



## Employee Handbook



# Contents of Handbook

<b>About the Employee Handbook</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Non-Discrimination Policy</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>History of the University</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>University Mission, Vision, and Core Values</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>University Organizational Chart</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Section 1 - Employee Information</b>	<b>11</b>
Key Employee Qualities	11
Employee Categories	11
Employment Applications	12
Reference Checks	13
Background Checks	13
Criminal Background and Sex Offender Record Checks	13
Physical Examination Requirements	13
Prior to the First Week - Onboarding Process Requirements	14
Union Membership	15
Probationary and Provisional Employment	15
Professional Development	16
Standards of Conduct	16
Attendance, Hours of Work, and Punctuality	19
Safety and Use of State Property and Vehicles	20
Use of University Telephones and Mobile Phones	20
Expectation of Privacy	20
Employee Expenses and Travel Reimbursements	21
Children in the Workplace	21
Pets in the Workplace	21
Employee Discipline	21
Access to Personnel Files/Confidentiality	21
Reasonable Accommodations for Employees	22
Job Postings, Transfer, and Advancement	22
Outside Employment	22
Personnel Data Changes	23

Grievance and Complaints	3 23
Employment Verifications and Public Information Requests	23
<b>Section 2 - Salary &amp; Payroll</b>	23
Social Security	23
Medicare Taxes	23
HR/CMS, Pay Periods, and Direct Deposit	24
Self-Service Time and Attendance	24
Contract Positions	24
Payroll Deductions	24
Salary Increases	24
<b>Section 3 - Benefits</b>	25
Group Insurance Commission	25
Health Insurance	25
Life Insurance	26
Long-Term Disability	26
Flexible Spending Accounts	26
Dental	27
Vision	27
Massachusetts State Employees' Retirement System (SERS)	27
Optional Retirement Program	28
Holiday Schedule	29
Vacation Leave	29
Personal Days	30
Sick Leave	30
Sick Leave Bank	30
Sick Leave Extension	30
Tuition Benefits	31
Recreation Center	31
Miscellaneous Benefits	31
<b>Section 4 - Leaves</b>	32
Absence from Work without Pay	32
Adjunct Faculty & Contracted Positions	32
Bereavement Leave	32

Blood Donation Leave	4 32
Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking in the Workplace Leave	32
Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)	32
Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML)	33
Jury Duty Leave	33
Parental Leave	33
Other Types of Leave	34
Workers' Compensation	34
Separation from State Employment	34
Unemployment Compensation	35
<b>Section 5 - Policies</b>	35
Equal Opportunity Plan	35
Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources Policy	38
Campus Crime Awareness and Security	39
Conflicts of Interest	39
Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988	40
Inclement Weather or Emergency Closings	41
Preventing and Reporting Fraud, Waste & Abuse	41
Public Employees and Campaigns	42
Right-to-Know	42
Smoke-Free Policy	43
Whistleblower Policy	43
<b>Section 6 - Training</b>	
<b>All new University employees must complete the following training within the first 30 days of employment.</b>	44
<b>ACRONYMS and Abbreviations</b>	45
<b>Contact Information</b>	46

## About the Employee Handbook

The Employee Handbook provides employees with current personnel policies and procedures. This handbook is designed to assist you, as a member of the Fitchburg State University staff, in the performance of your daily duties. It was prepared in accordance with current Collective Bargaining Agreements, Massachusetts Department of Higher Education Policy Handbooks, and applicable state and federal laws. It consolidates local practices and benefits, as well as state and federal regulations applicable to all faculty, staff, and excluded personnel.

Noted within the handbook will be different applications pertinent to specific employee groups. While this handbook contains summaries of many university policies, rules, procedures, and guidelines, its contents are *not intended to constitute a contract for employment with Fitchburg State University*. Applicable collective bargaining agreements will be cited as appropriate. Collective bargaining provisions may supersede handbook requirements as they affect conditions of employment.

All policies contained are applicable to benefit eligible employees unless otherwise specified. Information will be changed periodically as a result of modifications to institutional policies, collective bargaining agreements, policy changes effected by the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education or the Governor, and changes in state and federal law. Employees will be notified of such changes through memoranda, the web site, and/or periodic revisions of the handbook.

Questions or comments may be forwarded to:

Personnel Services  
160 Pearl Street  
Fitchburg, MA 01420  
978-665-3172  
[humanresources@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:humanresources@fitchburgstate.edu)

## Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy and commitment of Fitchburg State University not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, disability, veteran status, marital status, or national origin in its educational programs, activities, admissions, or employment policies, and to comply with the requirements of Federal Executive Orders 11246 and 11375 as amended, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended, Title IX of the Educational Act of 1972, Section 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 402, Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1988, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Civil Rights Act of 1991, and pertinent laws, regulations, and Executive Orders, directives of the Department of Higher Education of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and other applicable state and federal statutes.

Inquiries concerning the application of, or compliance with, the laws and regulations prohibiting such discrimination should be addressed to:

Rebecca Newell  
Director of Title IX & Equal Opportunity  
Section 504 and Title II of the ADA  
978-665-3172

For inquiries regarding discrimination on the basis of age, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy-related conditions, genetic information, marital or parental status, or Veteran status you may also contact:

U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights  
[OCR@ed.gov](mailto:OCR@ed.gov) | 800.421.3481



## History of the University

When Fitchburg State was established in 1894, it was known as the State Normal School in Fitchburg, and the sole curriculum was a two-year teacher-training program for women. There was no campus then, just temporary quarters set up in an old high school building on Academy Street operated by Principal John G. Thompson and a teaching staff of three. With 46 participants that first year, the program was seen as an overnight success and it became obvious that expansion was necessary. In 1896, the State Normal School in Fitchburg became a single building atop a rural hill that remains operational even today, Thompson Hall.

This early growth is representative of Fitchburg State on the whole: always adapting to meet the needs of an evolving world. So when the students needed a place on campus where they could “observe and practice” their educational pursuit, Edgerly Hall became the next building on campus in 1901. It was an immediate trendsetter for education programs nationwide. In 1910, it became one of the first junior high schools in the United States, and in 1911, it initiated the first-ever practical arts teacher-training course for men. The 1920s saw the expansion of student life programs, giving rise to the literary society, as well as the debating council, glee club, and drama club. Athletics were broadened beyond basketball to include hiking, crew, tennis, football, and bowling.

Additional land was purchased in support of these activities, which left the college well positioned to meet the major academic changes of the next decade.

In 1930, the State Normal School was authorized to offer a bachelor's degree in practical arts, and in 1932, when the name was officially changed to the State Teachers College at Fitchburg, four-year degrees were offered in all areas of education.

While summer courses were first offered in 1915, under the support of the State Division of University Extension, the college was able to establish actual continuing education courses through graduate programs by 1935, and offered evening courses by 1954.

The college expanded its mission in 1960 by diversifying its programs to include degrees in disciplines other than education. It also changed its name to the State College at Fitchburg for five years before becoming Fitchburg State College in 1965. It went by this name for the next 45 years, as it grew to offer 49 undergraduate degree programs in 18 academic departments, 20 master's degree programs, five certificate of advanced graduate study programs, and seven graduate certificate programs.

In 2010, the governor signed legislation that established a state university system in Massachusetts, and the institution's current name, Fitchburg State University, was enacted. Today, enrollment consists of nearly 8,000 students, between undergraduate and graduate populations, and the campus has come a long way from its humble origin in the old building on Academy Street. It offers 42 buildings spread across 60 acres and has become the educational center for the Montachusett region.

Since 1894, Fitchburg State has been proud to serve the educational needs of its students, and with its current offering of traditional and non-traditional programs, it will humbly continue serving its student population for generations to come.

## University Mission, Vision, and Core Values

### Mission

Fitchburg State University is committed to excellence in teaching and learning and blends liberal arts and sciences and professional programs within a small university environment. Our comprehensive public university prepares students to lead, serve, and succeed by fostering lifelong learning and civic and global responsibility.

A Fitchburg State education extends beyond our classrooms to include residential, professional, and co-curricular opportunities. As a community resource, we provide leadership and support for the economic, environmental, social, and cultural needs of North Central Massachusetts and the Commonwealth.

### Vision

Fitchburg State University will be nationally recognized for its excellence in teaching and learning in the current and emergent fields, for its commitment to transforming lives through education, and for its dedication to public service.

In order to achieve this, we will:

- Prepare students for a global society through curricular innovation and program development.
- Achieve academic excellence by investing in our faculty and librarians in pursuit of knowledge, professional competency, and scholarship.
- Employ innovative uses of technology in the library and across our campus to maximize student learning.
- Create a culture of diversity to meet the needs of the region and enhance the personal and academic lives of the university community.
- Build partnerships within our community to provide real-world opportunities for our students and collaborative solutions to community issues.

The core values, mission and vision were approved by the All College Committee, President Robert Antonucci, and the Board of Trustees. Approval from the Board of Trustees was December 8, 2009.

### Core Values

- **Accessibility** - Offering equitable access to high-quality programs and services to people of varying cultural backgrounds living within and beyond our diverse community of North Central Massachusetts.
- **Affordability** - Providing opportunities for students of varying socioeconomic backgrounds to pursue an affordable, quality education.
- **Community** - Forging partnerships with businesses and community organizations within the region to enhance quality of life.
- **Enrichment** - Sustaining a supportive campus environment for students, faculty, staff, and alumni in which all members can grow and excel in their personal and professional lives.
- **Excellence** - Striving for excellence in academic programs and services through innovative teaching and professional practices.

## University Organizational Chart



**Board of Directors****Chair**

Dr. Michael Fiorentino, Jr.

**President**

Dr. Donna Hodge

**Executive Assistant to the President**

Kelli Lundren

**Cabinet**

- Provost and Executive Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Patricia Marshall
- Chief of Staff, Matthew Bruun
- Vice President of Personnel Services and General Counsel, Stacey Luster
- Chief Financial Officer, Travis Chambers
- Executive in Charge of University Operations, Chief of Police, Michael Cloutier
- Associate Vice President of Capital Planning & Maintenance, Matthew Lechter
- Vice President of Enrollment Management and Student Success, Pamela McCafferty
- Dean of Students, Timothy St. John
- Executive Director of Athletics, Matthew Burke
- Assistant Vice President and Chief Information Officer, Stefan Dodd
- Vice President for Institutional Advancement, vacant

## Section 1 - Employee Information

### **Key Employee Qualities**

Employees are expected to actively contribute to the success of the university through effective performance of their job responsibilities and duties and to do so within organizational, ethical, and legal guidelines.

