members.

## **Performance Evaluation**

Policy DL series

Evaluation is an important component in promoting continuous improvement, enhancing student learning, and achieving excellence in the educational process. Therefore, the College District has adopted the following evaluation procedures for administration, faculty, and staff:

1. Evaluate faculty for the purpose of enhancing student learning and encouraging professional growth through a meaningful faculty development program; and
2. Evaluate all administration and staff for the purpose of promoting and supporting an ongoing initiative designed to enhance student learning.

Typically, evaluations will be done in October and will be for the prior academic/fiscal year.

# **Compensation and Benefits**

## **Salaries, Wages, and Stipends**

Policies DE, DEA, DEAB

Employees are paid in accordance with administrative guidelines and an established pay structure. The college's pay plans are reviewed by the administration each year and adjusted as needed. All college positions are classified as exempt or nonexempt according to federal law. Professional employees and academic administrators are generally classified as exempt and are paid twelve-month salaries. They are not entitled to overtime compensation. Other employees are generally classified as non-exempt and are paid an hourly wage or salary and receive compensatory time or overtime pay for each hour worked beyond 37.5 or 40 hrs. in a workweek.

Faculty who teach courses in addition to a regular course load and exempt employees who perform supplemental duties, may be paid a stipend in addition to their salary according to the college's overload schedule.

Employees should e-mail [payroll@tvcc.edu](mailto:payroll@tvcc.edu) for more information about the college's pay schedules or their own pay.

## **Paychecks**

All employees are paid on a semi-monthly basis, except for adjunct faculty\*, and Campus Police Officers (Bi-weekly). Exceptions to payday may be made when a weekend or school holiday



falls on the designated pay date. Full-time faculty salaries are divided into 24 equal payments issued semi-monthly.

\*Adjunct and Full-Time Faculty teaching courses/overloads will be paid in eight equal installments for the fall semester (September through December), eight equal installments for the Spring semester (February through May), four equal installments for the first summer semester (June and July), two installments for the second summer semester (August), and six equal installments for all summer (June, July, and August). These procedures are subject to timing of the start of the semester and to the due date for the special assignment agreements. If the pay date falls over a weekend or holiday, the paycheck is issued on the last business day before the weekend or holiday. Payment for overloads is dependent upon timely submission of assignment contracts and/or "Special Assignment Agreement" forms.

An employee's payroll statement contains detailed information including deductions, withholding information, and the amount of leave accumulated. The schedule of pay dates are available on the Human Resources department page under [Payroll](#).

## **Automatic Payroll Deposit**

All compensation and wages will be paid via direct deposit. All changes for Direct Deposits are to be done by the employee through the employee self service portal. Contact [Human Resources](#) for more information about the direct deposit service.

## **Payroll Deductions**

Policy CDDA

The college is required to make the following automatic payroll deductions:

- Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) or Social Security employee contributions
- Federal income tax required for all full-time employees
- Medicare tax (applicable only to employees hired after March 31, 1986)
- Child support and spousal maintenance, if applicable
- Delinquent federal education loan payments, if applicable
- English proficiency course costs, if applicable

Other payroll deductions employees may elect include reductions for the employee's share of premiums for health, dental, life, and vision insurance and annuities. Salary deductions are automatically made for unauthorized or unpaid leave.

The College District shall make deductions from an employee’s salary or wages or shall reduce an employee’s wages in accordance with law or salary reduction agreements executed between the College District and its employees.

## **W-2**

To view your current W-2 information, login to self-service, click “Employee “and then chose “Tax Information”.

\*Note: To view your W-2 through self-service, you must OPT IN. If you chose not to opt in, your W-2 will be mailed out accordingly.

## **Overtime Compensation**

Policies DEAB, DEC

The college compensates overtime for nonexempt employees in accordance with federal wage and hour laws. Only nonexempt employees or hourly employees are entitled to overtime compensation. Nonexempt employees are not authorized to work beyond their normal work schedule without advance approval from their supervisor. A nonexempt employee who works overtime without prior approval will be subject to disciplinary action

Overtime is legally defined as all hours worked more than 40 hours in a workweek and is not measured by the day or by the employee’s regular work schedule. For calculating overtime, a workweek begins on Monday at 12:00 a.m. and ends on Sunday at 11:59 p.m.

Employees may be compensated for overtime (i.e., hours beyond 40 in a workweek) at time-and-a-half rate with compensatory time off (comp time) or direct pay. The following applies to all nonexempt employees:

- Employees can accumulate up to 75 hours of comp time. Once the limit has been reached, the employee may be required to use the comp time or may receive overtime pay for additional hours.
- Use of comp time may be at the employee’s request with supervisor approval, as workload permits, or at the supervisor’s direction.
- An employee may be required to use comp time before using available paid leave (e.g., sick, personal, vacation).
- Weekly time records will be maintained on all nonexempt employees for the purpose of wage and salary administration.

## **Health, Dental, and Life Insurance**

Policy CKD

Group health insurance coverage is provided to regular full-time employees through the Employee Retirement System (ERS), Texas Employees Group Benefits Program (GBP). The college and/or state pays 100% of the medical, basic life, optional life up to 2x annual salary, and long-term disability premiums for the employee only as well as a portion of the dental coverage. In addition, approximately 50% of the same coverages are paid for dependents as well.

Qualifying part-time and adjunct faculty may participate in the program, but the college will not contribute to the employee premiums. Tobacco users are subject to additional premiums that are not covered by the college.

The GBP includes options for medical, dental, term and accidental life, and short- and long-term disability insurance. The insurance plan year is from September 1 through August 31. Current employees can make changes in their insurance coverage during open enrollment each year or when they experience a qualifying event (e.g., marriage, birth, divorce). The medical deductible renews September 1, and the prescription drug deductible renews January 1. Detailed descriptions of insurance coverage, employee cost, and eligibility requirements are provided to all employees in a separate booklet. Employees should contact the Benefit Coordinator for more information.

## **Supplemental Insurance Benefits**

At their own expense, employees may enroll in supplemental insurance programs for vision and accident. Premiums for these programs are paid by the employee via payroll deduction. Employees should contact the [Benefits Coordinator](#) for more information.

## **Cafeteria Plan Benefits (Section 125)**

Policy CDDA

Employees may be eligible to participate in the Cafeteria Plan (Section 125) and, under IRS regulations, must either accept or reject this benefit. This plan enables eligible employees to pay certain insurance premiums on a pretax basis (i.e., disability, accidental death and dismemberment, cancer and dread disease, dental, and additional term life insurance). A third-party administrator handles employee claims made on these accounts.

New employees must accept or reject this benefit during their first month of employment. All employees must accept or reject this benefit on an annual basis and during the specified time.

## **Workers' Compensation Insurance**

Policy CKE

The college, in accordance with state law, provides workers' compensation benefits to employees who suffer a work-related illness or injury on the job. Workers' Compensation Solutions provide and administer these benefits for the college.

Benefits help pay for medical treatment and make up for part of the income lost while recovering. Specific benefits are prescribed by law depending on the circumstances of each case.

All work-related accidents or injuries should be reported immediately to their immediate supervisor, Human Resources, and a First Report of Injury form must be completed. Employees who are unable to work because of a work-related injury will be notified of their rights and responsibilities under the Texas Labor Code. See *Relation to Paid Leave* in Legal Policy for information on use of paid leave for such absences.

## **Unemployment Compensation Insurance**

Policy CKF

Employees who have been laid off or terminated through no fault of their own may be eligible for unemployment compensation benefits. Employees are not eligible to collect unemployment benefits during regularly scheduled breaks in the school year, including the summer break, if they have employment contracts or reasonable assurance of returning to service. Employees with questions about unemployment benefits should contact the [Benefits Coordinator](#).

## **Retirement**

Policy DF

All TRS-eligible employees are automatically enrolled in the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) on their first day of employment.

ORP-eligible employees such as Administrators, Faculty, and Professional-level staff may elect to participate in the Optional Retirement Program (ORP) in lieu of TRS.

The option to enroll in the ORP must be made by the employee and received by TRS no later than the 90th calendar day of the first day of employment. Failure to elect the option of ORP during the 90-day election period shall constitute a default election into TRS. This is a one-time irrevocable decision (except for two very specific circumstances) and cannot be changed. Therefore, ORP-eligible employees are advised to make this decision very carefully after considering both plans and personal circumstances.

Employees who plan to retire should notify the [Benefits Coordinator](#) as soon as possible. Information on the application procedures for TRS benefits is available from TRS at Teacher Retirement System of Texas, 1000 Red River Street, Austin, TX 78701-2698, or call 800-223-8778 or 512-542-6400. TRS information is also available on the web ([www.trs.texas.gov](http://www.trs.texas.gov)).

## **Scholarships: Employee and Employee Family**

Policy DEB

After a year of full-time employment at TVCC, employees, their spouses, and unmarried dependent children (as defined by the IRS) are eligible to receive tuition scholarships at TVCC. These awards are given for enrollment in credit courses only.

The recipient must meet the criteria for admission. To inquire about the tuition scholarships, contact Human Resources. The form for tuition scholarships is available on the Human Resources page under [Employee Resources](#).

## **Tuition Reimbursement**

Policy DEB

A full-time College District employee shall be eligible to apply for tuition and fee reimbursement to assist the employee in the improvement of job skills through higher education programs. See Policy [DEB \(LOCAL\)](#) for requirements.

