

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

September 2004





Dear Research Foundation Employee:

It is my pleasure to welcome you to The Research Foundation of State University of New York! Whether you have been here for many years or just a few days, being part of the RF provides us the privilege of facilitating cutting-edge research and translating its benefits to better help humanity.

By way of background, the RF is a private, nonprofit educational corporation chartered by the Board of Regents. Since 1951, the RF has served The State University of New York (SUNY) by managing and administering sponsored research programs and other important functions such as technology transfer. We are confident that your contributions will allow the RF to successfully take advantage of the exciting opportunities ahead of us.

While the RF works hand-in-hand with SUNY, we are a separate corporation. Since we are not part of the State of New York system, the RF manages its own independent employee benefits programs, compensation plans, affirmative action policies, complaint procedures and other matters that affect you as an employee. Our compensation and employee benefits package is designed to be competitive in the marketplace while sensitive to the local setting in which we operate.

The RF is committed to providing a working environment that encourages open, honest dialogue between you and your supervisor. We have developed a Statement and Standards of Ethical Conduct in order to emphasize the RF's commitment to the highest ethical standards in its operations and among its employees and those acting on behalf of the RF. It is critical for everyone in the RF community to fully understand and embrace this concept of ethics and accountability. For additional information, refer to the RF's [Statement and Standards of Ethical Conduct](#).

This *Employee Handbook* is a valuable resource so please review it regularly for [updates](#). You may also print the most up-to-date copy of the handbook. This handbook sets the “rules for the road” for all RF employees.

Whether you are working on a sponsored award or some other RF activity, you are an essential member of the RF team. We look forward to your contributions to our mission and I thank you for your dedicated service.

Warmest wishes,

John J. O'Connor

President

The Research Foundation of State University of New York



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About the Handbook

The information contained in this handbook is presented as a guide for employees of The Research Foundation of State University of New York. We want you to know as much as possible about the RF policies, practices and [benefits](#) in this easy reference handbook.

We believe employees are key to our long-term success and understand the importance of a positive working environment. We believe this can be accomplished by maintaining, communicating and adhering to the RF's policies. The policies are intended to create a positive, productive and meaningful work environment, where teamwork is the norm and pride is evident.

This handbook references and outlines RF policies, but it is not a substitute for the policies themselves. Complete policies and forms/handouts can be found on the RF's web site at <http://www.rfsuny.org> These policies ensure that our day-to-day actions and behaviors are consistent with the RF's purpose and strategy. It is an introduction to the RF, our [mission](#), what you can expect from us and what we expect from you.

Please understand that this handbook only highlights RF policies, practices and benefits for your education and is not a legal document. In addition, circumstances will obviously require that policies, practices, and benefits described in the handbook change from time to time.

In order to retain necessary flexibility in the administration of policies and procedures, the RF reserves the right to change or revise policies and procedures described in this handbook without notice whenever the RF determines that such action is warranted. In the event of conflicts or differences between the wording of the policies themselves, and the summaries of this handbook, the terms of the policies will govern.

This handbook also summarizes benefits currently available to our employees. In the event of conflicts or differences between the wording of the benefit plans themselves, and the summaries of this handbook, the terms of the benefit plan will govern.

The RF and/or the plan administrator have the sole discretion to determine eligibility for benefits and to interpret and administer these plans. The RF reserves the right to change, revise or terminate, or change the employee/employer share of costs for any of the benefits discussed in this handbook without advance notice.

Do not consider this handbook your only source of information about the RF and your job. In fact, we want you to make every effort to learn as much as possible about your own department's procedures and goals through your manager and fellow employees.

The RF will strive to keep you informed and updated on new policies, benefits, organization information, and other important news through meetings, communications and via the [RF Web site](#).



Remember, if you have a question concerning any of the information contained in this handbook; please consult with your supervisor, your operations manager, the campus office that handles human resources matters or Barbara Pell, manager of employee relations and affirmative action at barbara.pell@rfsuny.org or (518) 434-7197.

The information contained in this handbook is not intended as a contract and does not alter the at-will employment relationship. This handbook supercedes all prior handbooks and written or verbal guidance, except as provided herein. The RF reserves the right to add, supplement, modify or abolish any personnel policies or handbooks without notice and in its sole discretion.

THIS HANDBOOK DOES NOT CREATE AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT AND MUST NOT BE CONSTRUED AS SUCH.



Vision, Mission, Values

Vision

To be internationally recognized and respected as the most responsive and agile university research partner providing expertise and comprehensive services to help the campuses and the university system achieve their vision.

Mission

The Research Foundation supports the advancement of education, research and discovery at the State University of New York.

Core Values

The Research Foundation strives to accomplish its mission by

- Respecting each employee and individual with whom we interact
- Maintaining a customer focus
- Providing efficient and effective operations
- Promoting professional and ethical behavior
- Encouraging flexibility and adaptability to change
- Facilitating collaboration.



What is the Research Foundation?

The Research Foundation is a private, nonprofit educational corporation whose primary responsibility is the administration of externally funded contracts and grants for and on behalf of SUNY. Since being [chartered in 1951](#), the RF has facilitated research, education and public service at 30 state-operated SUNY locations.

The RF carries out its primary responsibilities pursuant to an [agreement](#) entered into in 1977 with SUNY. Rather than directly contract with a principal investigator or with SUNY, sponsors contract directly with the RF for all sponsored grants, contracts and agreements for sponsored research and training programs.

The RF provides high quality, cost-effective [services](#) to SUNY campuses, campus-based foundations, affiliated corporations and other research foundations.

Separate Status

The RF is a separate, private corporation, and as such is not supported by state appropriated tax dollars, nor does it receive support services provided to New York State agencies. The RF is responsible for its own financial, legal and business systems; and it maintains its own personnel policies, employee fringe benefits program, and payroll services.

Rationale for the RF

The RF provides the administrative flexibility to respond quickly to the special demands of sponsored programs in a manner that facilitates their scientific or technical execution.

Consistent with being a private, independent organization, the RF is governed by its own board of directors composed of researchers, campus and system administrators, SUNY Trustees, and representatives of business and industry. The Chancellor of SUNY serves, *ex officio*, as chair of the board. The board has ultimate authority for the management and direction of the corporation, including the Research Foundation's policies and employee benefits.

The Board appoints four officers:

- President
- Executive vice president
- Treasurer
- Secretary

These officers are responsible for carrying out the activities of the RF, which maintains its corporate headquarters at 35 State Street in Albany, New York.