Employees are expected to be dedicated and committed to Fitchburg State University and to demonstrate the willingness to be:

- Flexible
- Multi-skilled
- Work when scheduled
- Considerate to other co-workers and customers
- Team player
- Motivated
- Problem-solver
- Successful through quality job performance

Employees who meet these expectations will help make Fitchburg State University successful, as well as create a productive and enjoyable work environment for everyone.

### **Employee Categories**

Policies governing the employment of different groups are set forth in their respective collective bargaining agreement and/or the Department of Higher Education [personnel policy handbook](#).

Administrators (APA): <http://www.maapa.org/>

- Assistant Dean
- Executive Director
- Director
- Associate Director
- Assistant Director
- Staff Associate
- Staff Assistant

Faculty (MSCA): <http://mscaunion.org/>

- Professor
- Associate Professor
- Assistant Professor
- Librarian
- Associate Librarian
- Assistant Librarian
- Instructor

Classified Staff (AFSCME): <https://afscme1067.org/>

- Unit I
  - Accountant
  - Administrative Assistant
  - Clerk
  - EDP Systems Analyst
  - Library Assistant
  - Etc.
- Unit 2
  - Building Maintenance Supervisor
  - Campus Police Officer
  - Maintainer
  - Trades
  - Etc.

#### Other

- Non-Unit Professionals – see the Non-Unit Professional Handbook: <https://www.mass.edu/forfacstaff/nonunit/home.asp>

#### Contracted Employees & Adjunct Faculty

- **Adjunct Faculty** are non-tenure track faculty members who are hired usually to cover a single lecture or to teach one particular subject. They are offered contracts on a per-semester basis. An adjunct faculty member is eligible only for legally mandated benefits.
- **A contract employee** is an employee hired for a specific job, which they will perform during a specific period of time; such employee works under a contract. A contracted employee is eligible only for legally mandated benefits.

#### Student Employees

- Federal Work Study - those who receive federal financial aid in the form of subsidized work.
- Trust Fund Student employees - those employed that are paid with University funds made available through the budget process.

#### **Employment Applications**

Fitchburg State relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in Fitchburg State's exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

#### **Reference Checks**

To ensure that individuals who join Fitchburg State are well-qualified and have a strong potential to be productive and successful, it is the general policy of Fitchburg State to check the employment references of the first finalist. If those references are not strong, then the search chair will proceed to the second finalist from the onsite interviews. The Office of Human Resources and Payroll Services or the appropriate supervisor will respond to all reference check inquiries from other employers.

### **Background Checks**

Benefited employment offers are contingent upon the completion of a successful criminal and employment background check. Background checks are conducted by a third party vendor, a nationally accredited specialist in the field of background screening, drug testing and verification services.

### **Criminal Background and Sex Offender Record Checks**

A criminal history screening is conducted for all forms of employment, volunteer work, interns and licensing purposes. Fitchburg State University is an agency required by MGL c. 6, §. 171A to maintain a Massachusetts [Criminal Offender Record Information \(CORI\) Policy](#). Personnel Services conducts the CORI on employees at the time of hire.

New employees are required to undergo a CORI/SORI verification as part of the employment process. The Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) [Support Services Unit](#) provides CORI to Board certified, non-criminal justice agencies such as schools, day care centers, home health aides, youth athletic coaches, and municipal government agencies. Individuals may also obtain a copy of their personal criminal record from the CORI Support Services Unit. This unit also assists in correcting inaccurate criminal records, investigates complaints of improper access to or dissemination of CORI, and provides legal assistance on matters relating to the CORI law to police, prosecutors, judges, and the public. Contact the Department of Criminal Justice Information Services CORI Unit at (617) 660-4640 or the office of Human Resources at 978-665-3172 with questions regarding the CORI process. The office also verifies employees through the Massachusetts Sex Offender Registry Board for all employees.

Creative Services, Inc is the University's third-party consumer reporting agency for criminal and sex offender record searches for benefitted employees. Fitchburg State University conducts a request for Massachusetts Sexual Offender Registry Information, through the [Massachusetts Sex Offender Registry Board](#) for all employees.

### **Physical Examination Requirements**

University maintenance, trades staff and university police officers are required to pass a pre-employment physical examination, which includes a drug screening, as a condition of employment.

The President or his/her designee may require an employee to submit to a physical exam by a physician appointed by the university whenever that employee's health appears to be a hazard to others in the university, or when medical documentation is needed to verify the need for sick leave.

### **Prior to the First Week - Onboarding Process Requirements**

New employees will attend a benefit orientation session with a Human Resources representative, on or before their first day of work. During the orientation, new employees will gain an understanding of the benefits available to them as an employee. Employees will complete hiring paperwork through the Onboarding Module, including the Form I-9. The university also uses E-Verify as part of the employment process.

A Human Resources representative will guide new employees through the hiring process, and ensure they meet required deadlines. After the orientation, it is the new employee's responsibility to read the

employee handbook, collective bargaining agreement and all other materials provided by the Benefits and Onboarding Coordinator and through the onboarding module of the jobsite – [jobs.fitchburgstate.edu](https://jobs.fitchburgstate.edu). This link will allow you to log into your onboarding packet to complete any outstanding documents.

The checklist below is an overview of the onboarding process.

**New Employee Checklist:**

1. Schedule and attend a benefits orientation appointment with Human Resources.
2. Complete Phase I of the onboarding process in the online module.
  - a. Please stop by Human Resources with a government issued picture ID to have your CORI/SORI and Form I-9 verified within three (3) days of completing the form.
3. Complete Phase II of the onboarding process (hiring paperwork including the Form I-9 and other hiring related paperwork) through the online module.
  - a. You must provide all original documentation to establish identity and employment eligibility for the Form I-9.
4. Phase III of the onboarding will be sent after the benefits orientation and the completion of the Form I-9.
5. Obtain your OneCard during Benefits Orientation.
6. Read the employee handbook and review policies. If you have any questions, schedule an appointment with Human Resources.
7. Complete required training sessions within 30 days of hire date.
  - A. [Conflict of Interest](https://massethicstraining.skillburst.com/User/index.php) - <https://massethicstraining.skillburst.com/User/index.php>
  - B. Vector Solutions Training will be sent to your Fitchburg State email address.
 

Topics covered include:

Browser Security Basics, Discrimination Awareness in the Workplace, Diversity and Inclusion: Faculty and Staff, Implicit Bias and Microaggression Awareness, Protection Against Malware, Title IX and Sexual Harassment Prevention for employees, and Campus Security Authority (CSA) and Responsible Employee (RE) training, if applicable.

## **Union Membership**

New employees whose position is governed by a collective bargaining agreement will meet with union representatives as part of the benefits orientation or the union will contact new employees during the first few months of employment. The [collective bargaining agreements](#) can be found by visiting the [Human Resources web site](#).

## **Probationary and Provisional Employment**

Full-time appointments to positions at the university are subject to the approval and policies of the Board of Trustees; the general laws, rules and regulations of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; the policies, rules and regulations of the Department of Higher Education; the President of the University; the terms and conditions of current collective bargaining agreements or non-unit handbooks, and the availability of funding for the position. (Positions at the university are not included in the Massachusetts Civil Service System.)

### *Classified Employees*

Classified employees must serve a seven-month probationary period. With the exception of a probationary employee who shall be evaluated at the completion of the first three (3) months of probationary service and again at the completion of the first six (6) months of probationary service, a performance evaluation of an employee shall be made annually by the supervisor during the period commencing on February 1st of each year and ending on April 30th of each year and the supervisors shall submit all completed evaluations to the Chief Human Resources Officer by June 1st of each year. The university may terminate the services of a classified employee at any time during the probationary period (for AFSCME employees, without recourse to the grievance and arbitration procedure except as provided in Article 27, Section 4).

### *Professional Employees*

*Revised September 2025*

The evaluation process of all administrators shall consist of **one** Annual Self-Report

- Annual self report due on or about **November 1st**
- Supervisor completes the Annual Performance Narrative Form on or about **December 15**
- The Annual Performance Narrative Form must be sent to the administrator approximately **seven (7) calendar days** in advance of the in-person meeting
- All forms/materials must be sent by the Supervisor to the intermediate supervisor on or about **January 1st**
- The intermediate supervisor shall review materials/sign Annual Performance Narrative and send originals to Human Resources for inclusion in the administrator's Official Personnel File on or about **February 1st**

More information can be found in the [Association of Professional Administrators, MTA/NEA](#).



*Faculty and Librarians: [Massachusetts State College Association](#)*

Terms and conditions regarding appointment and non-appointment processes can be found in the

*Non Unit Excluded*

Terms and conditions regarding employment can be found in the [Excluded Executive and Professional Employees Summary Description of Employment Policies](#).

**Performance Evaluations**

The performance of each full-time employee is evaluated at the intervals and in the manner specified in the applicable collective bargaining agreement.

Each employee is entitled to review their performance appraisal form before it is placed in their personnel file. The employee may respond in writing to the evaluation, and the response will also be included in their file. Each manager is tasked with evaluating each staff member in a timely manner, while adhering to the collective bargaining agreements. It is imperative that staff understand how they are performing, where they may need improvement and to establish future goals for their success. If you have questions regarding the process for evaluations please contact Personnel Services at ext. 3172.

**Professional Development**

The University recognizes the importance of continuous development of skills and knowledge for all employees. Employees are encouraged to utilize tuition remission or the tuition credit benefits to attend classes, which will assist them in advancing in their chosen field, or in preparing for a career change. Additionally, employees are encouraged to speak with their immediate supervisor on training opportunities, attendance at university training sessions and utilizing the support on campus to assist with sharpening their skills.

Full-time faculty/librarians covered by the MSCA agreement are eligible to apply for sabbatical leave for the purpose of professional development. As the university budget allows, professional and classified employees are able to attend seminars and workshops both on and off campus. For more details please contact Personnel Services at ext. 3172.

**Standards of Conduct**

Standards of conduct are guidelines for all employees to follow in order to create a safe, comfortable, and productive work environment that sets forth a model worthy of emulation by students. All staff members are expected to carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern. The following paragraphs describe the workplace etiquette that is expected of staff members by the Fitchburg State University Administration.

*Respectful Climate*

It is expected that all employees of Fitchburg State will contribute to making the working climate one that is characterized by respectful interactions, cooperation among department personnel, open and constructive communication, and trust. Employees will speak kindly with one another and acknowledge each other's talents and skills, although each individual may have a different means of achieving the same goal. Employees will work collaboratively toward common goals, support each other, and be accepting of

each other's ideas. Employees will be prompt when working with each other, and above all else, treat others as they would want to be treated.