## **Athletic Events**

Employees are encouraged to attend athletic events if desired. During football season, all full-time employees will be provided two tickets to all regular-season home games. Full time faculty and their families can attend basketball and softball games free of charge. Contact the Athletic Office at 903-675-6359 for information on obtaining tickets.

## **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**

EAP provides confidential counseling and other related services to employees and their families for free. EAP's professional services address a variety of personal concerns and organizational needs, such as:

- Family Concerns
- Marital Problems
- Alcohol/Drug Abuse
- Codependency
- Domestic Violence
- Grief
- Family Communications
- Workplace Violence
- Depression/Anxiety

To contact an EAP counselor that will guide you through the process, call toll-free [1-800-252-4555](tel:1-800-252-4555).

For more information concerning the EAP, view the Benefits and Open Enrollment Information on the [Employee Benefits webpage](#).

## Leaves and Absences

Policies CKD, DEC series, DED

The college offers employees paid and unpaid leaves of absence in times of personal need. This handbook describes the basic types of leave available and restrictions on leaves of absence. Employees who expect to be absent for an extended period of more than 3 days should call the [Benefits Coordinator](#) for information about applicable leave benefits, payment of insurance premiums, and requirements for communicating with the college.

Employees must follow college and department procedures to report or request any leave of absence and complete the appropriate form or certification. Any unapproved absences or absences beyond accumulated or available paid leave shall result in a deduction from the employee's pay.

If an hourly employee does not report or request leave of absence(s) according to college procedures, the incident is considered a "no call/no show". An employee who is absent for 3 consecutive days without notice is considered to have abandoned their job and may face disciplinary consequences up to and including termination.

**Medical Certification.** Any employee, who is absent more than 3 days because of a personal or family illness, must submit a medical certification from a qualified health care provider confirming the specific dates of the illness, appropriate medical facts about the illness, and—in the case of personal illness—the employee's fitness to return to work.

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits covered employers from requesting or requiring genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically allowed by this law. To comply with this law, we ask that employees and health care providers do not provide any genetic information in any medical certification. *Genetic information*, as defined by GINA, includes an individual's family medical history, the results of an individual's or family member's genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual's family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member, or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

**Continuation of Health Insurance.** Health insurance benefits for employees on paid leave and leave designated under the Family and Medical Leave Act will be paid or supplemented by the college as they were prior to the leave.

Employees on an approved unpaid leave of absence, other than family and medical leave, may continue their insurance benefits at their own expense. Otherwise, the college does not pay any portion of insurance premiums for employees who are on unpaid leave. This includes absences due to a work-related injury or illness.

## Vacation

Policy DEC

Twelve month administrative and auxiliary personnel are eligible and begin accruing vacation days at the following rates:

Years of Service	Accrual	Max
1	1 day /month	12 days
10+	1.5 days/month	18 days

Vacation days are accrued on or around the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month. In the event a normal school holiday falls within the period covered by an employee's vacation, the holiday shall not count as a day of vacation time. Vacation leave shall not be taken until it is earned. Vacation time shall not be removed from the vacation balance until the month in which it is used. All vacation schedules shall be subject to the control and prior approval of the appropriate supervisors or the College President, appropriate vice president, provost, associate vice president, or director responsible for various functions of the College District.

## Holidays

Policy DED

All full-time employees are entitled to holidays. Holidays for full-time personnel, other than police officers and grant personnel, generally follow the schedule outlined in the official College District catalog.

## Sick Leave

Policy DEC

To accrue sick leave, an employee must be employed on a full-time basis by the College District for at least nine months per year. Eligible employees shall be granted one sick leave day for each month of full-time employment.

The maximum accumulation of sick leave days shall be 45 days. Sick leave benefits shall accrue only during active periods of employment and may not accrue while an employee is on academic leave, sick leave, or any other extended absence from official duty.

**Reporting Absences.** Employees who are unable to be present for duty because of illness must make every effort to report their absence in advance to their immediate supervisor and/or the next person in the chain of command. Upon returning to work, the employee will complete a sick leave authorization form and file it with the immediate supervisor, who shall forward it to the appropriate supervisor. This must be accomplished on the day the employee returns to

work or the leave will be considered unauthorized, and the appropriate salary deduction shall be made. This policy shall apply to all personnel.

## **Personal Leave**

Policy DEC

All full-time employees who do not earn vacation leave shall be eligible for two days of personal leave per year. Twelve-month faculty earn three days of personal leave per year. For the faculty and professional staff, personal leave must be approved in advance by the division chairperson, provost or associate vice president, vice president for instruction, and/or the College President. For auxiliary staff, the immediate supervisor, and the appropriate vice president and/or the College President shall approve in advance, all personal leave. Personal leave may not be taken during the week preceding nor during the first three weeks of a long semester unless the leave is taken because of an emergency. Personal leave shall not accumulate.

## **Sick Leave Pool**

Policy DEC

An employee who has exhausted all paid leave and who suffers from a catastrophic illness or injury or is absent due to the catastrophic illness or injury of a member of the employee's immediate family may request the establishment of a sick leave pool, to which College District employees may donate sick leave for use by the eligible employee. For eligibility requirements, see [Policy DEC](#).

## **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)—General Provisions**

### **Leave Entitlements**

Eligible employees who work for a covered employer can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave in a 12-month period for the following reasons:

- The birth of a child or placement of a child for adoption or foster care,
- To bond with a child (leave must be taken within 1 year of the child's birth or placement),
- To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a qualifying serious health condition,
- For the employee's own qualifying serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.



An eligible employee who is a covered service member's spouse, child, parent, or next of kin may also take up to 26 weeks of FMLA leave in a single 12-month period to care for the service member with a serious injury or illness.

An employee does not need to use leave in one block. When it is medically necessary or otherwise permitted, employees may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule.

Employees may choose, or an employer may require, use of accrued paid leave while taking FMLA leave. If an employee substitutes accrued paid leave for FMLA leave, the employee must comply with the employer's normal paid leave policies.

### **Benefits and Protections**

While employees are on FMLA leave, employers must continue health insurance coverage as if the employees were not on leave.

Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to the same job or one nearly identical to it with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms and conditions.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

An employee who works for a covered employer must meet three criteria to be eligible for FMLA leave. The employee must:

- Have worked for the employer for at least 12 months,
- Have at least 1,250 hours of service in the 12 months before taking leave \* and
- Work at a location where the employer has at least 50 employees within 75 miles of the employee's worksite.

\*Special hours of service eligibility requirements apply to airline flight crew employees.

### **Requesting Leave**

Generally, employees must give 30-days' advance notice of the need for FMLA leave. If it is not possible to give 30-days' notice, an employee must notify the employer as soon as possible and, generally, follow the employer's usual procedures.

Employees do not have to share a medical diagnosis but must provide enough information to the employer so it can determine if the leave qualifies for FMLA protection.

Sufficient information could include informing an employer that the employee is or will be unable to perform his or her job functions, that a family member cannot perform daily activities, or that hospitalization or continuing medical treatment is necessary. Employees must

inform the employer if the need for leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified.

Employers can require a certification or periodic recertification supporting the need for leave. If the employer determines that the certification is incomplete, it must provide a written notice indicating what additional information is required.

### **Employer Responsibilities**

Once an employer becomes aware that an employee's need for leave is for a reason that may qualify under the FMLA, the employer must notify the employee if he or she is eligible for FMLA leave and, if eligible, must also provide a notice of rights and responsibilities under the FMLA. If the employee is not eligible, the employer must provide a reason for ineligibility.

Employers must notify its employees if leave will be designated as FMLA leave, and if so, how much leave will be designated as FMLA leave.

### **Enforcement**

Employees may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer.

The FMLA does not affect any federal or state law prohibiting discrimination or supersede any state or local law or collective bargaining agreement that provides greater family or medical leave rights.

For additional information:

1-866-4US-WAGE (1-866-487-9243) TTY: 1-877-889-5627

[www.dol.gov/whd](http://www.dol.gov/whd)

## **Local Family and Medical Leave Provisions**

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in the 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave.

**Use of Paid Leave.** FML runs concurrently with accrued paid leave, compensatory time, and absences due to a work-related illness or injury. The college will designate the leave as FML, if applicable, and notify the employee that accumulated leave will run concurrently.

**Combined Leave for Spouses.** Spouses who are employed by the college are limited to a combined total of 12 weeks of FML to care for a parent with a serious health condition; or for the birth, adoption, or foster placement of a child. Military caregiver leave for spouses is limited to a combined total of 26 weeks.

**Intermittent Leave.** When medically necessary or in the case of a qualifying exigency, an employee may take leave intermittently or on a reduced schedule. The college does not permit the use of intermittent or reduced-schedule leave for the care of a newborn child or for adoption or placement of a child with the employee.

**Fitness for Duty.** An employee that takes FMLA due to the employee's own serious health condition shall provide, before resuming work, a fitness-for-duty certification from the health care provider. If certification of the employee's ability to perform essential job functions is required, the college shall provide a list of essential job functions (e.g., job description) to the employee with the FMLA designation notice to share with the health care provider.