In addition, the RF has an office on each of the state-operated campuses of SUNY. At the campuses, day-to-day management rests with a RF operations manager, who is appointed by the RF's board. This official is responsible for all RF activity on his or her campus, including personnel operations.



Role of Human Resources

The Office of Human Resources provides two levels of service that work concurrently to meet your needs:

- At the campus, where sponsored program activity takes place
- At the corporate level in Albany.

The Office of Human Resources develops and implements RF human resource (HR) policies and programs, including a comprehensive compensation and fringe benefits program. These programs are designed to be competitive to meet your needs and to be comparable with SUNY programs. The RF strives to provide excellent customer service through comprehensive, integrated support to our employees.

Each campus has either an HR office or an office that administers RF policies and provides day-to-day services in coordination with the campus operations manager. These services include recruiting staff, processing appointments to payroll, providing orientation programs, assisting in enrolling and receiving benefits, administering salary and leave policies, maintaining employee records and implementing equal employment opportunity procedures.

For more information on the RF policies and procedures at your location and the services available to you as a RF employee, please contact your campus office that handles RF human resource matters. You may also contact the [Office of Human Resources at central office](#) for additional assistance.



Working at the Research Foundation

Introduction to Your Job

Whether you are a new employee or an experienced member of the Research Foundation team, your performance on the job contributes to the smooth functioning of research, sponsored program, or technology transfer activities.

RF employees can be found in administrative offices, at archaeological digs in Central America, in medical research labs or in the classrooms of third world countries. Whatever specific job you are doing, you are representing yourself, the RF sponsored project or administrative position for which you work, and the entire RF organization.

A positive, cooperative, self-motivated, courteous and professional attitude is an essential function of every position. While different positions have different areas of responsibility, we all need to work as a team, and we expect each employee to pitch in as necessary.

Since ground rules vary depending on your job and location, ask your supervisor for the proper work rules to follow. It is important to note that if you are working in a foreign country the laws of that country may supersede some of the policies referenced in this handbook.

If you are working in an environment where there is frequent contact with customers and guests from outside the corporation, the RF encourages you to maintain a professional appearance with proper dress attire.

Conditions of Employment - Employment-at-Will

Employment with the RF is on an at-will basis, meaning the employment relationship can be terminated at any time by the employee or the employer. An employee-at-will relationship means there is no specified length of time the employee or the employer expect the employment relationship to last.

Accordingly, the employment relationship can, in general, be terminated at any time by either party. This RF policy of at-will employment may be revised, deleted or altered only by a written employment agreement signed by the Research Foundation's executive vice president/chief operating officer and approved by the [Office of General Counsel and Secretary](#).

Employment Eligibility

The RF complies with the [Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986](#), as amended, and other federal laws that require employers to verify that all employees are authorized to work in the United States, regardless of citizenship. All new employees are required to complete an [Employment Eligibility Verification form](#) (form I-9, [see instructions](#)) and produce documents establishing identity and authorization to work at the time of hire.



Please contact your campus office that handles RF human resources matters or the [Office of Human resources at central office](#) for additional assistance.

New Employee Orientation Period

Each campus office holds an orientation session for new employees soon after they are hired.

This orientation session demonstrates the collegial atmosphere of the RF and introduces the positive employee relations environment in which you should work. During this orientation, you will learn about employee benefit programs, human resource policies and other information that supports you at the RF.

In addition, during your new employee orientation period and on an ongoing basis during your career, your supervisor is the best initial source of information if you have questions regarding job duties, policies and procedures that must be followed in the workplace, and the use of facilities, equipment and supplies.

Standard Workweek/Time and Attendance

Under the requirements of the [Fair Labor Standards Act \(FLSA\)](#), the RF has established a workweek period that extends from Saturday at 12:00 a.m. to Friday at 11:59 p.m. Within this workweek period, the RF has established either a 37.5-hour or a 40-hour standard workweek as the basis for full-time employment [1 full time equivalent (FTE)].

Your supervisor will inform you of the hours for your standard workweek and will notify you of any changes in the standard workweek. Your supervisor will also establish and inform you of the hours you will work each day. If you are sick or otherwise unable to report to work, you must, whenever possible, notify your supervisor 30 minutes before your scheduled start time. It is important for the normal conduct of business that you work as scheduled.

For more information, please review the [Research Foundation's Leave Policy](#).

Breaks and Meal Periods

The RF provides unpaid meal periods to eligible employees and, although not required by law, allows the scheduling of rest breaks during the course of a workday. The RF recognizes the benefit of meal periods and rest breaks and understands the need of employees to attend to personal needs during the day.

The RF will provide an unpaid meal period to employees working six hours or more in a day, of not less than a half hour and no more than one hour, to coincide with a midday or evening meal. Non-exempt employees must take at least a half hour meal period each day they work six hours or more. Employees working less than six hours a day will be eligible for rest breaks as they are permitted in their respective departments.

The provision of rest breaks will be left to each department head's or vice president's discretion. Generally, the RF will allow for up to two scheduled 10-minute rest breaks per day for full-time employees, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, and will allow part-time employees one rest break period during their shift. Rest break schedules may be



revised or suspended at any time, at the sole discretion of the supervisor, based on business needs.

For more information, please review the RF's [Meal Periods and Work Breaks Policy](#).

Personnel File

Your RF campus human resources office usually maintains your official personnel file, which is a permanent and confidential file. Upon request, current and former RF employees are generally permitted access to the information in their personnel file. A staff member in the human resources office will join you should you wish to review your file.

Former employees have the right to review their file within a reasonable period of time after separation. The RF will respond directly to requests for information regarding RF employees, as appropriate.

We want you to be aware that certain sensitive information may be withheld from inspection, except where such restrictions are prohibited by law. This sensitive information includes, but is not limited to, third-party references, confidential management documents or plans and information on security or criminal investigations.

In addition, any protected information about an employee that is maintained in electronic databases may also be held in strict confidence, unless there is a legitimate business need or legal reason to provide it to another person or organization.

References

All requests from prospective employers for references should be directed to the operations manager at your campus. If the operations manager is unavailable, direct the requests to the person in charge in the campus office that handles human resources matters. If you are at central office, direct all requests to the employment manager at central office. No other supervisor or employee is authorized or permitted to release references for a current or former employee. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the RF will respond to all reference requests by providing only dates of employment and positions held.