### *Harassment*

Fitchburg State University is committed to providing a work environment free from harassment of any nature, including, race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, marital or parental status, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, or veteran status or any other type of harassment.

Harassment is unwanted verbal, physical, or visual conduct relating to an individual's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, marital or parental status, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, or veteran status. Any employee that has witnessed, experienced or has knowledge of any act of harassment has an obligation to report this to the Director of Title IX and Equal Opportunity, located in Sanders 202, extension 3172. For more information review [Equal Opportunity and Title IX Plan](#).

### *Staff Protection*

The university will act to protect its employees from physical and/or psychological abuse (defined as the intentional or negligent infliction of emotional distress). Any employee who is threatened with harm should notify University Police if there is an immediate threat at ext. 3111. If there is not an immediate threat, contact Personnel Services at ext. 3172 and/or the immediate supervisor. A written report of any serious incidents shall be given to the President and to the Vice President of the area.

### *RAVE Guardian*

[Rave Guardian](#) is a free app for your iOS and Android devices that provides safety services to Fitchburg State University employees and students. The Rave Guardian app provides several tools you can use to enhance your safety on campus:

- Emergency calls & safety tips: Call or provide tips (including photos) to University Police about an unsafe situation on campus or call 911 directly from the app.
- Directly contact friends or family: Import contacts into the Rave Guardian app and communicate directly with trusted contacts.
- Set a safety timer: If you're heading out alone, set a safety timer. The app automatically notifies your contacts if the timer expires before you disable it.
- Guard someone else: Receive safety notifications via the Rave Guardian app on behalf of others.
- Create a safety profile: Automatically share key information about yourself, including a photo and information about medical conditions or allergies, in the event of an emergency.

The app includes step-by-step instructions for configuring and using each of these tools. For more information check out the University Police website for the [RAVE Guardian](#).

### *Fitchburg State Alerts*

Sign up to receive important campus announcements including campus and regional emergencies, snow closure/delays, faculty absences. [Fitchburg State Alert](#) is set up to send notifications to your Fitchburg State University email by default. Mobile phones, land lines, and additional email addresses must be

entered by the user.

### *Workplace Violence*

No employee is expected to tolerate violent actions from other employees, students, faculty, administrators, or any person with whom they come into contact throughout their employment.

Employees should report any incident of violence to University Police at ext. 3111, Personnel Services at ext. 3172, immediate supervisor.

### *Phone Panic Button*

A button on the third page of your phone menu screen called 'Panic'. The Panic button should only be used in an emergency. When pressed, it opens up a one-way intercom connection to University Police. They can hear you, but you can't hear them. University Police will also be sent your location information, and they will send an officer to investigate.

**Phone Panic Instructions:** Please note, the preferred method for contacting University Police is always dialing x3111. If you can't call and need assistance, you can use the Panic button on your phone.

- Using the gray scroll wheel, bottom dot, toggle down until you see 'Panic' on your phone's menu screen. You can also toggle right twice using the gray scroll wheel, right hand dot.
- Press the hard key next to Panic
- You will hear a single beep indicating you have a successful one-way intercom connection with University Police. They can hear you, but you can't hear them. They will also be sent your location information, and an officer will be dispatched.
  - To cancel the Panic, click the 'Drop' button on the menu screen.

**Video Tutorial:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPbk502rV8s>

### *Employee Safety*

The University is committed to protecting its employees from recognized hazards in the workplace.

Massachusetts General Law (MGL) Chapter 149, Section 6-1/2 entitled An Act Relative to Standards of Employee Safety sets minimum standards for employee safety requirements in public sector workplaces, and will be enforced by the Department of Labor Standards (DLS). This law took effect on February 1, 2019.

It is the university's responsibility to generally provide a workplace that minimizes or mitigates dangers that could physically harm an employee. Under MGL Chapter 149, public sector employers are required to implement methods of reducing work related injury and illness. The university implements methods, including training that are job specific depending on tasks and equipment handled by employees (e.g., chainsaws, toxic substances, biohazards, ladders, aerial lifts) as part of the strategy.

If you feel your work area is unsafe, make sure your supervisor is aware of the potential danger and allow him/her to correct the problem. You may also contact the university's Environmental Health and Safety Office extension 3115.

### *Dress and Personal Appearance*

The University, as a matter of policy, does not dictate a specific dress code among employees campus-wide. Employees are expected to practice good personal hygiene and use good judgment in their choice

of clothing and personal grooming. Employees are expected to maintain an appropriate appearance that is neat, professional, and meets the standard of suitable business casual as determined by the requirements of the area in which the employee works. Jeans, shorts, halter tops, and tee shirts with messages are not considered suitable business casual attire for the workplace; the only exception may be jeans and Fitchburg State University t-shirts on Fitchburg Fridays. Remember our behavior is being modeled for our students of Fitchburg State. Departments may specify additional reasonable requirements appropriate for their operation. Supervisors will inform employees of any uniform dress code or attire that may be required of the position.

In addition, a personal interest should be taken to ensure that work areas are kept neat and orderly. Departments, with administration approval, may determine the acceptable décor for work areas.

### **Attendance, Hours of Work, and Punctuality**

Employees are expected to report to work on a regular and punctual basis. The length of the work week is specified in collective bargaining agreements and handbooks.

For administrators, librarians, and classified employees, specific work hours are determined by managers and supervisors in each department. Administrative offices are required to be open from 8:00am to 5:00pm, and work schedules should be planned accordingly. Work hours for faculty are determined by class schedules and contract provisions.

### **Flexible Work Arrangements**

The University must be appropriately staffed at all times in order to effectively pursue our educational mission. The university provides in person services to our community, students, staff, faculty and visitors. In recognition of the wide range of responsibilities and duties required of university staff, there may be some limited circumstances that will allow for a flexible work arrangement to be implemented to optimally balance the needs of the university and an individual employee and/or work team. The availability of flexible work arrangements will vary by academic school, unit, position, duties, and be based on business and operational needs.

### **Safety and Use of State Property and Vehicles**

Departments make a great effort to provide a healthy and safe work environment. It is the employees' responsibility to perform and complete assignments and operate equipment safely. If during the course of an assignment an employee becomes aware of a situation that may endanger themselves or someone else's health or safety, they must notify their supervisor immediately. Safety is everyone's responsibility.

Employees in certain departments are required to complete annual training for health and safety procedures.

Asbestos Awareness	Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure	Compactors and balers
Confined Space/Respiratory Protection	Fall Protection	Forklifts/powered industrial lifts

Hazard Communication (Right to Know)	Lockout-Tagout	Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)
Procedures for reporting emergencies	Site Specific Chemical Training	Tool Use and Guarding
Universal Waste	Welding	Worksite Warning Signs and Labels

If an employee is required to drive a vehicle for official state business, they must possess a valid driver's license appropriate to the type of vehicle they operate. A training course may be required; employees will be notified by their supervisors if applicable. In addition, all employees who drive or are passengers in any vehicle used in the conducting of university business are required to wear seat belts, refrain from smoking, stay within the posted speed limits, and adhere to all motor vehicle regulations.

### **Use of University Telephones and Mobile Phones**

University telephones are intended to be used for business purposes. We understand that on occasion it is necessary to take a brief personal call during work hours. We ask that these calls be kept to a minimum. Should you need to utilize the university business line, please limit those calls to local calling.

The goal of our university is to provide the best customer experience to our students, staff and other constituents. The use of personal mobile devices during business hours can present distractions from your work and to other members of your department; we ask that employees respect their peers and managers and keep the use of mobile phones to a minimum during work hours. Cell phones should never be used while driving, operating equipment or in any situation where they may cause accidents.

### **Expectation of Privacy**

Any documentary materials or data made or received by employees of the university regardless of its physical form may be considered a public record and subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law. To learn more about the [Massachusetts Public Records Law](#), please refer to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 4, Section 7(26). In addition, areas in which you may keep personal belongings including but not limited to desks, filing cabinets, voicemail messages, and lockers, are the property of the Commonwealth and may be accessed by your employer at any time. Contact Human Resources if you have questions.

### **Employee Expenses and Travel Reimbursements**

Employees that are required to travel as part of their duties and responsibilities may request reimbursement. Each collective bargaining agreement has specific language regarding employee expenses and travel reimbursement. All reimbursements are processed in the Office of Financial Services. For full detailed information regarding travel, visit [Financial Services](#) to review the travel policy.

All travel must be approved by an immediate supervisor prior to making travel arrangements.

### **Children in the Workplace**

The University is sensitive to the needs of working parents and we foster an environment that is

conducive to student learning. Therefore, employees must find appropriate childcare, rather than bringing their children to work. We understand that occasionally, there may be a situation where you do not have childcare and you cannot be absent from work. On these rare occasions, please speak with your supervisor to discuss available options.

### **Pets in the Workplace**

To protect the health and safety of our students and personnel, pets are not allowed to be brought onto campus, into the workplace, or inside any building in which Fitchburg State provides functions or services. This policy does not apply to employees that require service animals that are actively engaged in the service for which they are trained. Employees who utilize service animals need to contact the Office of Human Resources to complete appropriate documentation.

### **Employee Discipline**

Employees may be subject to disciplinary action if they violate policy or contract provisions. Specific disciplinary procedures are described in the applicable collective bargaining agreement or handbook.

### **Access to Personnel Files/Confidentiality**

Personnel files are maintained under the provisions of the Fair Information Practices Act and in accordance with the provisions of applicable collective bargaining agreements.

Employees can request to review their personnel file at any time. Contact Personnel Services at [humanresources@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:humanresources@fitchburgstate.edu) to schedule an appointment. Personnel files are stored electronically and may be viewed in Personnel Services. Anyone who wishes to make a copy of a document in the file must first make a request with Human Resources. All employees in positions that involve access to personnel files are expected to maintain confidentiality and comply with the laws and policies that govern the release of that information. Misuse of confidential information may constitute a violation of state ethics statutes. When an employee requests a copy of their personnel file, Human Resources will provide it within five business days. The request must be made in writing to the Human Resources Department. An email to [humanresources@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:humanresources@fitchburgstate.edu) is acceptable as a written request.

Employees may make written objections to any information contained in the file. Any written objection must be signed by the employee and shall become part of the employee's personnel file. Further, no negative comment shall be placed in a file unless the person making the comment signs it and the staff member is informed of the comment and is given the opportunity to include a response. Generally speaking, Human Resources will determine appropriate file material in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations.