**Reinstatement.** On return from FMLA leave, an employee is entitled to be returned to the same position the employee held when leave began, or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits, pay, and other terms and conditions of employment. An employee is entitled to reinstatement even if the employee has been replaced or his or her position has been restructured to accommodate the employee's absence. However, an employee has no greater right to reinstatement or to other benefits and conditions of employment than if the employee had been continuously employed during the FMLA leave period.

**Failure to Return.** If, at the expiration of FMLA, the employee can return to work but chooses not to do so, the college may require the employee to reimburse the college's share of insurance premiums paid during any portion of FMLA when the employee was on unpaid leave. If the employee fails to return to work for a reason beyond the employee's control, such as a continuing personal or family serious health condition or a spouse being unexpectedly transferred more than 75 miles from the college, the college may not require the employee to reimburse the college's share of premiums paid.

**College Contact.** Employees that require FMLA or have questions should contact the [Benefits Coordinator](#) for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

## **Workers' Compensation Benefits**

Policy CKE

The employee shall inform the appropriate administrator whether he or she chooses to use available paid leave. Any paid leave used shall be offset against workers' compensation wage benefits.

An employee receiving workers' compensation wage benefits for a job-related illness or injury may choose to use accumulated sick leave or any other paid leave benefits. An employee choosing to use paid leave will not receive workers' compensation weekly income benefits until all paid leave is exhausted or to the extent that paid leave does not equal the pre-illness or -injury wage. If the use of paid leave is not elected, then the employee will only receive workers' compensation wage benefits for any absence resulting from a work-related illness or injury, which may not equal his or her pre-illness or -injury wage. During the workers' compensation

absence, the employee is not eligible for the college's contribution to health insurance premiums and is responsible for paying the entire amount.

## **Jury Duty**

The college provides paid leave to employees who are summoned to jury duty. An employee's pay or leave balances will not be impacted. Employees may keep any compensation the court provides.

An employee should report a summons for jury duty to the supervisor as soon as it is received and may be required to provide the college a copy of the summons to document the need for leave.

An employee may be required to report back to work as soon as they are released from jury duty. The college may consider the travel time required and the nature of the individual's position when determining the need to report to work.

## **Compliance with a Subpoena**

Employees will be paid while on leave to comply with a valid subpoena to appear in a civil, criminal, legislative, or administrative proceeding and will not be required to use personal leave. Employees may be required to submit documentation of their need for leave for court appearances.

## **Truancy Court Appearances**

An employee, who is a parent or guardian of a child and any court-appointed guardian ad litem of a child who is required to miss work to attend a truancy court hearing, may use sick leave or compensatory time for the absence. Employees who do not have paid leave available will be docked for any absence required because of the court appearance.

## **Religious Observance**

An employee may request to be absent for a religious holiday or observance. Accommodations such as changes to work schedules or approving a day of absence will be made unless they pose an undue hardship to the college. The employee may use any accumulated vacation or personal leave for this purpose. Employees who have exhausted applicable paid leave may be granted an unpaid day of absence.

**Faculty Members.** Faculty members are required to provide written notice of a list of religious holy days to be observed during the semester to the chairperson of the department. The notice may be delivered personally or by certified mail return receipt requested. Faculty are also required to provide advance notice to all students whose class would be canceled.

## Military Leave

Policy DECB

**Paid Leave for Military Service.** Any employee who is a member of the Texas National Guard, Texas State Guard, reserve component of the United States Armed Forces, or a member of a state or federally authorized Urban Search and Rescue Team is entitled to paid leave when engaged in authorized training or duty orders by proper authority. Paid military leave is limited to 15 days each fiscal year.

**Reemployment after Military Leave.** Employees who leave the college to enter the United States uniformed services or who are ordered to active duty as a member of the military force of any state (e.g., National or State Guard) may return to employment if they are honorably discharged. Employees who wish to return to the college will be reemployed provided they can be qualified to perform the required duties. Employees returning to work following military leave should contact the [Benefits Coordinator](#) within the period specified by law. In most cases, the length of federal military service cannot exceed five years.

**Continuation of Health Insurance.** Employees who perform service in the uniformed services may elect to continue their health plan coverage at their own cost for a period not to exceed 24 months. Employees should contact the [Benefits Coordinator](#) for details on eligibility, requirements, and limitations.

## Leave for Emergency Responders

A full-time college employed licensed police officer who regularly serves in a law enforcement capacity in a college police department or an emergency services medical personnel who is a paid employee of the college is entitled to a paid leave of absence (LOA) for an illness or injury related to the person's line of duty. If necessary, the leave shall continue for at least one year.

If unable to return to work at the end of the paid leave and any extension, police officer or emergency medical services personnel may use accumulated sick, vacation, and other accrued leave before being placed on unpaid temporary leave. At the end of the temporary leave, the police officer or emergency medical services personnel will be reinstated at the same rank and with the same seniority the person had before going on temporary leave.

## Employee Relations and Communications

### Employee Recognition and Appreciation

Continuous efforts are made throughout the year to recognize employees who make an extra effort to contribute to the success of the college. Employees are recognized at board meetings, in the college newsletter, and through special events and activities. Recognition and appreciation activities also include an annual Employee Appreciation Cookout and the Employee Milestone Award.

Milestone Awards are awarded at Christmas Luncheon each year. The increments are as follows:

Years of Service	Amount	Years of Service	Amount
5	\$100	30	\$1,000
10	\$200	35	\$1,200
15	\$300	40	\$1,500
20	\$400	45	\$1,800
25	\$800	50	\$2,100

The 5 – 20 yr. increments also receive a service pin. The 25-50 yr. increments also receive a plaque.

## College Communications

Throughout the academic year, the College utilizes various methods to communicate information. These provide employees and the community information pertaining to school activities, achievements, announcements, and upcoming events. They include the following:

- TVCC website – Calendar
- TVCC website – Homepage news
- TVCC Announcements email messaging
- The Valley magazine
- Social media
  - Facebook: [facebook.com/TrinityValleyCC](https://facebook.com/TrinityValleyCC)
  - Twitter: [@TrinityValleyCC](https://twitter.com/TrinityValleyCC)
  - Instagram: [TrinityValleyCC](https://instagram.com/TrinityValleyCC)
  - Snapchat: [TrinityValleyCC](https://snapchat.com/TrinityValleyCC)
  - YouTube: [Trinity Valley Community College](https://youtube.com/TrinityValleyCommunityCollege)
  - LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/school/282482](https://linkedin.com/school/282482)

## Communication of Nondiscrimination Notice

Due to federal requirements, the following nondiscrimination notice MUST be prominently placed in all College materials:

*Trinity Valley Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in its programs or activities. For questions or concerns regarding discrimination based a disability, contact: ADA/Section 504 Coordinator, 100 Cardinal Drive, Athens, TX 75751, 903-675-6224, [disability@tvcc.edu](mailto:disability@tvcc.edu). For all other questions or concerns regarding discrimination, contact: Director of Human Resources/Title IX Coordinator, 100 Cardinal Drive, Athens, TX 75751, 903-675-6215, [humanresources@tvcc.edu](mailto:humanresources@tvcc.edu).*

College materials include but are not limited to the following: announcements, bulletins, catalog, application forms, newsletters, magazines, website, electronic publications, videos,

written materials distributed to students, posters, brochures, newspaper advertisements and handbooks. All non-instructional materials that are distributed to students must be approved by the Director of Marketing and Communications prior to production.

## **Complaints and Grievances**

Policy DGBA

To hear and resolve employee concerns or complaints in a timely manner and at the lowest administrative level possible, the board has adopted an orderly grievance process. Employees are encouraged to discuss their concerns or complaints with their supervisors or an appropriate administrator at any time.

The formal process provides all employees with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest level of management if they are dissatisfied with an administrative response. Once all administrative procedures are exhausted, employees can bring concerns or complaints to the board of trustees. The college's policy concerning the process of bringing concerns and complaints can be found online in [DGBA \(LOCAL\)](#).

## **Employee Conduct and Welfare**

### **Standards of Conduct**

Policy DH

All employees are expected to work together in a cooperative spirit to serve the best interests of the college and to be courteous to students, one another, and the public. Employees are expected to observe the following standards of conduct:

- Recognize and respect the rights of students, parents, other employees, and members of the community.
- Maintain confidentiality in all matters relating to students and coworkers.
- Report to work according to the assigned schedule.
- Notify their immediate supervisor in advance or as early as possible if they must be absent or late. Unauthorized absences, chronic absenteeism, tardiness, and failure to follow procedures for reporting an absence may be cause for disciplinary action.
- Know and comply with department and college policies and procedures.
- Express concerns, complaints, or criticism through appropriate channels.
- Observe all safety rules and regulations and report injuries or unsafe conditions to a supervisor immediately.

- Use college time, funds, and property for authorized college business and activities only.

All employees should perform their duties in accordance with state and federal law, college policies and procedures, and ethical standards. Violation of policies, regulations, or guidelines may result in disciplinary action, including termination. The college holds all employees to the ethical standards expressed in the *Texas Community College Teachers Association Code of Professional Ethics*, which is reprinted below:

***Texas Community College Teachers Association***

***Code of Professional Ethics***

(Revised February 20, 1997)

Professional Educators affirm the inherent worth and dignity of all persons and the right of all persons to learn. Learning best occurs in an environment devoted to the pursuit of truth, excellence, and liberty. These flourish where both freedom and responsibility are esteemed.