Workplace Issues

Equal Employment Opportunity Practice

The Research Foundation is an equal employment opportunity employer and we strive to comply with all applicable laws prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, creed, gender (except where gender is a bona fide occupational qualification), sexual orientation, age, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, veteran status, marital status, as well as any other category protected by applicable federal or state laws.

All such discrimination is unlawful and all persons involved in the operations of the RF are prohibited from engaging in this type of unlawful conduct.

The RF actively supports equality in employment to all endeavors associated with the RF and provides equal opportunity in employment for all qualified individuals consistent with this policy.

An integral part of the RF's equal employment opportunity program includes identifying qualified candidates among protected classes such as minorities, women, disabled individuals, special disabled veterans, Vietnam era veterans, other protected veterans, and newly separated veterans, so that they may be considered along with other candidates for positions to be filled within the organization. In addition, the Research Foundation has adopted an affirmative action plan. Please contact the [Office of Human resources at central office](#) for further information about this program.

For more information on the RF equal opportunity policies and procedures at your location, please contact your RF campus human resources office or view the [RF Equal Employment Opportunity Policy](#).

Affirmative Action

The operations manager (or a designee), in conjunction with the campus office that handles human resources matters, is responsible for implementing the Research Foundation's equal employment opportunity program. Contact the operations manager (or a designee) at your campus if you would like additional information on the Research Foundation's affirmative action policies, procedures, and programs. You may also contact the Corporate Affirmative Action Office at central office for additional assistance.

The RF's affirmative action office at central office performs an oversight function to ensure that affirmative action policies, procedures, and programs are appropriately implemented at each campus location. This function includes monitoring and reviewing all formal workplace complaints and allegations of discrimination filed by RF employees, and providing managers and supervisors with technical assistance and training on a host of human resource-related and legal issues.

Preventing Harassment in the Workplace

The RF is committed to maintaining a working environment that is free of harassing behavior. The RF prohibits sexual harassment and other harassment because of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, creed, physical or mental disability, marital status, age,



sexual orientation, military service, or any other basis protected by applicable federal or state law. Any such harassment will not be tolerated.

Applicable state and federal laws define sexual harassment as unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other gender-based visual, verbal, or physical conduct when:

1. submission to the conduct is made a term or condition of employment;
2. submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as basis for employment decisions affecting the individual; or
3. the conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with the employee's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. This definition includes many forms of offensive behavior.

The following is a partial list:

- Unwanted sexual advances;
- Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors;
- Making or threatening reprisals after a negative response to sexual advances;
- Visual conduct such as leering, making sexual gestures, or displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons, or posters;
- Verbal conduct such as making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, sexually explicit jokes, or comments about any employee's body or dress;
- Verbal sexual advances or propositions;
- Verbal abuse of a sexual nature, graphic verbal commentary about an individual's body, sexually degrading words to describe an individual, or suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations;
- Physical conduct such as touching, assault, or impeding or blocking movements; and
- Retaliation for reporting harassment or threatening to report harassment.

It is unlawful for males to sexually harass females or other males, and for females to sexually harass males or other females. Sexual harassment on the job is unlawful whether it involves coworker harassment, harassment by a supervisor, or harassment by persons doing business with or for the RF.

Prohibited harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, physical or mental disability, marital status, age, sexual orientation, or any other protected basis, includes behavior similar to sexual harassment, such as:

- Verbal conduct such as threats, epithets, derogatory comments, or slurs;



- Visual conduct such as derogatory posters, photographs, cartoons, drawings, or gestures;
- Physical conduct such as assault, unwanted touching, or blocking normal movement; and
- Retaliation for reporting harassment or threatening to report harassment.

As a RF employee, it is your duty to avoid engaging in conduct that inappropriately interferes with your colleagues' work performance or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

If you feel you have been subjected to harassing behavior, you should discuss your situation with your supervisor, your campus office that handles RF human resources matters, your operations manager, or the [Office of Human resources at central office](#) for additional assistance.

For more information, please review the [RF Sexual Harassment policy](#).

Procedure for Resolving Allegations of Workplace Discrimination

When a person believes that he or she has been the victim of discrimination, RF management is committed to addressing the allegation as quickly as possible. The [Procedure for Resolving Allegations of Workplace Discrimination](#) was established to address these allegations. You may also obtain a hard copy of this document from the Research Foundation Discrimination Complaint Manager at your campus location or from your campus office that handles RF human resources matters.

An employee will not be retaliated against or treated adversely in any way for participating in an allegation of discrimination. To the extent possible, the confidentiality of discrimination complaints will be maintained.

For more information please review the [RF Procedure for Resolving Allegations of Workplace Discrimination](#).

Drug-Free Workplace Policy

The RF is covered by the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act, as amended, and seeks to maintain a drug-free workplace. As a covered employer, the RF must certify to the contracting government agencies, as required, that it will provide a drug-free workplace in connection with the performance of its government contracts. The RF will include drug-free awareness information in its programs and will comply with the requirements that the government be notified of any employee's workplace-related drug conviction.

In connection with the RF's drug-free workplace compliance efforts, please note the following requirements:

- Each employee is required to be given at new employee orientation time a copy of the RF's Drug-Free Workplace Policy.



- Employees must, as a condition of employment, report any criminal conviction under a criminal drug statute for violations occurring on the RF premises or while conducting RF business. A report of a conviction must be made to the vice president for human resources within five days of the conviction. Within ten (10) days of learning about an employee's conviction, the RF must notify any government agency with which it contracts or subcontracts of the employee's criminal drug statute conviction;
- Within 30 days of the date the RF learns of any employee's conviction, it will discipline the employee, up to and including termination. Any employee who is not terminated will be required to satisfactorily participate in and complete a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program.

The RF will make ongoing, good faith efforts to maintain a drug-free workplace by implementing the above requirements. Our failure to comply with the provisions of the drug-free workplace statute may subject the RF to loss of payments under a government contract, termination of the contract, and debarment as a contractor for up to five years.

If you have any questions or need additional assistance regarding our drug-free workplace compliance efforts, contact the Office of Human Resources at central office or the campus office that handles RF human resource matters.

For more information, please review the [Research Foundation's Drug-Free Workplace Policy](#).

Conflict of Interest Policy

The RF has adopted a [Conflict of Interest Policy](#), which states in pertinent part:

No officer or employee of the RF should have any interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or engage in any business or transaction or professional activity, or incur any obligation of any nature, which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his or her duties in the best interest of the RF.