When a request is received for information contained in an employee's personnel record, the Vice President for Personnel Services/General Counsel, or appointed designee, shall verify only that the individual concerned is employed by the university and shall further reveal in what capacity the individual serves, for example, clerk, custodian, etc. No further information concerning the individual shall be divulged unless the person making the inquiry supplies written authorization from the employee concerned or if there is a court subpoena.



### **Reasonable Accommodations for Employees**

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (as amended), a qualified person with a disability is someone who, with or without accommodation(s), is able to perform the essential functions of their position or meets the essential eligibility requirements for participating in the programs, services, and activities offered by the University. Employees who would like to request an accommodation under the ADA (as amended) may do so by contacting the Director of Human Resources at [bmalone7@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:bmalone7@fitchburgstate.edu) or 978-665-3172. You may also complete the [Request for Reasonable Accommodation form](#) to start the interactive process.

### **Job Postings, Transfer, and Advancement**

Fitchburg State provides employees with an opportunity to apply for open positions within the organization according to their skill and experience levels. In general, notices of all regular full-time and part-time job openings are posted, although Fitchburg State reserves its discretionary right to not post a particular opening, subject to the terms of the appropriate collective bargaining agreement or handbook. Postings include all pertinent information as defined in the collective bargaining agreement or handbook. Open positions are generally advertised in various publications and online outlets.

Position vacancies are posted online at <https://jobs.fitchburgstate.edu>, and are also distributed to current employees via email announcement. Any employee who wishes to apply for a posted position should do so by completing an online application, attaching a resume and cover letter at the above web address.

### **Outside Employment**

Generally speaking, an employee may hold a job with another organization as long as they satisfactorily perform their job responsibilities with Fitchburg State. All employees are expected to comply with their respective collective bargaining agreement or handbook with regard to work hours and schedules. Employees will be subject to Fitchburg State's scheduling requirements regardless of any existing outside work requirements.

If Fitchburg State determines that an employee's outside work interferes with performance or the ability to meet the job requirements of Fitchburg State, the employee may be asked to terminate the outside employment if they wish to remain with Fitchburg State.

Employees should refer to the [Massachusetts Conflict of Interest Law](#) for regulations pertaining to outside employment with other state agencies.

### **Personnel Data Changes**

Employees are responsible for ensuring that all personal data changes are promptly provided to the Office of Personnel Services. Change in name or address may be updated by completing the [Personal Information Change](#) form or directly through the SSTA state website. If you have a name change you must also notify Payroll Services and show them your new social security card. Emergency Contact information may be updated by completing this form the [Emergency Contact](#) form. Updates related to benefits may be done through your [myGICLink](#).

### **Grievance and Complaints**

All employees governed by a collective bargaining agreement have the right to file a grievance or an appeal if they believe that the university administration has violated a contract provision or policy. Specific details on grievance procedures are contained in each respective collective bargaining agreement.

### **Employment Verifications and Public Information Requests**

The Office of Personnel Services will verify past and/or current employment with the university. The policy of the department is to verify dates of employment, title and basic responsibilities only. The office will not release salary data over the phone; however, we will confirm a salary that is presented by the caller. The office does require written releases from the employee to provide any such release regarding salary from a financial institution, which should be emailed to [payhelp@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:payhelp@fitchburgstate.edu). The office will reply to the appropriate institution that made the inquiry timely and directly.

## **Section 2 - Salary & Payroll**

Full-time salaries are administered according to the provisions of the applicable collective bargaining agreement or handbook.

### **Social Security**

Massachusetts state employees do not have Social Security taxes withheld from their earnings.

### **Medicare Taxes**

Massachusetts state employees hired on or after April 1, 1986 will have Medicare taxes withheld from their earnings. State employees who were hired prior to April 1, 1986, without a break in service during their employment with the Commonwealth, are exempt from Medicare tax withholding. (1.45% of gross wages)

### **HR/CMS, Pay Periods, and Direct Deposit**

Employees are paid on a bi-weekly basis through the Human Resources Compensation Management System (HR/CMS). This system is maintained by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and also produces year-end W-2's, which are mailed to employees' homes at the end of January each year. Employees may opt to receive an electronic copy of their W-2 and print it from self-service time and attendance (SSTA). All employees are required to be paid by direct deposit. Through direct deposit, employees can distribute their earnings to multiple bank accounts as they wish, including checking, savings, and loan accounts. Employees may review their paycheck in SSTA.

### **Self-Service Time and Attendance**

Self-Service Time and Attendance (SSTA) is an online tool that allows employees to enter their attendance, check their paycheck, change their tax and direct deposit information, and obtain their W-2. For assistance with SSTA, contact Payroll Services at [payhelp@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:payhelp@fitchburgstate.edu) or 978-665-3177.

### **Contract Positions**

Employees employed in a non-student contract position must contribute towards the Alternate Retirement Program (OBRA). Contract employees are also eligible to contribute to the Dependent Care Assistance Program (DCAP), and the Retirement Savings Plans (i.e. Tax-Sheltered Annuity-403(b) plan and the Massachusetts Deferred SMART Plan 457(b) plan).

Contract positions are entitled to legally-mandated benefits, including sick leave accrual, workers' compensation, and unemployment benefits.

### **Payroll Deductions**

Employees must authorize all voluntary deductions by completing the appropriate form in Human Resources/Payroll Services. The chart below details the order in which deductions are taken, the description as it will read on the pay advice, and the tax status of the deduction.

<b>Deduction</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Federal Tax</b>	<b>State Tax</b>	<b>Pay Period</b>
Federal Taxes	Fed Tax	1	N/A	N/A	Every
Medicare	Med Tax	2	N/A	N/A	Every
State Taxes	State Tax	3	N/A	N/A	Every
Retirement	State Ret	4	Pre	Pre	Every
Adjustment to Retirement	Adj Ret	5	Pre	Pre	Every
Alternate Retirement (Mandatory OBRA)	Alt Ret	6	Pre	Pre	Every
Wage Garnishment	Garnish	7	Post	Post	Every*
Emergency Advance Payback	AdvPaybck	8	Post	Post	Every
Makeup Retirement	Makeup Ret	9	Post	Post	Every
Basic Life Insurance	Life Ins	10	Pre	Pre	First
Basic Health	Health Ins	11	Pre	Pre	First/Second
GIC Optional Life	Life Ins	12	Post	Post	Second
Long Term Disability	LTD Amt	13	Post	Post	First
Special Insurance	Spec Ins	14	Post	Post	Every
Union Dues	Union Due	15	Post	Post	Varies
Agency Fee	Agency Fee	16	Post	Post	Varies
Union Special	Union Spec	17	Post	Post	Varies

Health Care Spending Account Fee	HCSA Fee	18	Pre	Pre	Varies
Health Care Spending Account	HCSA Ded	19	Pre	Pre	Every
Dependent Care Assistance Program	Dep Care	20	Pre	Pre	Every
Tax Shelter Annuity Plan	TSA	21	Pre	Pre	Every
Deferred Compensation	Def Comp	22	Pre	Pre	Every
COMECC	COMECC	23	Post	Post	Every
MBTA	MBTA	24	Pre	Pre	First
MBTAX	MBTA Tax	25	Pre	Pre	First
UFUND	UFUND	26	Post	Post	First/Second
Commonwealth Fee	Comm Fee	27	Post	Post	Every

The first \$2,000 in the total of all Retirement contributions is not subject to MA State Tax.

\*Determined by court order.

### **Salary Increases**

Salary increases for members of Bargaining Units are generally governed by their respective Collective Bargaining Agreements.

Non-unit Professionals' increases are based on performance, job content, and authorization from the Commissioner of Higher Education.

### **Section 3 - Benefits**

Employees are encouraged to speak with the Onboarding and Benefits Specialist should they have any questions, concerns, or changes in status. Please note that it is *imperative* that employees report status changes to the Onboarding and Benefits Specialist for proper notification to the Group Insurance Commission, including divorce and remarriage. Failure to provide notification may result in serious financial obligation to the Group Insurance Commission.

### **Group Insurance Commission**

The Group Insurance Commission administers health insurance and other benefits for employees of the Commonwealth. Employees must be regularly scheduled for at least .50 FTE to be eligible for benefits.

Aside from health insurance, the GIC offers life insurance, long-term disability, and flexible spending programs.

### **Health Insurance**

The GIC offers nine (8) health plans to choose from. With HMO, EPO, PPO, and Indemnity options – there is a plan for everyone. A plan must be chosen within the first twenty-one calendar days of employment. Employees will need to review the [Benefit Decision Guide](#) that will detail each plan, in terms of cost and coverage. The guide also includes web site and contact information for each plan, so that employees may ask specific questions to the providers directly.

A new employee must submit completed GIC enrollment forms within 21 calendar days of hire to activate GIC insurance coverage. Coverage begins on the first day of the month following the employee's date of hire. If they start on the first of a month, benefits become effective immediately. To effectuate family coverage, new employees must provide proof of dependent eligibility through a legal document, which is most commonly a marriage license, birth certificate, adoption paperwork, etc.

Each year, the Group Insurance Commission holds an *Open Enrollment* during the spring. This allows employees the opportunity to re-evaluate their plan choice and make changes to their plan, effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. Employees may add or remove dependents during the plan year when a qualifying event has taken place. Qualifying events include:

- Marriage, Divorce, Legal Separation
- Birth, Adoption, Death
- Employment Status Change
- Dependent Status Change
- Move out of plan's coverage area

### **Life Insurance**

The Group Insurance Commission offers a Basic Life policy of \$10,000. For those who elect health insurance coverage through GIC, the Basic Life policy is automatically part of that package. For those who do not elect health insurance coverage through GIC, the Basic Life policy can be purchased separately for a low cost.

In addition to the Basic Life policy, GIC offers an Optional Life policy through MetLife. Coverage may be purchased in increments of the employee's salary, up to 8x. Rates are very competitive, and are based upon age, smoker/non-smoker status, per \$1000 of coverage. When elected at hire, there is no proof of insurability required. Any later adjustments to the policy may require proof of insurability. For specific details, consult with the Onboarding and Benefits Coordinator or visit [www.mass.gov/gic](http://www.mass.gov/gic).

### **Long-Term Disability**

The Group Insurance Commission offers a Long-Term Disability policy (LTD) that may be purchased through MetLife. This policy has competitive rates based upon age, per \$100 dollars of monthly earnings. It pays 55% of the employee's gross monthly earnings (up to \$10,000), tax-free, if they become ill or injured and unable to work for 90 consecutive days. Benefits stop at age 65, unless the insured becomes

disabled at (or after) age 62. In that case, benefits may continue beyond age 65. Similarly to the Optional Life Insurance policy, there is no proof of insurability required when this policy is elected at hire. It is possible to elect this policy at any time during the year; however, proof of insurability will be required. For specific details, consult with the Onboarding and Benefits Coordinator or visit [www.mass.gov/gic](http://www.mass.gov/gic).