To express more adequately the affirmation of our professional responsibilities, we, the members of the Texas Community College Teachers Association, do adopt, and hold ourselves and each other subject to, the following Code of Professional Ethics:

The Professional Educator shall treat all persons with respect, dignity, and justice, discriminating against no one on any arbitrary basis such as ethnicity, creed, gender, disability, or age.

The Professional Educator shall strive to help each student realize his or her full potential as a learner and as a human being.

The Professional Educator shall by example and action encourage and defend the unfettered pursuit of truth by both colleagues\* and students, supporting the free exchange of ideas, observing the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity, and always seeking an attitude of scholarly objectivity and tolerance of other viewpoints.

The Professional Educator shall work to enhance cooperation and collegiality among students, faculty, administrators, and other personnel.

The Professional Educator shall recognize and preserve the confidential nature of professional relationships, neither disclosing nor encouraging the disclosure of information or rumor which might damage or embarrass or violate the privacy of any other person.

The Professional Educator shall maintain competence through continued professional development, shall demonstrate that competence through consistently adequate preparation and performance, and shall seek to enhance that competence by accepting and appropriating constructive criticism and evaluation.



The Professional Educator shall make the most judicious and effective use of the college's time and resources

The Professional Educator shall fulfill the employment agreement both in spirit and in fact, shall give reasonable notice upon resignation, and shall neither accept tasks for which he or she is not qualified nor assign tasks to unqualified persons.

The Professional Educator shall support the goals and ideals of the college and shall act in public and private affairs in such a manner as to bring credit to the college.

The Professional Educator shall not engage in sexual harassment of students or colleagues and shall adhere to the college's policy on sexual conduct.

The Professional Educator shall observe the stated policies and procedures of the college, reserving the right to seek revision in a judicious and appropriate manner.

The Professional Educator shall participate in the governance of the college by accepting a fair share of committee and institutional responsibilities.

The Professional Educator shall support the right of all colleagues to academic freedom and due process and defend and assist a professional colleague accused of wrongdoing, incompetence, or other serious offense so long as the colleague's innocence may reasonably be maintained.

The Professional Educator shall not support a colleague whose persistently unethical conduct or professional incompetence has been demonstrated through due process.

The Professional Educator shall accept all rights and responsibilities of citizenship, always avoiding use of the privileges of his or her public position for private or partisan advantage.

*\*In this Code the term "colleague" refers to all persons employed by colleges in the educational enterprise*

## **Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation**

Policies DAAA, DH, DHC, DIAA, DIAB, FA, FFDA, FFDB

Employees shall not engage in prohibited harassment, including sexual harassment, of other employees, unpaid interns, student teachers, or students. While acting in the course of their employment, employees shall not engage in prohibited harassment of other persons including board members, vendors, contractors, volunteers, or parents. A substantiated charge of harassment will result in disciplinary action.

**Report of Actions Targeting Employees.** An employee who believes he or she has been discriminated or retaliated against or harassed is encouraged to promptly report such incidents to the employee's supervisor, [the Title IX coordinator, Janene Dotts](#), or the college president. An employee is not required to report prohibited conduct to the person alleged to have committed it. If the supervisor or college official is the subject of a complaint, the complaint

may be directed to the college president or designee. A complaint against the college president or chancellor, as appropriate, may be made directly to the board.

Allegations of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking may also be reported electronically through the college district's website at [www.tvcc.edu/titleix](http://www.tvcc.edu/titleix). An electronic report may be submitted anonymously.

The college's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating discrimination, harassment, and retaliation is reprinted below:

**Discrimination.** Discrimination against an employee is defined as conduct directed at an employee on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law, that adversely affects the employee's employment.

**Harassment.** Prohibited harassment of an employee is defined as physical, verbal, or nonverbal conduct based on an employee's race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by law, when the conduct is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that the conduct

1. Has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the employee's work performance;
2. Creates an intimidating, threatening, hostile, or offensive work environment; or
3. Otherwise adversely affects the employee's performance, environment, or employment opportunities.

**Retaliation.** The College District prohibits retaliation against an employee who makes a claim alleging to have experienced discrimination or harassment, or another employee who, in good faith, makes a report, serves as a witness, or otherwise participates in an investigation. An employee who intentionally makes a false claim, offers false statements, or refuses to cooperate with a College District investigation regarding harassment or discrimination is subject to appropriate discipline.

**Prohibited Conduct.** In this policy, the term "prohibited conduct" includes discrimination, harassment, and retaliation as defined by this policy, even if the behavior does not rise to the level of unlawful conduct.

**Reporting Procedures.** An employee who believes that he or she has experienced prohibited conduct or believes that another employee has experienced prohibited conduct should immediately report the alleged acts. The employee may report the alleged acts to his or her immediate supervisor. Alternatively, the employee may report the alleged acts to one of the College District officials below. For the purposes of this policy, College District officials are the ADA/Section 504 coordinator and the College President or designee.

The College District designates the following person to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, which incorporates and expands upon the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended:

Name: Melinda Berry  
Position: Director of Student Access and Counseling  
Address: 100 Cardinal Drive, Athens, TX 75751  
Telephone: (903) 675-6224

For the complete policy, please visit [DIAB \(LOCAL\)](#).

## Report of Actions Targeting Students

Policies FFDA, FFDB

Employees who suspect a student may have experienced prohibited discrimination, harassment, or retaliation are obligated to report their concerns to an appropriate college official. All allegations of prohibited harassment of a student will promptly be investigated. An employee who does not meet the description of a responsible employee may alternatively submit a report of sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, or stalking electronically through the college district's website at [www.tvcc.edu/titleix](http://www.tvcc.edu/titleix). An electronic report may be submitted anonymously. All allegations will promptly be investigated. An employee who knows of or suspects child abuse must also report his or her knowledge or suspicion to the appropriate authorities, as required by law. See *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*, page 35 for additional information.

Reports of discrimination based on sex, including sexual harassment or gender-based harassment, may be directed to the Title IX coordinator. The College District designates the following person to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended:

Name: Janene Dotts  
Position: Director of Human Resources  
Address: 100 Cardinal Drive, Athens, TX 75751  
Telephone: (903) 675-6215

The college's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating harassment of students is [FFDA \(LOCAL\)](#).

Reports of discrimination based on disability may be directed to the ADA/Section 504 coordinator. The College District designates the following person to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, as amended, which incorporates and expands the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended:

Name: Melinda Berry  
Position: Director of Student Access and Counseling  
Address: 100 Cardinal Drive, Athens, TX 75751  
Telephone: (903) 675-6224

The college's policy that includes definitions and procedures for reporting and investigating discrimination based on disability is [FFDB \(LOCAL\)](#).

## **Reporting Suspected Child Abuse**

Policies DH, DHB

All employees are required by state law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect, as defined by Texas Family Code §26.001, to a local or state law enforcement agency, Department of Family and Protective Services, or appropriate state agency (e.g., state agency operating, licensing, certifying, or registering a facility in which the abuse occurred) within 48 hours of the event that led to the suspicion.

Employees are also required to make a report if they have cause to believe that an adult was a victim of abuse or neglect as a child, and they determine in good faith that the disclosure of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of another child, elderly person, or disabled person.

Reports to Child Protective Services can be made to the Texas Abuse Hotline (800-252-5400). State law specifies that an employee may not delegate to or rely on another person or administrator to make the report.

Reports to the Department of Family and Protective Services can be made to the Texas Abuse Hotline at 800-252-5400 or, if not urgent, on the web at [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org). An employee's failure to make the required report may result in prosecution as a Class A misdemeanor. An employee may not delegate to or rely on another person or administrator to make the report.

Under state law, any person reporting or assisting in the investigation of reported child abuse or neglect is immune from liability unless the report is made in bad faith or with malicious intent. In addition, the college is prohibited from retaliating against an employee who, in good faith, reports child abuse or neglect or who participates in an investigation regarding an allegation of child abuse or neglect.

Employees who suspect that a child has been or may be abused or neglected should also report their concerns to the TVCC police department. This includes students with disabilities who are no longer minors. Employees are not required to report their concern to TVCC police department before making a report to the appropriate agency.

Reporting the concern to TVCC Police Department does not relieve the employee of the requirement to report it to the appropriate state agency. In addition, employees must cooperate with investigators of child abuse and neglect. Interference with a child abuse investigation is prohibited.

The college has established training for addressing sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children, which may be through Canvas. As an employee, it is important for you to be aware of

warning signs that could indicate a child may have been or is being sexually abused or maltreated. *Sexual abuse* in the Texas Family Code is defined as any sexual conduct harmful to a child's mental, emotional, or physical welfare as well as a failure to make a reasonable effort to prevent sexual conduct with a child. *Maltreatment* is defined as abuse or neglect. Anyone who suspects that a child has been or may be abused or neglected has a legal responsibility under state law for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect to law enforcement or to Child Protective Services (CPS).

Employees are required to follow the procedures described above in *Reporting Suspected Child Abuse*.

## **Other Information Relating to Personnel**

### **Minor Children**

Employees are not allowed to bring children to work. Exceptions can be made at the discretion of the department director. However, this is not encouraged.

### **Pets**

Employees are not allowed to bring pets to work.