All Foundation employees are expected to act in accordance with the policy. The policy also sets standards for the proper conduct of RF business and describes the activities that would be considered a conflict of interest.

Under this policy:

- Outside employment can't impair independence of judgment or disclosure of RF confidential information;
- Employee's position with RF can't be used to secure undue privileges or exemptions;
- Employee can't represent RF with another business in which employee, spouse, dependent, or business partner has financial interest that could conflict;



- Employee must adhere to the RF [Guidelines for Vendor or Independent Contractor Selection](#);
- Employee can't give impression of special favors;
- Employee can't hold personal investments in a business where a conflict would result between RF and the employee's private interests.

If there is a suspected breach:

- Operations manager (or designee) must advise campus president and Office of General Counsel and Secretary;
- Campus is office of record;
- Operations manager is responsible for enforcement of RF Conflict of Interest Policy.

For more information, review the [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) or contact your campus operations manager, the [Office of Human Resources at central office](#) or the [Office of General Counsel and Secretary](#) for additional assistance.

Confidential RF Information Policy

Confidential information stored on the Research Foundation of State University of New York (RF) network and/or in any media is an important resource for all RF employees and those acting on behalf of the RF in performing their job duties. As the organization has grown so too, have internal and external threats to the security and confidentiality of RF information.

Maintaining the integrity of RF confidential information is of utmost importance to the organization. In response, the RF developed this policy to reduce the risk of compromising confidential RF information and to comply with applicable state and federal laws, including the New York State Information Security Breach and Notification Act, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. In addition, the RF's [Statement and Standards of Ethical Conduct](#) emphasizes the organization's commitment to operating in an ethical, honest, and lawful manner.

All RF employees and those acting on behalf of the RF who have access to confidential RF information will ensure that this information is treated in accordance with the "Requirements for Maintaining Confidential Information."

In addition, all RF employees and those acting on behalf of the RF are responsible for immediately reporting any suspected violation(s) of this policy or any other action which violates confidentiality of RF information to the manager/supervisor, department vice president/head, or RF operations manager/designee, as appropriate, at the campus location.

For the entire policy, refer to the [Policy on Research Foundation Confidential Information](#).



Patents and Inventions Policy

One of the RF's primary goals is the development of patentable intellectual property. While our [Patents and Inventions Policy of State University of New York](#) requires that employees report promptly to the RF or its designee any patentable inventions and discoveries arising out of work supported by the sponsor; the RF also rewards those inventions and discoveries that have market value. The objectives of the Patents and Inventions Policy include:

- Identifying inventions through disclosures;
- Securing appropriate patents or copyrights;
- Marketing inventions through licensing and other arrangements;
- Managing royalties and other invention-related income; and
- Safeguarding intellectual property.

The [Patents and Inventions Policy](#) has been adopted as Title 8, Chapter V, Subchapter B, Section 335.28 of Codes, Rules and Regulations of the State of New York. Pursuant to the [1977 Agreement between the RF and SUNY](#), the RF Board of Directors has adopted the [Patents and Inventions Policy](#) as its own.

The RF requires that anyone making an invention while using SUNY facilities for sponsored program research must disclose the invention to the [campus Technology Transfer Office](#) or [central office Technology Transfer Office](#) and assign the invention to the RF. Accordingly, the RF holds title to the invention.

For more information on this policy, contact your local campus Technology Transfer Office, the Central Office Technology Transfer Office, or the Office of General Counsel and Secretary.

Fraud Policy

The RF has established a [Fraud Policy](#) in order to facilitate the development of controls which will aid in the detection and prevention of fraud against the RF. It is the Research Foundation's intent to promote consistent organizational behavior by providing guidelines and assigning responsibility for the development of controls and conduct of investigations.

This policy applies to any irregularity, or suspected irregularity, involving any person employed by, representing or acting on behalf of the RF, or who is in a significant decision making capacity with respect to sponsored program activity as well as consultants, vendors, contractors, outside agencies doing business with employees of such agencies, and/or any other parties with a business relationship with the RF.

SUNY has a separate policy for notification and investigation of suspected fraudulent activities.

Any investigative activity required will be conducted without regard to the suspected wrongdoer's length of service, position/title, or relationship to the RF. The terms **defalcation**, **misappropriation**, and other **fiscal irregularities** refer to, and may include, but are not limited to:



- Any dishonest or fraudulent act;
- Forgery or alteration of any document or account belonging to the RF;
- Forgery or alteration of a check, bank draft, or any other financial document;
- Misappropriation of funds, supplies, or other assets;
- Impropriety in the handling or reporting of money or financial transactions;
- Disclosing confidential and proprietary information to outside parties;
- Accepting or seeking anything of material value from contractors, vendors or persons providing services/material to the RF, consistent with the guidelines established within the [Conflict of Interest Policy](#);
- Destruction, removal or inappropriate use of records, furniture, fixtures and equipment;
- Any activity which results in violation of sponsor terms involving sponsor funds or sponsor reporting;
- Any similar or related irregularity.

For more information on this policy, contact your campus office that handles RF human resources or contact the [Office of Internal Audit and Management Advisory Services at central office](#) for assistance. For more information please review the Research Foundation's [Fraud Policy](#).

Travel Guide

If you travel on official RF business and your expenses are authorized, you will be reimbursed for expenses in accordance with the [Travel Guide](#). This Guide outlines the policies, procedures, and responsibilities related to RF travel. The information in this guide helps govern the expenditure of travel funds from sponsored program, administrative, and agency accounts. This guide applies to all travel undertaken in connection with:

- the performance of operational or administrative functions.
- sponsored programs administered by the RF.

Travel costs are generally allowable when they are directly attributed to specific work on a sponsored project. In addition, there is medical, safety, and travel information available to you on the RF public Web site through the [Assistance Abroad portal](#).

For more information on the Travel policy, contact your operating location office responsible for travel reimbursement. If additional assistance is needed, contact the Finance Office at central office. For more information please review the Research Foundation's [Travel Guide](#).



Solicitation and Distribution

The Research Foundation's guidelines on solicitation and distribution were established in order to maintain an environment free from distracting solicitation. As such, employees are not permitted to engage in solicitation or to distribute literature:

- during their work time or
- at any other time if such distribution or solicitation interferes with other employees' work activities.

The only exception is that the RF may authorize the solicitation of funds, goods, or services for charitable purposes.

You should be aware that persons not employed by the RF may not, without prior authorization solicit, sell, or distribute merchandise, services, or literature in RF work areas for any purpose at any time.