### **Flexible Spending Accounts**

The Group Insurance Commission offers a Health Care Spending Account Program and a Dependent Care Assistance Program through [TASC](#). Through these plans, employees can save money by paying for medical and child care expenses on a pre-tax basis. Employees are eligible to sign up for these plans at hire and during the FSA Open Enrollment, which takes place in the spring. For specific details, consult with the Onboarding and Benefits Coordinator or visit log into the [Flexible Spending Accounts](#).

### **Dental**

Dental coverage varies based upon union affiliation. Members of AFSCME are offered dental coverage at no additional cost to them through the Massachusetts Public Employees Fund. Members of MSCA and APA are offered dental coverage at no additional cost to them through MetLife. Non-Unit employees pay a premium for dental coverage through MetLife. There is a 6-month waiting period for AFSCME unit members, a 180-day waiting period for APA and MSCA members, and a 2-month waiting period for non-unit members. For specific details, consult with the Onboarding and Benefits Coordinator.

### **Vision**

AFSCME offers their members a vision plan through the Massachusetts Public Employees Fund at no additional cost to them. Members of MSCA, APA, and Non-Unit employees are part of the *MetLife Vision Discount Program*, using code MET2020. This program offers discounts on various eyewear and exams. There is a 6-month waiting period for unit members and a 2-month waiting period for non-unit members. All employees and their family members are eligible for an eye exam every 24 months through their health insurance plan. For specific details, consult with the Onboarding and Benefits Coordinator.



### **Massachusetts State Employees' Retirement System (SERS)**

The State Board of Retirement administers the [Massachusetts State Employees' Retirement System](#) (SERS) for Fitchburg State employees. It is a contributory, defined benefit retirement system governed by Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 32. The system provides retirement, disability, survivor, and death benefits to members and their beneficiaries.

Membership in SERS is mandatory for nearly all employees in a benefited position. The only exception to this rule is made for faculty members, librarians, and professional employees, who have the option, at hire, of contributing to the Optional Retirement Program (see below for more information).

Contributions are made on a pre-tax basis through payroll deductions. Employees hired into the state system on or after July 1, 1996 have a contribution rate of 9% on earnings up to \$30,000 during the calendar year. Employees will contribute an additional 2% on earnings in excess of \$30,000. For the time employees are contributing into the system, they are earning creditable service towards retirement. In order to retire from the Commonwealth, employees hired before April 2, 2012 must be vested, and reach the age of 55 with 10 years of creditable service, or be any age with 20 years of creditable service. Employees hired on or after April 2, 2012 must be vested, and reach the age of 60 with 10 years of creditable service, or have 20 years of creditable service at any age, to be eligible for retirement. To be vested, employees must have 10 years of creditable service on record with the State Board of Retirement.

The retirement allowance is made up of an annuity and a pension. The annuity portion is the amount that the employee contributed during their tenure with the Commonwealth. The pension is the difference between the retirement allowance specified by law and the amount of the employee's contributions and the retirement systems investment earnings. The amount of the retirement allowance is based upon age, length of creditable service and the highest 36 consecutive months of regular compensation. (For employees hired on or after April 2, 2012, the amount of the retirement allowance considers the highest 5 consecutive years salary.) Upon retirement, employees have the opportunity to choose between 3 different payout options. When employees retire from the Commonwealth, they are also eligible for health insurance through GIC at a retiree rate.

Employees who leave state service before being vested may withdraw or roll their contributions into another qualified retirement plan. For specific details, or to discuss planning for retirement, consult with the Onboarding and Benefits Coordinator.

### **Optional Retirement Program**

The [Optional Retirement Program](#) (ORP) is a defined contribution plan that provides income based on the investment performance of the employee's individual account balance, in which the employee decides how to invest their contributions. It is administered by the Department of Higher Education.

The contribution rates for ORP are the same as SERS. New employees have 180 days to opt into the ORP. The decision is irrevocable. The Onboarding and Benefits Coordinator will provide each new, eligible employee with all of the enrollment information during their benefits orientation.

All employees, with the exception of unit and non-unit classified, are eligible to elect ORP as their

retirement vehicle.

ORP participants can choose between two ORP Providers: Fidelity or TIAA. Providers may be changed once every 12 months.

ORP participants are considered immediately vested in their account because they are always entitled to the money. If the employee leaves employment with the Commonwealth, the money can be taken with them. This includes the Commonwealth's contribution, which is 5% of the employee's salary. After administrative fees, the net contribution is 4.3%.

The ORP also comes with a Long-Term Disability policy and an Optional Life Insurance Policy for each member. There is no additional cost for these policies; however, a portion of the administrative fee goes towards maintaining these policies.

ORP participants must still have 10 years of state service to be eligible for health insurance benefits through GIC during retirement. For specific details, consult with the Onboarding and Benefits Coordinator.

### **Holiday Schedule**

There are 12 paid holidays. Holidays that fall on a Saturday are to be observed on a Saturday. However, as many employees as possible should be given that Friday off. Employees assigned to work will be given an additional day off as the law and applicable collective bargaining agreements allow. Holidays that fall on a Sunday are to be observed on the Monday immediately following. For a current listing of holiday dates, please click [this link](#) or consult with the Office of Personnel Services. Part time benefited employees receive holiday hours based on the prorated schedule. For example, if an employee works 20 hours a week, four days a week. They would receive 4 hours of holiday hours.

### **Vacation Leave**

All employees, with the exception of faculty, begin to accrue vacation time on their first day of employment. A maximum of 50 days of vacation time may be kept on the books at one time. Any vacation time in excess of 50 days shall be forfeited. Please refer to your respective collective bargaining agreements to see when vacation time is forfeited each year.

See the charts below for accruals and refer to the collective bargaining agreement or handbook for details.

<b>AFSCME Unit Vacation</b>	<b>Accrual Per Year</b>
0 – 4.5 Years of Service	10 Days
4.5 – 9.5 Years of Service	15 Days
9.5 – 19.5 Years of Service	20 Days
19.5 + Years of Service	25 Days

<b>APA Administrator Vacation</b>	<b>Accrual Per Year</b>
0 – 4 Year of Service	20 Days
5- 9 Years of Service	22 Days
10 - 14 Years of Service	23 Days
15 - 19 Years of Service	24 Days
20+ Years of Service	25 Days

<b>MSCA Librarians Vacation</b>	<b>Accrual Per Year</b>
0 – 4 Years of Service	20 Days
5 – 9 Years of Service	22 Days
10 - 14 Years of Service	23 Days
15 - 19 Years of Service	24 Days
20+ Years of Service	25 Days
<b>Non-Unit Professional Vacation</b>	<b>Accrual Per Year</b>
0 – 4 Years of Service	20 Days
5 – 9 Years of Service	22 Days
10 – 14 Years of Service	23 Days
15 - 19 Years of Service	24 Days
20+ Years of Service	25 Days

### **Personal Days**

New, full-time, 12-month employees (APA, AFSCME, MSCA Librarians and Non – Unit) are credited with 5 personal days on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Part-time employees are credited with personal time on a prorated basis. New employees, hired after January 1<sup>st</sup>, are also credited with their personal time on a prorated basis for that year.

Personal days may be used for any purpose. Except in an emergency, it is requested that employees give

at least 24 hours' notice of the request. The use of personal days must be approved by the supervisor. Personal days must be used by December 31<sup>st</sup>. Any time not used will be forfeited.

Faculty members employed on January 1 or hired after January 1 but before July 1 in any calendar year shall be credited with 15 hours (2 days) personal leave. All personal time must be used by December 31<sup>st</sup> or it will be forfeited.

### **Sick Leave**

Full-time, 12-month employees accrue sick leave each pay period for a total 15 sick days per year. Faculty members accrue 10 sick days during the academic year. There is no limit to the amount of sick time that may be accrued or carried over from year to year.

Generally, accrued sick leave may be taken when an employee is incapacitated by illness or when presence of the employee at work may expose others to a contagious illness, thereby jeopardizing the health of those employees. Within the limits of the collective bargaining agreements and handbooks, employees may also utilize sick time to care for members of their family or immediate household, and to keep medical appointments that cannot be scheduled outside of normal work hours.

### **Sick Leave Bank**

APA and MSCA members are eligible to join a sick leave bank within their union. Initial membership requires the contribution of one sick day to the bank. Employees who are members of the sick leave bank may draw upon the bank after they have utilized all of their available leave and have been off the payroll for 5 days (37.5 hours).

APA and MSCA members that are eligible for the sick leave bank and satisfy all the university's requirements for receiving FMLA leave may draw upon the bank for the Birth or Adoption of a child. Unit members must first exhaust all forms of paid leave under the collective bargaining agreement before drawing on the bank. Employees drawing on the bank for childbirth or adoption are not required to be off payroll for 5 days (37.5 hours). Refer to the collective bargaining agreement for details.

### **Sick Leave Extension**

AFSCME members may be eligible for a sick leave extension after exhausting all of their paid leave in certain circumstances. Refer to the collective bargaining agreement for details.

### **State Employees Responding as Volunteers (SERV) Program**

SERV (State Employees Responding as Volunteers) is an employee benefit available as a result of former Governor Patrick's Executive Order 479 which provides an opportunity for employees to give back to their communities by volunteering at approved nonprofit organizations

Upon written approval, university employees with at least six months of service may volunteer for up to one day per month (7.5/8.0 hours) for approved activities; part-time employees are eligible on a pro-rated basis. Seasonal, intermittent, and contract employees are not eligible.

Volunteer activities must take place in an accredited nonprofit organization or a public entity, such as a public school. Out-of-state organizations are not included and not all nonprofit agencies are on the state

approved list for a variety of reasons. SERV volunteers cannot perform services which could be considered political or partisan or a promotion of religion.

The four types of SERV activities are: Mentoring Programs, School Volunteer Programs, Foster Care Leave, and Community Service Leave.

- [SERV Program Flyer](#)
- [SERV Leave Request Form](#)
- [SERV Leave Verification Form](#)
- [Learn more about the SERV program on mass.gov](#)

### **Tuition Benefits**

Employees can take classes at Fitchburg State without the payment of tuition or fees, after 6 months of employment. There is also a tuition benefit extended to the spouse and dependents of the employee at state institutions. Benefit eligibility varies based upon each collective bargaining agreement. For specific details, consult with the Human Resources & Payroll Services Office or refer to the collective bargaining agreement.