### **Nepotism**

Spouses and relatives of TVCC employees are eligible for employment at the institution. However, spouses and relatives may not be employed in positions where they serve in supervisory roles of relatives. Faculty and staff members may not initiate or participate in institutional decisions involving a direct benefit to members of their immediate family who are employed by the district. All nepotism policies are found at [DBE](#).

## **Graduation**

There are three (3) graduations annually. Full-time faculty are required to attend, and part-time faculty is encouraged to attend the May and December ceremonies; the August ceremony is optional. Professional staff attendance is decided at the departmental level by the assigned vice president. Faculty who teach in the associate of applied science (AAS) and certificate programs are required to attend that graduation only, and faculty who teach in the associate of arts (AA) degree program will be required to attend that graduation only. The AAS nursing faculty will be required to attend the nursing graduation each semester. Academic regalia are to be worn at the graduation ceremonies. If you do not own academic regalia, it should be ordered at the beginning of the semester through the Athens Campus Bookstore (903-670-2697).

## **Committee Participation**

All full-time faculty, as well as paraprofessional and professional staff members are expected to actively participate in college committees and as club sponsors. Faculty and staff members are given an annual opportunity to select the committees on which they prefer to serve, however Vice-Presidents and President will make final decisions.

In addition to regular committees, faculty and staff may be asked to serve on special committees. Should those committees require travel, expenses will qualify for reimbursement.

## **Custodial/Maintenance Requests**

For help or service with the following:

- Maintenance
- Custodial
- Grounds
- Events Set-up, please submit a work order

Please enter work requests using the:

### **SchoolDude Work Order System**

TVCC Homepage → Departments → Physical → Facilities → Work Request Form.

Enter your email and follow the prompts.

Maintenance Request Submittal Password is “cardinal”

Contacts:

Director of Building Services

903.675.6247

## **Dress Policy**

The need for the college to project a professional image at all times is ever present. Therefore, when determining what constitutes as appropriate attire, employees should use common sense and good judgement. On weekdays, faculty and staff members should conform to the general rules of business casual attire. Though jeans are not generally acceptable, nice jeans may be worn on Fridays. Shorts should only be worn in appropriate settings. Those needing assistance in interpreting the appropriateness of certain attire should consult with an immediate supervisor or Human Resources.

The TVCC Bookstore stocks a wide assortment of college-themed clothing. TVCC does not provide these items for employees. However, staff members and faculty members who wish to wear TVCC-related clothing can purchase those items at a discounted rate. Generally, TVCC themed items are acceptable attire.

## **Reporting Crime**

Policy DG

The Texas Whistleblower Act protects college employees who make good faith reports of violations of law by the college to an appropriate law enforcement authority. The college is prohibited from suspending, terminating the employment of, or taking other adverse personnel action against, an employee who makes a report under the Act. An *appropriate law enforcement authority* is part of a federal, state, or local governmental entity that the employee

in good faith believes is authorized to regulate under or enforce the law alleged to be violated or to investigate or prosecute a crime.

## Technology Resources

Policy CR

The college's technology resources, including its networks, computer systems, e-mail accounts, devices connected to its networks, and all college-owned devices used on or off college property, are primarily for administrative and instructional purposes. Limited personal use is permitted if the use:

- Imposes no tangible cost to the college,
- Does not unduly burden the college's computer or network resources, and
- Has no adverse effect on job performance or on a student's academic performance.

Electronic mail transmissions and other use of college technology resources are not confidential and can be monitored at any time to ensure appropriate use.

Employees are required to abide by the provisions of the acceptable use agreement and administrative procedures. Failure to do so can result in suspension of access or termination of privileges and may lead to disciplinary and legal action. Employees with questions about computer use and data management can contact [IT Service Desk](#).

## Service Desk

It is easy to get technology help from the TVCC Service Desk!

### Web Link:

Accessing the online Service Desk is a great way to get technical assistance. Visit the web link at <https://tvcc.service-now.com> to create and submit an incident. During business hours, Service Desk staff constantly monitors requests and will quickly reply to you with the information you requested. Incidents submitted after business hours will be addressed the next business day.

### Call the Service Desk:

Technical support is only a phone call away. Call the TVCC Service Desk for quick answers to your technology questions. If the problem cannot be easily resolved a trouble ticket will be created and a technician will contact you when a resolution to your problem is available. During Service Desk business hours, the Service Desk staff can be reached by calling 903-675-6300.

### Come by the Service Desk Office:

To expedite your request, you can call 903-675-6300 and schedule an appointment before dropping by the Service Desk to talk with a technician. The IT Service Desk is located upstairs in the Ginger Murchison Learning Resource Center in Room LRC 221. Stop by to ask a quick question, report a problem, or get technical assistance. Full time or part time Instructors can

bring their laptop by for assistance in getting their wireless connection working or have other issues they would like help with. Note that some issues may require scheduling. If you have questions, contact the Service Desk staff during hours by calling 903-675-6300.

## **Computer Software**

The Microsoft Campus Agreement (MSCA) allows each eligible TVCC faculty and staff members to use selected software products on one computer he or she owns, for college-related work. The cost of the Microsoft software licenses is covered by the Microsoft Campus Agreement. The software can be downloaded from the following link. <https://www.office.com>

The Student/Faculty can login there with their TVCC email address and download the Microsoft software. If you are interested in purchasing Microsoft for your home computer, please contact the IT Service Desk. Software is available for current students and active employees at TVCC.

## **TVWIRELESS**

TVWireless is an initiative of the IT Services department to provide TVCC with wireless network access to the TVCC Network in most areas across the four campuses. Access to TVWireless is available to TVCC staff, faculty, adjunct faculty, students and guests. TVWireless provides unencrypted access for most 802.11b/g (Wi-Fi) equipped computers. Note that the actual TVWireless login is still encrypted even when other network communications are not. For information regarding the TVCC Wireless network, please visit the webpage at: <http://www.tvcc.edu/ITServices/wireless>

## **Personal Use of Electronic Media**

Policy CR, DH

Electronic media includes all forms of social media, such as text messaging, instant messaging, electronic mail (e-mail), web logs (blogs), wikis, electronic forums (chat rooms), video-sharing websites (e.g., YouTube), editorial comments posted on the Internet, and social network sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram). Electronic media also includes all forms of telecommunication such as landlines, cell phones, and web-based applications.

Employees are responsible for their public conduct even when they are not acting as college employees. Employees will be held to the same professional standards in their public use of electronic media as they are for any other public conduct. If an employee's use of electronic media interferes with the employee's ability to effectively perform his or her job duties, the employee is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. If an employee wishes to use a social network site or similar media for personal purposes, the employee is responsible for the content on the employee's page, including content added by the employee, the employee's friends, or members of the public who can access the



employee's page, and for web links on the employee's page. The employee is also responsible for maintaining privacy settings appropriate to the content.

An employee who uses electronic media for personal purposes shall observe the following:

The employee may not set up or update the employee's personal social network page(s) using the college's computers, network, or equipment.

- The employee shall limit use of personal electronic communication devices to send or receive calls, text messages, pictures, and videos to breaks, mealtimes, and before and after scheduled work hours, unless there is an emergency, or the use is authorized by a supervisor to conduct college business.
- The employee shall not use the college's logo or other copyrighted material of the college without express, written consent.
- An employee may not share or post, in any format, information, videos, or pictures obtained while on duty or on college business unless the employee first obtains written approval from the employee's immediate supervisor. Employees should be cognizant that they have access to information and images that, if transmitted to the public, could violate privacy concerns.
- The employee continues to be subject to applicable state and federal laws, local policies, administrative regulations, and the *Texas Community College Teachers Association Code of Professional Ethics*, even when communicating regarding personal and private matters, regardless of whether the employee is using private or public equipment, on or off campus. These restrictions include:
  - Confidentiality of student records [See Policy FJ],
  - Confidentiality of health or personnel information concerning colleagues, unless disclosure serves lawful professional purposes or is required by law [See Policy DBA],
  - Confidentiality of college records, including private e-mail addresses [See Policy GCA],
  - Intellectual property [See Policy CT], and
  - Prohibition on the disclosure of information or rumor which might damage or embarrass or violate the privacy of any other person. [See Policy DH (EXHIBIT)]

## **Electronic Communication for Work Purposes - Nonexempt**

DEA Policies

Employees may perform job duties using a variety of electronic communications depending on

the nature of the work and responsibilities involved. Some of the required communication mediums might include smartphones, cellphones, text messaging devices, computers, handheld computers such as tablets and personal digital assistants (PDA).

Nonexempt employees using electronic communications for work-related correspondence during unauthorized times may be subject to discipline for violating this policy. Supervisors requiring nonexempt employees to use electronic communications for work-related correspondence at unauthorized times are also subject to discipline up to and including termination.

If you have any questions relating to this, please contact Human Resources.

## **Records Retention**

Policy CIA, GCB

Employees must retain local government records for the appropriate retention period, which varies depending on the category of record (i.e., the content contained in that individual e-mail message) described in the college's records retention schedule. *Local government record* means any document, paper, letter, book, map, photograph, sound or video recording, microfilm, magnetic tape, electronic medium, or other information recording medium, regardless of physical form or characteristic and regardless of whether public access to it is open or restricted under the laws of the state, created or received by a local government or any of its officers or employees pursuant to law, including an ordinance, or in the transaction of public business. The determination of which category of record applies must be made on a case-by-case basis. If the contents of the record fall in more than one category in the records retention schedule and are not severable, the combined record must be retained for the length of time of the component with the longest retention period. The college's records retention schedule is available for request from Human Resources or the

## **Criminal History Background Checks**

Policy DC

Employees may be subject to a review of their criminal history record information at any time during employment. National criminal history checks based on an individual's fingerprints, photo, and other identification will be conducted on certain employees and entered the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) Clearinghouse. This database provides the college with access to an employee's current national criminal history and updates to the employee's subsequent criminal history.