For more information on these guidelines, contact your campus office that handles human resources matters.

Safety and Security

Information Security

The Research Foundation operates and maintains a highly sophisticated computer network that provides access to information on grants and contracts at all campus locations where research and sponsored programs are conducted.

As an RF employee, you play a major role in ensuring that work-related information that is discussed or disseminated is kept confidential. You should always protect the confidentiality of your user ID, password, and all accounts you use to access data processing resources and facilities.

Notify a responsible person, such as your supervisor or the data security officer at your campus location, if you suspect system abuse. If you are unaware of the proper security procedures at your campus, ask your supervisor for assistance in learning these procedures.

Safety

As an employee, you have certain access to the RF location where you work. Access to your work location should be only for work purposes. For most employees, this access is usually limited on nights and weekends. For more information on this policy, please contact your campus operations manager, the Office of Information Services at central office, or the Office of General Counsel and Secretary at central office.

If you become involved in an accident on the job, report it immediately to your supervisor and complete the accident report form provided by your supervisor. This report is the basis for correcting any safety hazards, complying with insurance requirements, and protecting employees from future injury. Should you become troubled about the safety of your work



environment, discuss your concerns with your supervisor. Failure to report accidents may result in disciplinary action.

Workplace Violence

Acts or threats of physical violence, including intimidation, physical harassment, and/or coercion, that involve or affect the RF or that occur on RF or SUNY property or in the conduct of RF business off RF property, will not be tolerated.

This prohibition against threats and acts of violence applies to all persons involved in RF operations, including, but not limited to, RF personnel, contract workers, temporary employees, and anyone else on RF property or conducting RF business off RF property. Violations of these guidelines by any individual may lead to disciplinary and/or legal action as appropriate.

Workplace violence is defined as any intentional conduct that is sufficiently severe, offensive, or intimidating to cause an individual to reasonably fear for his or her personal physical safety or the safety of his or her family, friends, and/or property such that employment conditions are altered or a hostile, abusive, or intimidating work environment is created for one or more RF employees.

Workplace violence may involve any threats or acts of violence occurring on RF premises, regardless of the relationship between the RF and the parties involved in the incident. It also includes threats or acts of violence that affect the business interests of the RF or that may lead to an incident of violence on RF premises.

Threats or acts of violence occurring off RF premises that involve employees, agents, or individuals acting as a representative of the RF, whether as victims of or active participants in the conduct, may also constitute workplace violence.

Specific examples of conduct that may constitute threats or acts of violence under these guidelines include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Threats or acts of physical or aggressive contact directed toward another individual;
- Threats or acts of physical harm directed toward an individual or his/her family, friends, associates, or property;
- Intentional destruction or threat of destruction of RF property or another employee's property;
- Harassing or threatening phone calls;
- Surveillance;
- Stalking;
- Veiled threats of physical harm or similar intimidation; and



- Any conduct resulting in the conviction under any criminal code provision relating to violence or threats of violence that adversely affects the RF's legitimate business interests.

Any person who engages in a threat or violent action on RF property may be removed from the premises as quickly as safety permits and may be required, at the RF's discretion, to remain off RF premises pending the outcome of an investigation of the incident.

When threats are made or acts of violence are committed by an employee, a judgment will be made by the RF as to what actions are appropriate with respect to that employee, including potential medical evaluation and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Solving Workplace Concerns

We strive to provide an environment of open, honest dialogue and realize that you may occasionally have concerns about work rules or how you are treated on the job. To assist you and your supervisor in addressing these matters, the RF has established the [Procedure for Solving Problems in the Workplace](#). If you use this procedure, your concerns will be kept confidential and you will be protected from any type of retaliation by a manager or supervisor.

For more information, refer to the [Procedure for Solving Problems in the Workplace](#). You may also obtain the procedure from your RF Workplace Complaint Manager or your campus office handles human resources matters.

Data Security Guidelines

The RF takes steps to ensure that the Research Foundation's business and other sensitive information remains confidential as well as available when needed. All records, data, and information ("information") that are created in the course of business, including without limitation, e-mail, memoranda, spreadsheets, Internet usage, and other documents or files are and remain the exclusive property of the RF, regardless of whether these are of a personal nature or not. Moreover, the RF reserves the right to monitor the use, storage, and dissemination of such information at any time and without advanced notice.

In your work you will learn confidential information about the RF's business. Every employee at the RF has a professional and ethical responsibility to treat this information as confidential and to ensure such information is not improperly disclosed.

Except as required in the performance of your duties for the RF, you may not use or disclose any confidential information and must, when you leave the RF, return all copies of documents, notes, computer disks, etc. which contain such confidential information.

Some examples of confidential information include:

- Word processing documents, such as internal memos and letters;
- Cost and financial figures;
- Board of Director materials;



- Personnel files (including names, salaries and levels of qualifications); and
- Reports from consultants into the workings of the RF .

For more information on these guidelines, contact your campus operations manager, the Office of Information Services at central office, or the Office of General Counsel and Secretary at central office.

Special Considerations Related to the Internet

Communication via the Internet is as easy as using the RF internal mail system. The rules governing the confidentiality and protection of our data/information cannot be relaxed. Employees should exercise caution when disclosing documents, spreadsheets, data or other information over the Internet.

E-mail communication via the Internet must be viewed with the same formality as written communications via a posted letter. Any libelous statements, infringement of copyrighted materials, unlawful harassment, misrepresentations or commitments made via Internet communication could expose you and the RF to liability.

Access to the Internet (to include the Web) using RF equipment must be for work purposes only. Non-work information (including software) is not to be downloaded using RF-provided equipment nor is non-work correspondence to originate from the RF's equipment.

Electronic Communications

The RF provides computer and telephone equipment and related facilities for the purpose of conducting the RF's business. The RF reserves the right to review electronic communications and information stored in a computer, including without limitation e-mail, voice mail, and/or stored e-mail or voice mail messages, at the RF's discretion without prior notice.

Employees are expected to conduct their electronic communications in the same professional and respectful manner as all other internal or external communications. Employees may not use RF computer facilities to conduct illegal activities of any sort, including infringement of copyrighted materials or harassment.

When accessing the RF internal systems remotely, the same responsibilities and requirements apply as if you were working at the office. Employees who violate this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Research Foundation Property

During your employment with the RF you may be issued certain equipment to enhance your ability to perform your job. Such equipment may include, without limitation, a desktop or laptop computer cell phone, blackberry or personal digital assistant, security access device, telephone, parking permit, ID cards, and other property ("equipment"). This equipment is owned by the RF, and no title or interest in the equipment is transferred to you during or after your period of employment with the RF.