### **Recreation Center**

Employees are allowed to use the Recreation Center, free of charge. The Rec Center offers weight machines, free weights, treadmills, ellipticals, racquetball courts, basketball courts, a suspended indoor track, and more. Contact the [Recreation Center](#) directly for more information about fitness programs.

### **Miscellaneous Benefits**

- 10% Discount at University Bookstore
- Use of University Library and materials
- Access to the Dining Hall Facilities to purchase meals
- Free parking
- Various discounts for cell phone providers, local businesses, and more
- Visit the Human Resources' web site or the [One Card Office](#) staff discounts page for current discounts.

## **Section 4 - Leaves**

### **Absence from Work without Pay**

Absence from work without pay (authorized or unauthorized) may affect leave accruals, vacation status, salary adjustments, GIC benefits, retirement and/or other benefits. An employee on unpaid leave and who is enrolled in GIC insurance plans may need to pay insurance premiums directly to the Group Insurance Commission (GIC).

### **Adjunct Faculty & Contracted Positions**

Adjunct faculty and contracted employees are entitled only to the following:

- Are paid for the first three days of jury duty in Massachusetts; and
- Accrue sick leave beginning on their first day of work at the rate of one hour of sick leave for each 30 hours they work per calendar year, up to a maximum of 40 hours. Unused sick hours are

forfeited upon termination of the contract. [Earned Sick Time Policy](#) is located on the policy page on the [HR/Payroll website](#).

- Student employees are not eligible to accrue sick leave.

### **Bereavement Leave**

Bereavement Leave is governed by the appropriate collective bargaining agreement or by the non-unit handbook. All requests for bereavement leave are subject to providing proof of the relationship of the deceased to the employee as well as to the fact of the death.

### **Blood Donation Leave**

University employees are eligible for up to two hours of paid leave to donate blood.

### **Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking in the Workplace Leave**

Executive Order 491 provides for up to 15 days of paid domestic violence leave per calendar year if you and/or your children are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking, and need to go to court and/or attend medical appointments. Employees needing this type of leave must contact the Office of Human Resources.

### **Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

Employees may be eligible for 12 work weeks of protected unpaid leave within a 12-month period under the Family Medical Leave Act for certain medical or family reasons. Employees must have been continuously employed through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for 1 year, and must have worked 1250 hours during the 12 months immediately preceding the leave request. FMLA may be utilized on a consecutive or intermittent basis.

Employees who need to request such leave should do so by contacting the Office of Human Resources as soon as they are aware of the need for leave. All qualified leaves in excess of 10 days will require the utilization of FMLA, if the employee is eligible. Employees will be required to use their sick, vacation, personal, and other accrued time while on leave. Employees may utilize their compensatory time, if they have it, for this purpose, but it is not required. If employees do not have enough accrued time to cover their leave, they will be placed on unpaid leave under FMLA.

Employees will continue to accrue time and contribute to their retirement system for as long as they are on the payroll. The utilization of FMLA does not interfere with sick accruals or the utilization of the sick leave bank or sick leave extension option.

Paid long-term disability and workers' compensation leave run concurrently with FMLA.

### **Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML)**

The Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) program, as defined by [MGL c.175M as added by St. 2018, c.121](#) is managed by the [Department of Family and Medical Leave](#). This program provides temporary income replacement to eligible workers who are welcoming a new child into their family, are struck by a serious illness or injury, need to take care of an ill or ailing relative, and for certain military considerations. Most workers in Massachusetts will be eligible to get up to 12 weeks of paid family leave and up to 20 weeks of paid medical leave. The program will be funded by premiums paid by employees, employers,



and the self-employed. All Massachusetts employees and many Massachusetts independent contractors will be covered by the PFML law and eligible for benefits. All leaves run concurrently.

### **Jury Duty Leave**

Employees are entitled to leave with pay when called for jury service or when summoned as a witness on behalf of any city or town of the Commonwealth or the state or federal government.

If employees receive jury fees for jury service and present the appropriate court certificate of service, you shall either retain such fees in lieu of pay for the period of jury service if the fees exceed your regular rate of compensation or remit to the University any fees if they are less than your regular compensation rate for the period involved.

### **Parental Leave**

An employee who has completed three months of service with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as a full-time employee is eligible to take up to 8 weeks of unpaid parental leave, if the need arises. Parental leave may be taken only to give birth, to bond with or care for a newborn baby, or to bond with or care for a newly adopted child who is under the age of 18 (or under 23, if mentally or physically disabled).

Rights and responsibilities are as follows:

- An employee seeking parental leave must notify Human Resources at least 2 weeks prior to the anticipated date of departure, or as soon as practicable. The employee must notify HR of their intent to return to work.
- If both the employee and their spouse work for Fitchburg State University, the two are entitled to an aggregate of 8 weeks of parental leave.
- If an employee is eligible for both Parental Leave and for leave under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), all leaves run concurrently.
- An employee on parental leave has the option of using accumulated leave time to cover their absence.
- An employee returning from parental leave will be restored to the same or an equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

### **Other Types of Leave**

Employees should consult their respective collective bargaining agreements for information about their rights and responsibilities applicable to various leaves of absence.

When in need of leave, employees should consult with Human Resources as soon as they are aware of their need for leave. Other types of leave may include, but may not be limited to: jury duty, bereavement leave, family leave, personal leave, educational leave, maternity/paternity leave, and military leave. Please note that many of these leave types may run concurrently with FMLA.

### **Workers' Compensation**

Workers' Compensation is mandated under [Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 152](#). The law provides for compensation to employees for on-the-job injuries and covers both medical costs, and loss of income. If you are injured at work, you must report the injury to Human Resources within 24 hours so that a report can be filed with the state's Division of Workers' Compensation (HRD) in a timely manner. Not doing so may result in denial of workers' compensation benefits.

HRD will review your claim and, if approved, you may receive benefits to cover medical costs and offset loss of wages during your period of disability. Injuries or illnesses resulting in serious or willful misconduct or those occurring outside the scope of employment will not be covered.

Should medical attention be required, the University Police will provide assistance to Health Alliance Hospital-Leominster Hospital. The prevention of injuries is the responsibility of all members of the university community. Please report any conditions that you believe to be unsafe, to your supervisor or the university's Environmental Health and Safety Office.

Time on workers compensation does not count towards retirement.

### **Separation from State Employment**

Upon separation from employment, each employee will meet with Human Resources for an exit interview. The Benefits Coordinator will also provide information pertaining to health insurance, life insurance, retirement, unemployment, university property, and more. An informational booklet is available in Human Resources.

### *Resignations*

Employees are asked to provide the University with written notice of their intent to resign. This notice should be sent to the Vice President of the area with copies to the supervisor and Human Resources. Supervisors must submit a Separation Notice form located on the [HR & Payroll Forms page](#). Classified employees are asked to provide a minimum of two weeks' notice when resigning from their position. Professional administrators (unit and non-unit) are asked to provide a one month notice, and faculty and librarians are asked to provide a one semester notice, if possible. An appointment with Human Resources prior to the last scheduled work week to review benefits and details on your last paycheck.

### *Retirement*

Employees who intend to retire are asked to provide the university with as much written notice as possible, in accordance with their respective collective bargaining agreement. This notice should be sent

to the Vice President of the area with copies to the supervisor and Human Resources. An appointment should be scheduled with the Onboarding and Benefits Specialist at least 90 days prior to your retirement date. It's also recommended that the employee contact the State Board of Retirement or Department of Higher Education (depending on which retirement plan they have) for retirement counseling. Check out [mass.gov](http://mass.gov) website for more information on [retirement](#) or stop by Human Resources for a copy of the "Guide to Retirement."

### *Reductions in Workforce (Retrenchments)*

If a reduction in the workforce occurs due to fiscal exigencies, reorganization, or program changes, the reduction will be administered in accordance with all applicable collective bargaining agreements and handbooks.

An appointment with Human Resources will be scheduled for each employee who is affected by a reduction in the workforce. Options for continuing insurance coverage under the provisions of COBRA and procedures for obtaining retirement contribution refunds will be explained at that time. Estimates of final pay may also be provided.

### *Involuntary Separations*

Employees who leave state service may apply for a refund of retirement contributions. In order to receive a refund of retirement contributions, an application for a refund must be completed upon termination.

Employees who leave university service on an involuntary basis should be sure to meet with a member of the Human Resources team as soon as notice of termination is received. Human Resources will assist with COBRA information, unemployment information, retirement information, etc.

### **Unemployment Compensation**

Unemployment insurance is mandated for state employees, including university employees, under Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 151A. Under the law, employers are required to inform all employees about unemployment insurance. The insurance applies to those who are permanently separated from work, or temporarily, for seven or more days. The Division of Unemployment Assistance oversees and administers the unemployment process. See Human Resources for more information on unemployment, including how to apply for benefits.

### **Section 5 - Policies**

The following policies are applicable to all employee types at Fitchburg State. These policies can also be found on the Human Resources' website.

### **Equal Opportunity Plan**

The University is committed to a policy of non-discrimination, equal opportunity, diversity, and affirmative action. We strive for a campus free from all forms of sexually harassing and violent behavior. The University is dedicated to providing an educational, working, and living environment for students, employees and other members of the campus community. The Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Plan includes policies regarding the following matters:

- Sexual Violence
- Sexual and/or Gender-Based Harassment
- Domestic/Dating Violence
- Stalking

The full plan in detail can be found on the University website: [Equal Opportunity and Title IX Plan](#).

### ***Consensual Relationships***

Under this policy of the Massachusetts State Universities, consensual romantic and/or sexual relationships in which one party retains a direct supervisory or evaluative role over the other party are unethical and create a risk for real or perceived coercion. The University does not intrude upon private choices regarding personal relationships when these relationships do not violate the University's policies, or cause harm or increase the risk of harm to the safety and wellbeing of members of the campus community.

#### **1. Faculty/Administrator/Staff Member Relationships with Students**

No faculty member shall have a romantic and/or sexual relationship, consensual or otherwise, with a student who is being taught or advised by the faculty member or whose academic work is being supervised or evaluated, directly or indirectly, by the faculty member. No administrator or staff member shall have a romantic and/or sexual relationship, consensual or otherwise, with a student who the administrator or staff member supervises, evaluates, advises or provides other professional advice or services as part of a University program or activity. A romantic and/or sexual relationship, consensual or otherwise, between a faculty member, administrator or staff member and a student is looked upon with disfavor and is strongly discouraged.