## **Employee Arrests and Convictions**

Policy DH

An employee must notify his or her immediate supervisor within three calendar days of any arrest, indictment, conviction, no contest or guilty plea, or other adjudication of any felony or offense involving moral turpitude.

Moral turpitude includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Dishonesty,
- Fraud,
- Deceit,
- Theft,
- Misrepresentation,
- Deliberate violence,
- Base, vile, or depraved acts that are intended to arouse or gratify the sexual desire of the actor,
- Crimes involving any felony possession or conspiracy to possess, or any misdemeanor or felony transfer, sale, distribution, or conspiracy to transfer, sell, or distribute any controlled substance,
- Felonies involving driving while intoxicated (DWI), and
- Acts constituting abuse under the Texas Family Code.

## **Alcohol- and Drug-Abuse Prevention**

Policies DH, DI

Trinity Valley Community College is committed to maintaining an alcohol- and drug-free environment and will not tolerate the use of alcohol and illegal drugs in the workplace and at college-related or college-sanctioned activities on or off college property. Employees, who use or are under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs as defined by the Texas Controlled Substances Act during working hours, may be dismissed. The college's policy regarding employee drug use can be found in [Policy Online](#):

- [DH \(LEGAL\)](#)
- [DH \(LOCAL\)](#)
- [DI \(LOCAL\)](#)
- [DI \(EXHIBIT\)](#)

## **Tobacco Products and E-Cigarette Use**

Policies DH, GDA

The college prohibits smoking, using tobacco products, or e-cigarettes on all college-owned property, in college vehicles, and at college-related activities. This includes all buildings, parking facilities, and facilities used for athletics and other activities. *E-cigarette* means an electronic cigarette or any other device that simulates smoking by using a mechanical heating element, battery, or electronic circuit to deliver nicotine or other substances to the individual inhaling from the device. The term does not include a prescription medical device unrelated to the cessation of smoking but does include a component, part, or accessory for the device.

## **Fraud and Financial Impropriety**

Policy CDE

All employees should act with integrity and diligence in duties involving the college's financial resources. The college prohibits fraud and financial impropriety, as defined below. Fraud and financial impropriety include the following:

- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of any document or account belonging to the college,
- Forgery or unauthorized alteration of a check, bank draft, or any other financial document,
- Misappropriation of funds, securities, supplies, or other college assets including employee time,
- Impropriety in the handling of money or reporting of college financial transactions,
- Profiteering as a result of insider knowledge of college information or activities,
- Unauthorized disclosure of confidential or proprietary information to outside parties,
- Unauthorized disclosure of investment activities engaged in or contemplated by the college,
- Accepting or seeking anything of material value from contractors, vendors, or other persons providing services or materials to the college, except as otherwise permitted by law or college policy,
- Inappropriately destroying, removing, or using records, furniture, fixtures, or equipment,
- Failing to provide financial records required by federal, state, or local entities,
- Failure to disclose conflicts of interest as required by law or college policy,
- Any other dishonest act regarding the finances of the college, and

- Failure to comply with requirements imposed by law, the awarding agency, or a pass-through entity for state and federal awards.

## **Conflict of Interest**

Policies CAA, DBD, DBF

Employees are required to disclose in writing to the college any situation that creates a potential conflict of interest with proper discharge of assigned duties and responsibilities or creates a potential conflict of interest with the best interests of the college. This includes the following:

- A personal financial interest,
- A business interest,
- Any other obligation or relationship, and
- Outside employment.

Employees should contact their supervisor for additional information.

## **Gifts and Favors**

Policies CAA, DBD

Employees may not accept gifts, favors, services, or other benefits that could influence, or be construed to influence, the employee's discharge of assigned duties. In addition, acceptance of any single item with a value at or above \$50 or items from a single contractor or subcontractor that have an aggregate value exceeding \$100 in a 12-month period is prohibited.

## **Intellectual Property**

Policy CT

All copyrights, trademarks, and other intellectual property rights belonging to the college shall remain with the college at all times. Except as provided by law, college policy, or written authorization from the college president, use of college intellectual property shall be limited to college-related purposes.

**Copyrighted Materials.** Employees are expected to comply with the provisions of federal copyright law relating to the unauthorized use, reproduction, distribution, performance, or display of copyrighted materials (i.e., printed material, videos, computer data and programs, etc.). Electronic media, including motion pictures and other audiovisual works, are to be used for instructional purposes only. Duplication or backup of computer programs and data must be made within the provisions of the purchase agreement.

**Trademarked Materials.** Symbols, like a professional team’s mascot, colors, slogans, sounds, and like items, are typically protected by federal and state trademark law. Employees are expected to comply with the provisions of the law.

**Patents.** Federal law protects the invention or discovery of a process, machine, manufacture, or improvement. Only the patent holder may use, make, or sell the invention or discovery or a material component of that invention or discovery.

**Work Product.** As an agent of the college, an employee, including a student employee, does not have rights to the work he or she creates on college time or using college technology resources. The college will own any work or work product created by a college employee in the course and scope of his or her employment, including the right to obtain copyrights.

If the employee obtains a patent for such work, the employee is required to grant a non-exclusive, non-transferable, perpetual, royalty-free, college-wide license to the college for use of the patented work. A college employee shall own any work or work product produced on his or her own time, away from his or her job and with personal equipment and materials, including the right to obtain patents or copyrights.

A college employee may apply to the college president or designee to use college materials and equipment in his or her creative projects, provided the employee agrees either to grant to the college a non-exclusive, non-transferable, perpetual, royalty-free, college-wide license to use the work, or permits the college to be listed as co-author or co-inventor if the college contribution to the work is substantial.

For more information visit our [TVCC Libraries: Intellectual Property/Copyright](#) page.

## **Associations and Political Activities**

Policy DGA

The college will not directly or indirectly discourage employees from participating in political affairs or require any employee to join any group, club, committee, organization, or association.

An individual’s employment will not be affected by membership or a decision not to be a member of any employee organization that exists for the purpose of dealing with employers concerning grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment, or conditions of work. Use of college resources including work time for political activities is prohibited.

## **Safety and Security**

Policy CG series

The college has developed and promotes a comprehensive program to ensure the safety of its employees, students, and visitors. The safety program includes guidelines and procedures for responding to emergencies and activities to help reduce the frequency of accidents and

injuries. To prevent or minimize injuries to employees, coworkers, and students and to protect and conserve college equipment, employees must comply with the following requirements:

- Observe all safety rules,
- Always keep work areas clean and orderly,
- Immediately report all accidents to their supervisor, and
- Operate only equipment or machines for which they have training and authorization.

While driving on college business, employees are required to abide by all state and local traffic laws. Employees driving on college district business are prohibited from texting and using other electronic devices that require both visual and manual attention while the vehicle is in motion. Employees will exercise care and sound judgement on whether to use hands-free technology while the vehicle is in motion.

Employees with questions or concerns relating to safety programs and issues can contact the [Benefits Specialist](#).

## **Annual Security Report**

Policy GCC

The college collects information about campus crime statistics and the college's security policies as required by the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act. The college's annual security report issued under the Clery Act is posted to the [Police Department page](#) on the TVCC website in the Annual Security Report.

The Trinity Valley Community College Police Department maintains a daily crime log for all campus property and a fire log for all reported fires that occur in on-campus housing facilities. The logs include the date and time the crime occurred, general location and disposition of the complaint, if known. These logs are available to any member of the public, free of charge, upon request. Logs may be picked up in person at the Trinity Valley Community College Police Department, located in the Math/Journalism building room 105, on the Athens campus. Logs may also be mailed or e-mailed.

In the event a situation arises, either on or off campus, that in the judgment of the Director of Campus Police and Public Safety, or their designee, constitutes an ongoing or continuing threat to the campus community, a campus-wide "Timely Warning" will be issued using the colleges email system and [ALERT system](#). Timely warnings will also be posted on the Police Department's web page. The college will issue the timely warning to provide students, faculty, and staff as reasonably and timely as possible, notification to heighten safety awareness throughout the community.

Anyone with information warranting a Timely Warning should immediately report the circumstances to the Campus Police, by phone 903-203-3970 or in person on the Athens

campus in the Math/Journalism building room 105. On the Terrell campus by phone 972-563-4935 in the “A” building room A102, or any Provost or their designee on the Palestine and Kaufman campuses. Information Warranting a timely warning may also be reported to any Campus Security Authority.

## **Possession of Firearms and Weapons**

Policies CHF

The College District prohibits the use, possession, or display of a firearm on College District property or at a College District-sponsored or -related activity in violation of law and College District regulations.

This policy does not apply to commissioned peace officers in accordance with law.

All persons, including license holders, are prohibited from openly carrying a handgun on all College District campuses and premises.

License holders may carry a concealed handgun on or about their person while on College District campuses and premises. License holders are responsible for complying with applicable federal and state law and [Local Policy CHF](#) and associated regulations.