If your employment is terminated for any reason, on or prior to your termination date you must return the RF's equipment in good condition and repair.

Compensation

Salary

The Research Foundation's compensation guidelines are designed to provide you with a salary that is competitive with local and national market conditions. All positions are classified under specific titles and salary grades or ranges. This classification system reflects job relationships and salary equity. Pay increases occur within minimum to maximum ranges assigned to each job classification.

Annually, the RF's Board of Directors approves a salary plan which is effective on July 1st of each year. For more information on the salary plan and how it applies to you, contact your campus office that handles RF human resource matters or the [Office of Human Resources at central office](#) for assistance.

For additional information, refer to [Salaries Rules and Policies When Assigning Regular Employees](#).

Position Classification Policy

The RF has established a [Position Classification Policy](#) for its employees for the purpose of maintaining salary and wage equity and for consistency in the treatment of its employees.

The RF makes every effort to ensure that each position is classified correctly; however, sometimes job assignments vary. If your work has changed significantly, discuss the matter with your supervisor.

Your supervisor can give you a copy of the job description for your specific position. You and your supervisor should also discuss asking your human resource office to review the position classification. That office has information about the standards used to determine the classification of your position.

Your Paycheck

The RF's pay cycle is biweekly, generally with a Friday pay date. Each payroll check reflects regular time worked during the two weeks through and including payday for all employees except those paid hourly. Hourly employees and any overtime wages are paid on a two-week lag basis.

Your timesheet (for non-exempt employees) or exception report (for exempt employees) is used to determine payment for services performed and is required to be completed accurately and on a timely basis.

In accordance with the August 2004 revised Fair Labor Standards Act regulations, exempt employees are required to be paid on a salaried basis. As an exempt employee, if you believe your salary (not deductions) has been improperly reduced and you have not been notified in advance, you should contact your campus office that handles RF human resources matters.



Direct Deposit

The RF offers a [direct deposit program](#) to persons eligible to participate. Eligibility is determined by the operations manager at each campus location. Those people who are eligible to participate can have all or a portion of their net pay directly deposited to any financial institution that is a member of the New York Automated Clearing House.

For additional information on this program, contact your campus office that handles human resource matters.

Overtime

Employees will be classified as exempt or non-exempt employees. Non-exempt employees are eligible for overtime pay in accordance with applicable law and are required to complete a time sheet each pay period, recording the hours worked each day during that period.

Overtime pay is calculated based on the Foundation's workweek beginning Saturday at 12:00 a.m. and ending Friday at 11:59 p.m. Clerical, technical support, and other positions eligible for overtime pay are paid one and one-half times the regular rate of pay for all hours worked in excess of 40 in any workweek. Generally, overtime must be arranged with your supervisor in advance.

Exempt employees are those whose job classifications meet the federal and state requirement for overtime exemption. Exempt employees are compensated on a salary basis and are not eligible for overtime pay.

The Office of Human Resources will notify you if you are an exempt employee. Certain professional, administrative, supervisory, and executive positions are not eligible for overtime pay. If you are in one of these positions, you will be required to complete a monthly leave report to verify that you worked as scheduled and to record any charges to leave credits.



Leave

Paid Time Off

The RF realizes that it's important for employees to have a healthy work-life balance, and has created and implemented a well-designed [Leave Policy](#). The RF allows eligible employees to earn accruals for vacation, sick and personal leave, and to take other types of leave such as holiday leave, military leave and leave without pay.

Salaried employees appointed to at least 50 percent of the standard full-time schedule are eligible to accrue leave. Unless there are special circumstances, an employee cannot take leave unless it is already accrued.

Employees assigned to the following student titles are not eligible to receive leave:

- Research Project Assistant
- Project Instructional Assistant
- Research Graduate Assistant
- Research Aide
- Senior Research Aide
- Camp Counselor-Student

For additional information on eligibility for leave and how it is administered, refer to the [Leave Policy](#). Following are types of paid time off:

Sick leave

The primary purpose of sick leave is to provide a reasonable measure of protection against loss of income due to illness or disability. The amount of sick leave you accrue and are able to use depends on the date you were hired, your employment status and your position classification. Your campus office that handles RF human resources matters will explain your eligibility.

Vacation and Personal Leave

Subject to managerial approval, vacation leave may be taken at employees' request. Personal leave may be used for absences due to pressing personal business and other similar circumstances, e.g., medical appointments, banking, and so on, that cannot be taken care of other than during normal working hours.

Your eligibility to accrue and use vacation and personal leave depends on the date you were hired, your status as a full-time or part-time employee, and status as an exempt or nonexempt employee. Your campus office that handles RF human resources matters will provide you with additional details on leave accrual.

Holidays

Generally, RF employees observe state, federal, and other customary holidays scheduled at their individual campus locations. If you are required to work on an official holiday, you will



be paid for your time and given a paid day off. If employees do not use holiday leave before their employment terminates, the holiday leave is lost.

For a list of holidays at your campus location, contact your campus office that handles RF human resources matters or the [Office of Human Resources at central office](#) for additional assistance.

Military Leave

If you are called to active military duty, you will be paid for up to 22 work days or 30 calendar days, whichever is greater, during any one calendar year or any continuous period of ordered military service. After paid leave is exhausted, you may use accrued vacation, holiday or personal leave credit or be put on leave without pay for the period of your military duty.

You may be entitled to re-employment rights and retention of full seniority benefits for all prior service upon re-employment under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act and the New York State Military Law.

You need to bring your military service orders to the campus office that handles RF human resources matters or the [Office of Human Resources at central office](#) (depending on work location) for review prior to commencement of the leave.

Temporary employees may not be eligible for reinstatement following military leave, and reinstatement may not be required for other employees in some circumstances.

As with other leaves of absence, failure to return to work or to reapply within applicable time limits may result in termination of employment.

Effective August 16, 2006, spouses of members of the armed forces who have been deployed during a period of military conflict are allowed to take ten (10) days unpaid leave when that employee's spouse is on leave from the armed forces.

For additional information, refer to the procedure on [Military Leave](#).

Jury Duty

If you are called to jury duty, you will receive the necessary time off with full pay to fulfill this civic obligation. You should request jury duty leave from your supervisor in advance and provide him or her with the necessary documentation (jury duty voucher).