#### **2. Relationships Between Supervisors and Subordinates or Between Co-Workers**

A consenting romantic and/or sexual relationship between a supervisor and subordinate or co-workers may interfere with or impair the performance of professional duties and responsibilities and/or create an appearance of bias or favoritism. Further, such relationships could implicate state ethics laws and/or result in claims of discrimination, sexual violence, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence dating violence, stalking and retaliation. Therefore, such workplace relationships are strongly discouraged.

### ***Institutional Complaint Procedures***

The Massachusetts State Universities have established specific internal discrimination complaint procedures to help resolve claims and complaints of discrimination on the campus. These procedures will serve as a system of review and resolution for both informal claims and formal complaints of discrimination. Any member of the university community and/or any applicant for employment who believes she/he has been a victim of discrimination, discriminatory harassment or retaliation may initiate

an informal claim or formal complaint as outlined in the Discrimination Complaint Procedures.

Hard copies of the Discrimination Complaint Procedures are available in the Human Resources and Affirmative Action Office. The Discrimination Complaint Procedures are also outlined in the [Equal Opportunity and Title IX Plan](#).

Further advice or information regarding the Universities' Discrimination Complaint Procedures may be obtained by contacting Stacey Luster, Vice President for Personnel Service/General Counsel, at [sluster@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:sluster@fitchburgstate.edu) or (978) 665-3338, or Rebecca Newell, Director of Title IX and Equal Opportunity, at [rnewell7@fitchburgstate.edu](mailto:rnewell7@fitchburgstate.edu) or (978) 665-2336.

### *Retaliation is Prohibited*

The University prohibits retaliation against any person for making a complaint of sexual violence, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking and retaliation, for assisting in making a complaint, for resisting or openly opposing such conduct, or for otherwise using or participating in the complaint investigation process under the Policy. Persons who file, or participate in the investigation or resolution of, claims or complaints of sexual violence, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence dating violence, stalking and retaliation with outside agencies, law enforcement or otherwise pursuant to any applicable state or federal law, are also protected from retaliation by this Policy.

Prohibited retaliation includes, but is not limited to: threats; intimidation; reprisals; continued harassment or misconduct; other forms of harassment; slander and libel; and adverse actions, related to employment or education. Retaliation can be committed by individuals or groups including, friends, relatives or others associates of the person against whom a complaint is filed. Retaliation, even in the absence of proven sexual violence, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence or stalking an underlying complainant, constitutes a violation of this Policy that is just as serious as the main offense itself.

Any person who believes that he or she is the object of retaliation, or any person with questions or concerns about retaliation should contact the University's EO Officer.

### *Duty to Cooperate*

Every faculty member, librarian, administrator, staff member and University employee has a duty to cooperate fully and unconditionally in an investigation conducted pursuant to the Complaint Investigation and Resolution Procedures. This duty includes, among other things, speaking with the EO Officer, Title IX Coordinator, Investigator, reviewing or appellate body, and providing all documentation that relates to the claim being investigated. The failure and/or refusal of any employee, other than an employee subject to criminal charges or who invokes a Fifth Amendment privilege, to cooperate in an investigation may result in a separate disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### *Other Administrative Options*

It is the intent of Fitchburg State University to actively respond to all complaints of discrimination and/or harassment with the hope that it can fully, quickly, and adequately resolve them internally. The university

also recognizes the right of all complaining persons to file charges of unlawful discrimination and/or retaliation with the appropriate federal or state agency without first pursuing an internal resolution of the complaint through the university's discrimination complaint procedures.

These agencies include:

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination  
One Ashburton Place, Room 601  
Boston, MA 02108  
Telephone: 617-994-6000    Fax: 617-994-6124    TTY: 617-994-6196

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination  
436 Dwight Street, Second Floor, Room 220  
Springfield, MA 01103  
Telephone: 413-739-2145

US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission  
John F. Kennedy Federal Building  
475 Government Center  
Boston, MA 02203  
Telephone: 800-669-4000    Fax: 617-565-3196    TTY: 800-669-6820

#### **Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to define the acceptable use of Fitchburg State University's applications, hardware, information and other information technology resources and systems. This policy applies to any person utilizing FITCHBURG STATE's information technology resources. The following persons are authorized to use FITCHBURG STATE information technology resources: (1) current faculty; (2) current staff; (3) current students; and (4) authorized visitors.

Acceptable use of FITCHBURG STATE information technology resources includes usage for academic, educational or professional purposes which are directly related to official FITCHBURG STATE business and in support of FITCHBURG STATE's mission. Accordingly, users are encouraged to utilize FITCHBURG STATE's information technology resources to the fullest extent in pursuit of the University's mission, goals, and objectives. The University expects that these information technology resources are always utilized in a responsible manner and reserves the right to limit or remove access as needed.

FITCHBURG STATE's electronic communications systems, including Internet, telephony, email, and messaging services, are to be used primarily for university-related purposes. **Users shall have no expectation of privacy over any communication, transmission, or work performed using or stored on FITCHBURG STATE's information technology resources.** The University reserves the right to monitor any and all aspects of its information technology resources and to do so at any time, without notice, and without the user's permission. FITCHBURG STATE makes no warranties, expressed or implied, for the information technology resources it is providing. FITCHBURG STATE will not be responsible for any damages a user may suffer, including loss of data, undelivered messages or content, or service interruptions. FITCHBURG STATE denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its information technology resources. Unacceptable use of the FSU electronic communications systems includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Activities that violate local, state, or federal laws and/or regulations including the use of unlicensed software;
- Excessive, unreasonable, or unauthorized personal use;
- Storing, sending, or forwarding e-mails that contain libelous, defamatory, obscene, inflammatory, threatening, or harassing content;
- Infringing on intellectual property rights;
- Commercial purposes;
- Activities that attempt to circumvent or disable protection mechanisms that have been put in place by FSU

\*For the full [Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources Policy](#) visit the [Technology](#) website.

### **Campus Crime Awareness and Security**

Illegal or criminal activity should be reported to University Police by calling 978-665-3111 or by visiting their office, located on the corner of Clinton and Congress streets. Additionally, there are numerous emergency call boxes located around campus, which may be used by any member of the community when in need of emergency assistance.

In accordance with the *Jeanne Clery Safety Act*, crime report statistics for the campus and adjacent neighborhoods are reported on an annual basis. [The Annual Security and Fire Safety Report](#) is available at [University Police](#), [Personnel Services](#) and the [Dean of Students Office](#).

### **Conflicts of Interest**

An actual or potential conflict of interest can occur when an employee is in a position to influence a decision that may result in a personal gain for that employee or for a relative as a result of Fitchburg State's business dealings. For the purposes of this policy, a relative is any person who is related by blood or marriage or whose relationship with the employee is similar to that of persons who are related by blood or marriage.

No "presumption of guilt" is created by the mere existence of a relationship with outside firms. However, if employees have any influence on transactions involving purchases, contracts, or leases, it is imperative that they disclose to an officer of Fitchburg State, as soon as possible, the existence of any actual or potential conflict of interest so that safeguards can be established to protect all parties.

Employees have an obligation to conduct business within guidelines that prohibit actual or potential conflict of interest. Fitchburg State's conflict of interest policy is mandated by the Massachusetts State Ethics Commission, which provides guidelines for political activity as Conflict of Interest Law and Massachusetts Financial Disclosure Law. The purpose of the guidelines is to provide general directions that employees can seek further clarification on issues related to the subject of acceptable standards of operation. Contact the Office of Human Resources and Payroll Services for more information about conflicts of interest and check out the website for the [Summary of the Conflict of Interest Law for State Employees](#). Employees may also contact the [State Ethics Commission](#) for questions and advice about how the conflict of interest law applies to the employee. If you have a specific situation, call the main number 617-371-9500, and ask for the Attorney of the Day.

Employees complete the Conflict of Interest Training biennially and must acknowledge the Summary of the Conflict of Interest Law for State Employees Annually. Reminders are sent out at the beginning of

every calendar year.

### **Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988**

In order to comply with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, Pub. L. No. 100-690, 5151-5160, applicants for federally funded grants and contracts are required to certify that they have made a good faith effort to maintain a drug free workplace in accordance with the following policy.

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 94 C, establishes five "classes" of drugs as controlled substances. These classes include, but are not limited to such substances as heroin, cocaine, LSD, marijuana and opium based drugs. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession or use of a controlled substance by Fitchburg State University employees is prohibited on any premises occupied or controlled by the university. No employee will report to work while under the influence of illegal drugs. Any employee determined to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including removal.

In order to comply with the federal law, Fitchburg State University requires that an employee notify the employer of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after such conviction. Notice shall go to the Human Resources Department. Fitchburg State University will notify any federal contracting agency within ten (10) days of having received notice that an employee engaged in the performance of such a contract has had any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace. Fitchburg State University will impose an assistance or rehabilitation program by any employee who is so convicted within thirty days of receiving notice of such conviction.

Each employee is notified that, as a condition of employment, they must abide by the policy and notify the employer of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five (5) days after such convictions. Failure to abide by the policy may result in disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to warnings, suspensions, participation in a drug assistant rehabilitation program, or termination.

Fitchburg State University will assist with confidential referrals to substance abuse, assistance or rehabilitation programs as well as sponsor on-campus educational and training programs in order to ensure that all employees of the college are aware of the issues regarding drug use/abuse in the workplace. Contact the Human Resources Department for more information.

Fitchburg State University shall provide every employee with the information listed above.

### **Inclement Weather or Emergency Closings**

In instances where the university is closed due to inclement weather or other emergency situations, only "essential" personnel are required to report to work. Those individuals who are essential will be notified that they have been designated as such by their supervisors and/or the Office of Human Resources.

On rare occasions, however, an emergency may arise where an employee who previously had not been designated as essential may be required to report to work. Any staff member, who is required to report to work when classes have been canceled or the university has been closed, will be granted compensatory time (AFSCME) or flexible scheduling (APA).



Announcements regarding the cancellation of classes or the closing of the university are broadcasted over local television and radio stations, and posted on the Fitchburg State web site. Employees are encouraged to add their contact information to **RAVE**, the university's emergency notification system. For assistance, contact IT. The **RAVE** system will automatically call and/or text you in the event of an emergency, including snow closures and delays. Please see the [Inclement Weather](#) policy on the Human Resources [website](#).

### **Preventing and Reporting Fraud, Waste & Abuse**

Fitchburg State University is committed to the responsible stewardship of its resources. University Management is responsible for maintaining a work environment that promotes ethical and honest behavior. Management is further responsible for establishing and implementing policies and procedures to prevent and detect irregularities, including fraud, waste and abuse. Employees, at all levels, should be aware of the risks and exposures inherent in their areas of responsibility and should incorporate into their business practices policies and procedures that safeguard the resources entrusted to them.