View more information concerning [Firearms on Campus](#) on the Police Department page.

## **Crime Prevention on Campus**

A primary goal of the Trinity Valley Community College Police Department is the prevention of crime before it occurs. Because Trinity Valley Community College Police Officers cannot be everywhere all the time, they need the help of all members of the College community to take an active role in their personal safety and property protection. Crime prevention is important to the campus community, and you can help by reporting any crime or suspected crime immediately to the College Police. By doing so, you may be preventing someone else from becoming a victim of a more serious crime. For information or to schedule a crime prevention program you are encouraged to call the TVCC Police at (903) 675-6235 or visit the TVCC Police Department on the Athens Campus. The Trinity Valley Community College Police Department offers a variety of crime prevention programs to our community members:

- Personal Safety Awareness
- Office Security Survey
- Sexual Assault Awareness
- Motor Vehicle Theft Prevention
- Bicycle or Personal Property Engraving

## **Protect Your Property**

The following serves as a reminder to help deter the opportunistic thief from taking advantage



of you. For example, in any campus environment, laptops and bicycles are a prime target of the opportunistic thief. The Trinity Valley Community College Police Department encourages all students to participate in Operation Identification, by engraving your driver's license number with the appropriate state prefix on the laptop cover or bicycle frame. TVCC Police also recommend you document the color, make, model, and serial number of the laptop or bicycle and keep it in a safe place. The Trinity Valley Community College Police Department strongly believes the sharing of this information can help in the prevention and reduction of crime:

- By being more aware and observant during your daily activities. If you feel the actions of a person appear suspicious, take the time to notify the police. We would much rather receive the call and determine later there was no problem, than to not be informed when a crime is being committed.
- By being an active participant in Operation Identification, you can record the make, model, and serial number of your property. Also, engrave your driver's license number with the prefix from the state of issuance. Once you have gathered this information, secure it in a safe place so that if you are victimized, this information can be entered in the state and national database of stolen property. The Trinity Valley Community College Police Department can assist you in the engraving of your property.
- By not leaving your property (backpacks, laptops, cell phones, textbooks, purses etc.) unattended and unsecured in the hallway while attending class or other activity.
- By not leaving property unsecured in your office or cubicle. Secure your valuables in a locked desk or cabinet while out of the office.
- By promptly reporting the presence of strangers in buildings.
- By not leaving your property unattended and unsecured in dining facilities or in one of the libraries.
- By not leaving your property unattended beside the court or along the sidelines during your participation in activities in a recreational facility or on a sports field.
- By promptly reporting and cancelling your lost or stolen credit cards and debit cards to prevent unauthorized use.
- By not leaving your laptop, computers, or other computer hand-held devices unattended or unsecured.
- By not leaving your property in plain view in your parked vehicle. Remove and store the items securely in the trunk or remove it for safekeeping.

## **Lost or Stolen Items**

In the event that any of your items are lost, stolen, or damaged, you are encouraged to file a report with the Campus Police Office, (903-675-6235), so that an investigation may ensue, if necessary. You will need to provide the investigating officer with a detailed description of the lost or stolen property. This description includes a serial number, if personal property, the number issued by TVCC if it is TVCC property or any other defining numbers that could aid in the investigation. It is advised that you write down this information including any distinguishing marks, color, etc., that could aid in locating your property. You should keep this information in a place readily accessible to you. The Campus Police Office is custodian of all lost or stolen items.

Unclaimed items are maintained for 60 days before disposition.

## **Courtesy Services**

### **Escorts**

In the interest of safety of the faculty, staff, students, and visitors to the campus, we provide an Escort Service. This service is available between the hours of dusk and daylight to all persons going to on-campus destinations. To use this service, call (903) 675-6235.

### **Vehicle Assists**

Should you have trouble in starting your vehicle, or in the event you lock your keys in your vehicle, Police personnel will be glad to assist you. To request assistance, call (903) 675-6235.

### **Anonymous Reporting**

[Anonymous Reporting](#) is provided as a service to you. We understand there are times when citizens may wish to provide information to the Police about criminal activity and remain anonymous. Providing for a safe community requires a partnership and a commitment from both Law Enforcement and the communities which they serve. We ask you to help us to serve and protect your community by reporting criminal activity by using the link on the police department page.

## **General Procedures**

### **Severe Weather Closing**

The college may close campuses because of severe weather or emergency conditions. When it becomes necessary to delay or cancel classes, a notice will be posted on the college's website and the local radio and television stations will be notified.

[TVCC ALERT](#) is a mass notification system that can alert employees with text messages on their cell phones. Register to receive notifications on the IT Services department webpage.

## **Emergencies**

Policies CGC

All employees should be familiar with the safety procedures for responding to a medical emergency and the evacuation diagrams posted in their work areas. Emergency drills will be conducted to familiarize employees and students with safety and evacuation procedures. Each campus is equipped with an automatic external defibrillator. Fire extinguishers are located throughout all college buildings. Employees should know the location of these devices and procedures for their use.

The Emergency Operations Manual can be found on the [EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS](#) section of [the Police Department webpage](#).

Campus members observing criminal activities and other emergencies occurring on campus should contact law enforcement immediately by dialing 6235 or 9-1-1 from any campus telephone, contacting a police officer on patrol, or in person at the campus police department.

1. Athens Dial 903-675-6235 (Campus Phone 6235) Math/Journalism building room 105
2. Terrell Dial 972-563-4935 (Campus Phone 6235) "A" building room A102
3. Palestine Dial 903-675-6235 (Campus Phone 6235)
4. Kaufman Dial 903-675-6235 (Campus Phone 6235)

## **Parking**

Policy CHC

Upon employment, employees will be issued a TVCC parking sticker which is to be placed on the lower left corner of the back glass of the employee's vehicle. Parking for TVCC employees is designated by the green painted curbs. Fines will be incurred for the lack of parking sticker or improper parking, which could lead to disciplinary measures.

Employees are required to park in the areas designated by the college issued parking permit. Restricted parking areas are clearly marked, and employees are prohibited from parking in areas reserved for visitors, no parking areas, marked fire lanes, areas reserved for the disabled, or any area not specifically designed for vehicle parking.

To request a parking permit, click on [Cardinal Connection](#) on the TVCC webpage. Choose "Faculty & Staff", login and click "Submit Vehicle Information for TVCC Parking Permit".

More information can be found on the [Parking](#) section of the police department webpage. All questions regarding parking should be directed to campus police.

## **Building Access**

### **Keys**

Keys to offices, classrooms, and other specified buildings must be checked out from Campus Police Department located in the Math/Journalism Building. Many areas are routinely locked for security reasons. Each person who receives and signs for keys assumes responsibility for the equipment and supplies in areas made accessible by such keys. Please ensure that doors and cabinets always remain locked and do not loan keys to students or other individuals. Keys must be returned to the campus police department upon retirement or termination of employment at TVCC.

### **Key Cards**

Cards with RFID chips and proper authorization will allow you to enter your designated

building(s) on Campus. Key card access requires approval from a supervisor. Cardinal ID Cards with RFID's can be obtained through the IT Department. To get one your supervisor needs to contact the IT help desk and send in a request. In the request it needs to give the employee's name, TVIN or Cardinal ID and what accesses they will need. The IT department will then create the card for the employee and let the supervisor know when it is ready for pickup. "Sharing" or "loaning" of your ID card is not permitted.

### **Identification Card (ID) or Cardinal ID Card**

Employee ID cards are issued upon hire and are renewed on a two-year cycle. ID cards may be obtained from the campus police department on the Athens campus or from the LRC on the Palestine and Terrell campuses. Part-time faculty members are issued ID cards during the first week of a semester.

### **Purchasing Procedures**

Policy CF

All requests for purchases must be submitted to the purchasing department on an official Request for Purchase form with the appropriate approval signatures. No purchases, charges, or commitments to buy goods or services for the college over \$200.00 can be made without a PO number. The college will not reimburse employees or assume responsibility for purchases made without authorization. Employees are not permitted to purchase supplies or equipment for personal use through the college's business office. Contact (903) 675-6240 for additional information on purchasing procedures.

### **Campus Bookstore**

The TVCC Bookstore is open to all students, staff, faculty, and alumni, the TVCC Bookstore offers excellent selection and pricing on used, new rental and digital textbooks for all TVCC course offerings, plus any required course materials. School/office supplies are always available, along with the latest styles in imprinted TVCC logo clothing and gift items.

### **Name and Address Changes**

It is important that employment records be kept up to date. Employees must notify the Human Resources office if there are any changes or corrections to their name, home address, contact telephone number, marital status, emergency contact, or beneficiary. Send an e-mail to [humanresources@tvcc.edu](mailto:humanresources@tvcc.edu) to request changes.

### **Shredding Bins**

TVCC provides shredding bins for the disposal of information-sensitive documents. There are bins located in various locations throughout the campus. Bins are not to be moved without prior permission from Campus Services. Each bin is locked for security and is routinely collected by a certified shredding agency. All documents to be shredded must be disposed of in the bins;

no boxes marked “shred” will be collected. Paper clips and staples may be left on the documents, but any binder clips, brads, or folders containing metal must be removed. Please note: these are not recycling bins or trash bins; only information-sensitive documents are to be disposed of in the bins.