Leave of Absence

You may be eligible for the following types of leave without pay: disability, child care and personal. Requests for leave without pay must be reviewed individually by your supervisor.



Family and Medical Leave

The RF will grant family and medical leave in accordance with the requirements of applicable state and federal law in effect at the time the leave is granted. No greater or lesser leave benefits will be granted than those set forth in the relevant state or federal laws. The following is a summary of the relevant provisions.

Eligible employees may receive up to a total of 12 workweeks of unpaid leave during a 12-month period. To be eligible for family and medical leave benefits, you must:

- have worked for the RF for a total of at least 12 months
- have worked at least 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months
- work at a location where at least 50 employees are employed by the RF within 75 miles.

Leave may be used for one or more of the following reasons:

- for the birth of a child or placement of a child with an employee for adoption or foster care
- to care for an immediate family member (spouse, child, or parent) with a serious health condition
- to take medical leave when the employee is unable to work because of his or her own serious health condition.

Under some circumstances, employees may take family and medical leave intermittently--which means taking leave in blocks of time, or by reducing their normal weekly or daily work schedule. Certain restrictions on these benefits may apply.

Please contact your campus office that handles RF human resources matters or [the Office of Human Resources at central office](#) (depending on your location) as soon as you become aware of the need for a family and medical leave. If you need family and medical leave, you may be required to provide:

- 30-day advance notice when the need for the leave is foreseeable
- Medical certification from a health care provider (both prior to the leave and prior to reinstatement)
- Periodic recertification
- Periodic reports during the leave.



Failure to provide this information when requested may affect the eligibility for or timing of Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave.

Family and medical leave is unpaid. The RF may require you to use or you may choose to use accrued paid leave (such as paid time off leave) to cover some or all of the family and medical leave. The use of paid time off will not extend the length of a family and medical leave.

The RF will maintain, for up to a maximum of 12 workweeks of family and medical leave, any group health insurance coverage that you were provided before the leave on the same terms as if you had continued to work. In some instances the RF may recover premiums it paid to maintain health coverage if you do not return to work following family or medical leave.

If you are on family and medical leave but you are not entitled to continue paid coverage, you may continue your group health insurance coverage through the RF in conjunction with federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) guidelines by making monthly payments to the RF for the amount of the relevant premium. Please contact the campus office that handles RF human resource matters or the [the Office of Human Resources at central office](#) (depending on work location) for further information.

Under most circumstances, upon return from family and medical leave, you will be reinstated to your previous position, or to an equivalent job with equivalent pay, benefits and other employment terms and conditions. However, upon return from a family and medical leave, you have no greater right to reinstatement than if you had been continuously employed rather than on leave.

For additional information on these types of leave without pay, you may contact your campus office that handles RF human resources matters or refer to the [Overview of the Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#).

Accrued but Unused Vacation Leave

Upon separation from RF employment, eligible employees will be paid for up to 30 days of accrued vacation leave.



Benefits

The Research Foundation offers a wide range of benefits to its employees. These plans have evolved to meet our employees' needs and are intended to be generally comparable to what SUNY offers its employees. The RF routinely reviews its plans to maintain competitive and comparable plans.

The plans are designed to include core benefits with competitive employee contributions that provide for income protection and also provide optional supplemental benefits at affordable group rates. In addition, our benefits plans incorporate many of the tax-favorable features allowed within federal and state laws.

The following sections contain brief descriptions of each benefit plan. Specific eligibility requirements, waiting periods, and enrollment instructions can be found in the *RF Benefits Handbook*.

You can also obtain information on these plans from your campus office that handles RF human resources matters. If any questions arise regarding the interpretation of these benefit plans, the answers will be determined by referring to the actual plan documents and insurance policies rather than the highlights contained in this handbook.

In addition to the benefits plans described in this handbook, you can also participate, depending on eligibility rules, in other plans, such as health care and dependent care flexible spending accounts, group long-term care insurance, college savings, and you can seek medical decision support from the organization [Consumer's Medical Resources](#).

For more information on these plans, refer to the [RF Benefits Handbook](#).

Eligibility for Benefits

As a non-student employee, you are eligible to participate in the RF's benefits programs and insurance plans if you are employed at 50 percent or more of full-time hours and are not a temporary summer employee or full-time SUNY student employed part-time by the RF in a student title position.

All employees are eligible for New York State Disability and Workers' Compensation insurance and unemployment benefits unless specifically excluded by law. Employees enrolled as full-time SUNY students may receive health insurance coverage under a separate plan.

If your employment status changes and you become eligible to participate in the RF's insurance plans, your waiting period for each benefit starts the day you become eligible.

BENEFITS FOR NON-STUDENT EMPLOYEES

The following sections provide a brief summary of benefits for non-student employees.

Health Insurance

The RF's health insurance program gives you the opportunity to enroll in either a Preferred



Provider Organization (PPO) or a Health Maintenance Organization (HMO) if one is available in your area. Under the PPO, you are offered a choice in the selection of hospitals, physicians and providers of health care almost anywhere in the world. HMOs offer health-care services within a specific geographic location.

You are eligible for coverage after 42 days of employment at 50 percent or more of full-time hours. There is an employee contribution required for individual or family coverage; however, the RF pays the major portion of the premium. Refer to the [RF Benefits Handbook](#) for more detailed information.

Dental Insurance

Under the RF Dental Plan, you and your covered dependents are eligible for preventive and basic services after six months of employment at 50 percent or more of full-time hours. There is a 12-month waiting period for prosthetic services including crowns, fixed bridges and full or partial dentures.

The RF pays the full cost of coverage for this plan, but you do share in the cost of some services. Refer to the [RF Benefits Handbook](#) for more detailed information on this plan.

Vision Care

Under the Vision Care Plan, you and each covered member of your family are eligible for an eye examination and eye glasses every 24 months. You may choose a participating provider and pay no cost, or a nonparticipating provider and be reimbursed up to a specified allowance. You are not required to pay a premium for this coverage, but may share in the cost of some optional services.

You are eligible for coverage after six months of employment at 50 percent or more of full-time hours. Refer to the [RF Benefits Handbook](#) for more detailed information.

Life Insurance

The RF's Basic Life Insurance Plan provides you with \$10,000 of coverage if you began employment on or after July 1, 1992. You are eligible for coverage after six (6) months of employment at 50 percent or more of full-time hours. The RF pays the entire premium for this coverage. Longer service employees are eligible for a different benefit.

Refer to the [RF Benefits Handbook](#) for more detailed information on this plan.