It is the intention of the University to take whatever action may be needed to prevent and correct activities that violate this policy.

No area or department is exempt from potential misappropriation or misuse of university resources. Fraud, waste and abuse all have the same pattern, commonly referred to as the fraud triangle. Where this pattern exists there is a potential for misappropriation or misuse. The three factors present for fraud, waste and abuse to occur are as follows:

<b>Pressure or motivation -</b>	There is a will to commit fraud, waste or abuse.
<b>Opportunity -</b>	There is minimal oversight or lack of adequate controls in a particular area.
<b>Rationalization -</b>	There is an accepted practice or a perceived entitlement.



Understanding the forces driving fraud, waste and abuse facilitate the development of policies and procedures to prevent and detect it.

\*For the full [Preventing and Reporting Fraud, Waste and Abuse](#) visit the Human Resources website. Any questions or concerns regarding this policy or its implementation should be directed to the Chief Financial Officer.

### **Public Employees and Campaigns**

Under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 55, the Campaign Finance Law regulates political activity by public employees and the use of public buildings and resources in campaigns.

#### ***Section 13: Public Employees***

No person employed for compensation for the Commonwealth, its cities, towns and counties, and public agencies, other than an elected official, may directly or indirectly solicit or receive a contribution or anything of value for any political purpose.

#### ***Section 14: Public Buildings***

Soliciting or receiving campaign contributions in a public building is prohibited. Examples include City or Town Hall, office buildings, public schools and libraries, police and fire stations, and public works garages.

#### ***Use of Public Resources***

Campaign Finance Law prohibits the use of public resources for political campaign purposes, such as influencing the nomination or election of a candidate, or the passage or defeat of a ballot in question, "Public Resources" encompass just about anything that is paid for by taxpayers, such as vehicles, office equipment and supplies, buildings and the paid time of public employees.

For more information, or a copy of the complete policy, please contact Human Resources.

### **Right-to-Know**

The University is committed to protecting its employees from recognized hazards in the workplace. The main federal law governing workplace safety is the Occupational Health and Safety Act of 1970, otherwise known as OSHA. Massachusetts has its own law called the Right-to-Know law. It is the university's responsibility to generally provide a workplace that is free of dangers that could physically harm an employee.

Under the Massachusetts Right-to-Know law, and the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard, you are entitled to receive information about the toxic substances that are used or stored in your workplace. This information is available to you in the form of a Materials Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) – a technical fact sheet that describes the health effects and safe uses of the toxic products on the job. The MSDS is written by the product manufacturer, who must give it to the university. In turn, the university must provide the MSDS to you, your union, or your doctor, upon request.

If you feel your work area is unsafe, make sure your supervisor is aware of the potential danger and allow him/her to correct the problem. You may also contact the university's Environmental Health and Safety Office.

### **Smoke-Free Environment**

Since July 1, 1994, Fitchburg State University has been a smoke free institution. Thus, any smoking must be done outdoors at least 25' from all buildings. The decision to establish a smoke free environment was based on a recommendation from the university governance group.

Given all that is generally known about the disadvantages of direct smoking and second hand smoke as it relates to our general health, and the increasing number of organizations and institutions following a similar pattern, we believe it is in everyone's best interest to maintain a smoke free campus.

For those members of our university community who have special difficulties in dealing with the absence of smoking, please seek assistance from either the Office of Human Resources and Payroll Services or the Health Services Office. Thank you for your cooperation.

### **Whistleblower Policy**

Fitchburg State University encourages all faculty, staff, students, and volunteers, acting in good faith to report suspected or actual wrongful conduct. The university is committed to protecting individuals from interference with making a protected disclosure and from retaliation for having made a protected disclosure or for having refused an illegal order as defined in this policy.

University faculty, staff, students, or volunteers may not retaliate against an individual who has made a protected disclosure or who has refused to obey an illegal order. University faculty, staff, students or volunteers may not directly or indirectly use or attempt to use the official authority or influence of their positions or offices for the purpose of interfering with the right of an individual to make a protected disclosure to the individual's immediate supervisor or other appropriate administrator or supervisor within the operating unit, or other appropriate university official about matters within the scope of this policy.

It is the intention of the university to take whatever action may be needed to prevent and correct activities that violate this policy.

### **Policy Guidelines**

#### **I. Definitions**

- A. Wrongful Conduct – A serious violation of university policy; a violation of applicable state and federal laws; or use of the university property, resources, or authority for personal gain or other non-university related purpose except as provided under university policy.
- B. Protected Disclosure – Communication about actual or suspected wrongful conduct engaged in by a university employee, student, volunteer, agent, or contractor (who is not also the disclosing individual) based on a good faith and reasonable belief that the conduct has both occurred and is wrongful under applicable law and/or university policy. Individuals who are aware of or have reason to suspect wrongful conduct should report the conduct to:
  - 1. The disclosing individual's supervisor, either verbally or in writing, or
  - 2. Any office listed in this policy under Procedure Section I – Reporting Violations, either verbally or in writing, or
  - 3. The appropriate governmental unit, law enforcement office or ethics commission after first providing written communication about the wrongful conduct to the appropriate university administrator as identified in Procedure Section I – Reporting Violations of this policy.

Individuals who wish to be protected by the University Whistleblower Protection Act must provide a written report that provides sufficient detail to identify and describe the violation.

- C. Retaliation – Adverse action against an individual because she or he has made a protected disclosure or has participated in an investigation, proceeding or hearing involving a protected disclosure.

\*For the full [Whistleblower Policy](#) visit the Human Resources website.

## Section 6 - Training

All new University employees must complete the following training within the first 30 days of employment.

- Browser Security Basics
- Discrimination Awareness in the Workplace
- Diversity and Inclusion: Faculty and Staff
- Implicit Bias and Microaggression Awareness
- Protection Against Malware
- Title IX and Sexual Harassment Prevention for Employees
- Campus Security Authority (CSA) and Responsible Employee (RE) training, if applicable

Employees will receive an email with a link instructing them to complete the training.

The Conflict of Interest - <https://www.mass.gov/online-conflict-of-interest-law-training> needs to be completed every 2 years. All state, county and municipal employees must complete a conflict of interest law online training program. Newly hired employees must complete this training within 30 days of hire date, and every 2 years thereafter.

In addition, every year all state, county and municipal employees must be provided with the [summary of the conflict of interest law](#). All public employees are required to sign a written acknowledgement that they have been provided with the summary.

Other trainings that may be required due to the employee's position:

Environmental Safety Training, if applicable

Asbestos Awareness	Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure	Compactors and balers
Confined Space/Respiratory Protection	Fall Protection	Forklifts/powered industrial lifts
Hazard Communication (Right to Know)	Lockout-Tagout	Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)
Procedures for reporting emergencies	Site Specific Chemical Training	Tool Use and Guarding
Universal Waste	Welding	Worksite Warning Signs and Labels

#### **ACRONYMS and Abbreviations**

<b>ADA - American with Disability Act</b>	<b>HR/CMS – State payroll/human resources system</b>
<b>AG – Attorney General</b>	<b>HRD – Human Resources Division</b>
<b>AGO – Attorney General’s Office</b>	<b>I-9 – Employment Eligibility form – authorization to work in the U.S.</b>
<b>ANF – Executive Office for Administration and Finance</b>	<b>LTD – Long Term Disability</b>
<b>CBA – Collective Bargaining Agreement</b>	<b>MGL – Massachusetts General Laws</b>
<b>COBRA – Law covering rights to continue health insurance under certain conditions</b>	<b>OBRA – Alternative retirement plan for part time contractors</b>
<b>COMECC – Commonwealth of Massachusetts Employee Charitable Campaign</b>	<b>OCPF – Office of Campaign and Political Finance</b>
<b>CORI – Criminal offender record information</b>	<b>OER – Office of Employee Relations</b>
<b>DCAM – Division of Capital Asset Management</b>	<b>ORP – Optional Retirement Program</b>
<b>DCAP – Dependent Care Assistance Program</b>	<b>OSC – Office of the State Comptroller</b>
<b>DESE – Department of Elementary and Secondary Education</b>	<b>PAYINFO – Online system for retrieving pay advice for employees</b>
<b>DUA – Division of Unemployment Assistance</b>	<b>PCP – Primary Care Physician</b>

<b>EEO – Equal Employment opportunity</b>	<b>PERAC – Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission</b>
<b>EMPLID – Employee ID generated by the HR/CMS payroll system</b>	<b>PFML - Paid Family Medical Leave</b>
<b>ERIP – Early Retirement Incentive Program</b>	<b>POS – Point of Service Plan</b>
<b>ETH –State Ethics Commission</b>	<b>PPO – Preferred Provider Organization</b>
<b>FLSA – Fair Labor Standard Act</b>	<b>PRP – Performance Recognition Program</b>
<b>FMLA – Family Medical Leave Act</b>	<b>SBR – State Retirement Board</b>
<b>FY – Fiscal year</b>	<b>W-4 – Federal Tax exemption form</b>
<b>GIC – Group Insurance Commission</b>	<b>W-2 – End of year tax statement showing earnings, etc.</b>
<b>HIPPA – Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996</b>	<b>457B – Deferred Compensation (optional retirement savings plan) 100% employee funded</b>
<b>HMO Health Maintenance Organization</b>	<b>403B – tax sheltered annuity (optional retirement savings plan) 100% employee funded</b>
<b>HR – Human Resources</b>	<b>SSTA – Self-Service Time and Attendance</b>

**Contact Information****On Campus**

Personnel Services	978-665-3172 or <a href="mailto:humanresources@fitchburgstate.edu">humanresources@fitchburgstate.edu</a> 978-665-3177 or <a href="mailto:payhelp@fitchburgstate.edu">payhelp@fitchburgstate.edu</a>
University Police	978-665-3111
Environmental Health and Safety	978-665-3756
AFSCME Office	978-665-4078
APA Office	978-665-3750
MSCA Office	978-665-3303

**Off Campus**

State Board of Retirement	617-367-7770
Group Insurance Commission	617-727-2310
Department of Higher Education	617-994-6950
Unemployment Assistance	877-626-6800
MPE Fund (AFSCME Dental/Vision)	800-325-5214
MetLife (APA, MSCA, & Non-Unit Dental)	800-942-0854

**Websites**[Human Resources](#)[University Police](#)[AFSCME](#)[APA](#)[MSCA](#)[Non-Unit Personnel Policies](#)[State Board of Retirement](#)[Group Insurance Commission](#)[Department of Higher Education](#)[Unemployment Assistance](#)[MPE Fund](#)[MetLife Dental](#)