## **Personnel Records**

Policy DBA, GCA

Most college records, including personnel records, are public information and must be released upon request. Employees may choose to have the following personal information withheld:

- Address,
- Phone number, including personal cell phone number,
- Emergency contact information, and

Information that reveals whether they have family members. The choice to not allow public access to this information or change to an existing choice, may be made at any time by requesting a Disclosure/Non-Disclosure form from Human Resources. Otherwise, personal information will be released to the public. In most cases, an employee’s personal e-mail is confidential and may not be released without the employee’s permission.

## **Facilities Use**

Policies DGC, GD, GDA

Employees who wish to use college facilities for activities must follow established procedures. The building services department is responsible for scheduling the use of facilities. Contact 903-675-6206 to submit a request and to obtain information.

## **Travel Expense Reimbursement**

*Policy DEE*

Travel, or other expense advances, shall be authorized solely for the purpose of conducting official TVCC business, and reimbursement for travel expenditures to employees is subject to the following conditions:

- A. Except in cases of emergency, all travel or other expense will be authorized in advance using TVCC’s Request for Advance: Travel or Expense form.
- B. Out of state or international travel must be approved in advance by the President of TVCC.
- C. Personal business conducted in conjunction with official travel or expense will not be reimbursed. Also, non-TVCC travelers’ expenses (spouse, relatives, etc.) will not be reimbursed.

- D. Reimbursement for travel will be at TVCC stated rates unless provisions within grants state otherwise. All rates for reimbursement are maximum amounts that may be reimbursed. Requests for reimbursements that are less than the maximum amount are authorized at the traveler's request. In addition, departments that have substantial travel costs may elect less than maximum reimbursement amounts.
- E. Travel advances or other expense advances will be requested using TVCC'S Request for Advance: Travel or Expense form. These requests are NOT submitted electronically at this time. This includes all forms of travel advances such as registration fees, meals, hotel, airfare, etc., whether paid directly to the vendor or employee. Advances paid directly to the employee will not be issued more than thirty (30) days in advance.
- F. A Travel Report or Other Expense Report form, which reconciles travel/event advances with actual travel/event expenses, must be turned in to Accounting Services within fifteen (15) days after travel/event is completed. Failure to turn in a Travel Report or Other Expense Report form, along with excess advances, if any, in a timely manner could cause your advances and/or reimbursements to be included in your taxable income.
- G. Personnel who are not currently receiving a travel allowance and who travel regularly on short trips between campuses and miscellaneous errand trips and who desire mileage reimbursement should submit a monthly Travel Report form with the proper documentation that substantiates time, place, business purpose, and mileage for each trip. Although a monthly report is not required for this type of travel, it is preferable to individual travel reports, because it limits the number of checks that need to be issued. The monthly travel report should be turned in to Accounting Services during the month following the month of travel being reported. Failure to turn in a Travel Report form in a timely manner could cause your reimbursement to be included in your taxable income.

For more information concerning travel time and determining compensable travel time for nonexempt employees, please see guidelines from Accounting Services.

## **Travel Forms**

Travel forms may be obtained in Accounting Services.

### **A. Request for Travel Authorization:**

The Request for Advance: Travel or Expense form is the official document to initiate travel requirements. This form must be submitted and approved prior to the date travel is to commence.

### **B. Travel Report:**

The Travel Report form is used to reconcile travel advances (even if no advances were requested, i.e., \$0) to actual travel expenses. Original receipts must be submitted with the Travel Report form. Differences in advancements and actual expenses will result in

- (1) advances greater than actual expenses and excess returned to TVCC,
- (2) advances less than actual expenses and reimbursement due employee, or

(3) advances equal actual expenses. See examples of completed form.

C. Hotel Tax Exemption Form:

Employees traveling on business for Trinity Valley Community College present this form upon check-in at hotel to claim exemption of Texas state taxes.

## Driver Authorization and Transportation Request (Vehicle Request)

*Policy CJ*

To reserve a vehicle for travel you must complete a [Vehicle Request Form](#) found on the [Transportation department page](#).

For more information on requirements for drivers, go to [Policy CJ \(LOCAL\)](#).

# Termination of Employment

## Resignations

*Policy DMD*

**Contract Employees.** Contract employees may resign their position at the end of the contract term if reasonable notice is submitted. A contract employee must obtain the board's permission to resign in the middle of the contract term. A written notice that includes the reasons for the resignation should be submitted to the College President or Human Resources. Once submitted, the resignation may not be withdrawn without the consent of the board.

**Noncontract Employees.** Noncontract employees may resign their position at any time by submitting a written notice of resignation to the College President or Human Resources. Employees should include the reasons for leaving in the letter of resignation.

## Dismissal or Nonrenewal of Contract Employees

*Policies DM series*

Employees on a term contract can be dismissed during the academic year for good cause or non-renewed at the end of the contract term for any reason according to the procedures outlined in college policies. A contract employee that is dismissed or non-renewed has the right to address the board, and if faculty, the administration, according to the college policy.

## Dismissal of Noncontract Employees

*Policy DM*

Noncontract employees are employed at will and may be dismissed without written notice, a description of the reasons for dismissal, or a hearing. It is unlawful for the college to dismiss any employee for reasons of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, military status, genetic information, any other basis protected by law, or in retaliation for the exercise of certain protected legal rights. Noncontract employees who are dismissed have the right to grieve the termination. The dismissed employee must follow the college process outlined in this handbook when pursuing the grievance. (See *Complaints and Grievances*, page 31.)

## **Exit Interviews and Procedures**

Policy DM

Exit interviews will be sent via survey monkey and may be requested by employees leaving the college. Information on the continuation of benefits, release of information, and procedures for requesting references can be obtained from the [Benefits Coordinator](#). All college keys, books, property, including intellectual property, and equipment must be returned upon separation from employment.

## **Reports Concerning Court-Ordered Withholding**

The college is required to report the termination of employees that are under court order or writ of withholding for child support or spousal maintenance to the court and the individual receiving the support. Notice of the following must be sent to the support recipient and the court or, in the case of child support, the Texas Attorney General Child Support Division:

- Termination of employment not later than the seventh day after the date of termination
- Employee's last known address
- Name and address of the employee's new employer, if known

# **Student Issues**

## **Equal Educational Opportunities**

Policies FA, FFDA, FFDB

Trinity Valley Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender, age, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs, including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; Americans with Disabilities Act; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

Questions or concerns about discrimination against students based on sex, including sexual harassment should be directed to [Janene Dotts](#), the Title IX coordinator. Questions or concerns about discrimination on the basis of a disability should be directed to [Melinda Berry](#), the



ADA/Section 504 coordinator. All other questions or concerns relating to discrimination based on any other reasons should be directed to the Director of Human Resources.

## **Student Records**

Policy FJ

Student records are confidential and are protected from unauthorized inspection or use. Employees should take precautions to maintain the confidentiality of all student records. Access to student records is restricted to individuals authorized by law, including the student, parents when the student is a dependent for tax purposes, and college officials with legitimate educational interests.

The [College Catalog](#) provides students with detailed information on student records. Students who want to review student records should be directed to the Admissions Office for assistance.

## **Student Complaints**

Policy FLD

To hear and resolve student complaints in a timely manner and at the lowest administrative level possible, the board has adopted orderly processes for handling complaints on different issues. The following people can provide students with information on filing a complaint:

- AVP of Academic Affairs
- AVP of Workforce Education
- Director of TDCJ Academy
- Campus Director, Palestine Campus
- AVP, Health Science Center
- Campus Director, Terrell campus
- Campus Director, Kaufman campus

Students are encouraged to discuss problems or complaints with the faculty member or the appropriate administrator at any time. Students with complaints that cannot be resolved to their satisfaction should be directed to the department chair or student services counselor. The formal complaint process provides students with an opportunity to be heard up to the highest levels of management (i.e., the president and board) if they are dissatisfied with a department chair or student services counselor's response.

## **Student Conduct and Discipline**

Policies FL series, FM series

Students are expected to follow the college's rules and regulations concerning student conduct outlined in the college catalog. Faculty and staff are required to submit an alleged violation or violations of college policies and procedures, including rules for student conduct to the TVCC

Police Chief or the Director of Student Housing/Judicial Officer within a reasonable timeframe (i.e., within 10 days). The allegations must be submitted in writing through traditional or electronic means and describe the violation and surrounding facts. The vice president, student services, or designee shall investigate the matter if necessary. Additional Information is located on the [Judicial Services](#) page.

## Dining Services

### The Perch, We Proudly Brew Starbucks

Monday - Thursday  
7:30 am - 5:00 pm

Friday  
8:00 am - 2:00 pm

Closed Saturday and Sunday

Summer Schedule:

Monday - Thursday  
8:00 am – 1:00 pm

### Cardinal Grill

Made-to-order and ice cream novelties.

Monday - Thursday  
8:00 am - 10:00 pm

Friday  
11:00 am - 2:00 pm

Closed for Summer.

### The Nest, Cafeteria

The main cafeteria.

Monday - Friday  
Breakfast 7:30 am - 10:30 am  
Lunch 11:00 am - 2:00 pm

## Fitness Center

### Located on the Athens Campus

Fall/Spring

Monday-Thursday

7:00 am – 8:00 pm

Friday – Saturday

10:00 am – 6:00 pm

Summer:

Monday – Thursday

10:00 am – 6:00 pm

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