Long-Term Disability

This plan provides 60 percent of your monthly salary up to a maximum of \$5,000. It is offset by income benefits from employee sick leave, other group disability benefits, retirement benefits, Social Security and Workers' Compensation.

You may be eligible for this income protection plan if a certain illness or injury prevents you from working for more than six (6) months, you are employed full time, and you completed a one-year employment period before the disability occurred.



Your campus office that handles RF human resources matters will advise you of the steps necessary to file a claim for benefits under this plan.

Optional Life Insurance for Employees and Dependents

The RF also offers an optional Life Insurance Plan. Under this optional plan you can choose to purchase coverage amounting to 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 times your annual earnings up to an overall maximum of \$300,000 (or \$240,000) including the basic plan benefits. You are eligible for coverage after six months of employment at 50 percent or more of full-time hours. The optional plan also provides additional insurance benefits for accidental death and dismemberment.

Dependent life insurance may be purchased for your spouse or domestic partner (amounts ranging from \$10,000 - \$100,000) and your children (amounts ranging from \$2,000 - \$10,000).

You will be required to complete a statement of health and be approved by the life insurance carrier if you delay enrollment beyond 60 days of your eligibility date.

Refer to the [RF Benefits Handbook](#) for more detailed information.

Basic Retirement Plan

The Basic Retirement Plan is intended to provide you with income when you retire. It is a defined contribution plan, funded entirely by the RF. You must complete one year of qualified employment with the RF before contributions begin. RF employees hired since July 1, 1994 receive eight percent of earnings until completion of seven years of employment and 10 percent of earnings thereafter.

Employees with longer service are eligible for different contribution levels based on a percentage of your RF earnings. You become vested and gain full ownership of these funds once you complete the three-year period of qualified employment.

Refer to the [RF Benefits Handbook](#) for information on specific contributions and plan rules.

Optional Retirement Plan

In addition to the Basic Retirement Plan, the RF offers a tax-deferred retirement savings plan. There is no waiting period for participation, and you can enroll at any time. This plan gives you the opportunity to invest a portion of your earnings for retirement, while deferring income taxes on the amount you invest.

You will not pay taxes on this portion of income or the investment earnings until you withdraw the funds (after employment ends). Refer to the [RF Benefits Handbook](#) for more information on this plan and how to enroll.

Flexible Benefits Program

Under the RF's Flexible Benefits Program you may pay your share of health insurance premiums on a pretax basis, resulting in lower tax withholding and higher take-home pay.



Savings under the program will vary depending on the health plan chosen, whether an employee has individual or family coverage and the number of withholding allowances claimed for tax purposes. After employees have chosen the type of health coverage they desire, they are automatically enrolled for pre-tax premiums under the Flexible Benefits Program unless they decide not to participate and complete a Participant Waiver Form.

Refer to the [RF Benefits Handbook](#) for more information on this plan.

Flexible Spending Account

In addition to allowing employees to pay their share of health insurance premiums with pretax earnings, employees are also allowed to use pretax earnings to pay for uninsured medical expenses and dependent care expenses. An eligible employee may authorize payroll deductions to participate in a Health Care Spending Account or Dependent Care Spending Account.

An eligible employee pays the full cost of the program. For the Health Care Spending Account, there is a waiting period of six months from date of hire or date of eligibility, if later. You must be employed by the RF for at least one year following the date of enrollment in the program. There is no waiting period for the Dependent Care Spending Account. There is an annual maximum dollar amount set by federal law.

Refer to the [RF Benefits Handbook](#) for more information on this plan.

Consumer's Medical Resource

[Consumer's Medical Resource](#) offers Medical Decision Support to those enrolled in a non-student health plan through the RF. Medical Decision Support provides information about serious and/or chronic medical conditions and treatment options to help you make better decisions while working with your doctor.

Consumer's Medical Resource is an independent company staffed by physicians and research professionals. It is not affiliated with any insurance companies, and will provide you with information that is designed to be unbiased, current, well-organized and customized to your particular circumstances.

Refer to the [RF Benefits Handbook](#) for more information on this plan.

Group Long-Term Care Insurance

Group Long-Term Care Insurance is available to RF employees and family members as an optional, employee paid benefit. Premium payments can be made through payroll deduction or by direct payment to the insurance company. Long-Term Care benefits provide skilled, intermediate or custodial care in a nursing home or assisted living facility, or through community-based home care or adult day care.

Refer to the [RF Benefits Handbook](#) for more information on this plan.

Voluntary Short-Term Disability Insurance



Voluntary Short-Term Disability insurance is available to supplement the Short-Term Disability insurance mandated by New York State (see section that follows on “Short-Term Disability”). Employees may purchase additional coverage to bring their weekly benefit up to 60 percent of earnings (maximum of \$1,250 per week). They must earn at least \$15,000 a year.

Continuing Benefits

Knowing what happens to your benefits is important if you take an approved unpaid leave of absence, you become disabled or your employment with the RF ends.

For additional information on continuing your benefits in any of these situations, refer the [RF Benefits Handbook](#).

BENEFITS FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

Income Protection Plans

The following benefits are available to all employees.

Workers’ Compensation

This plan provides a maximum weekly amount of income replacement set by the Workers’ Compensation Board if you can’t work due to an illness or injury caused by your job. Workers’ Compensation insurance may also provide payment for related medical expenses.

To qualify, notify your supervisor and the campus office that handles RF human resources matters immediately so that claim procedures can be started.

Short-Term Disability

This plan provides 50 percent of your earnings up to \$170 per week if you can’t work due to an illness or injury that is not caused by your job. Benefits are provided under the New York State Disability Benefits Law for a maximum of 26 weeks. You may be eligible for this income replacement coverage if your illness or injury lasts beyond seven (7) calendar days.

To qualify, notify your supervisor and campus office that handles human resources matters so that a claim can be filed immediately.

Unemployment Benefits

Under New York State law, you may be eligible for unemployment benefits for an involuntary termination of employment. The benefit amount is based on the employee’s prior wages, to a maximum of \$405 per week. Contact your local New York State Department of Labor office to apply for benefits.

For more information on Workers’ Compensation and Short-Term Disability, refer to the [RF Benefits Handbook](#). You can also get information on these plans from your campus office that handles RF human resources matters.

Other Services Offered



New York College Savings Program

The Research Foundation offers employees the opportunity to participate in the [New York College Savings Program](#) through payroll deduction. In order to participate through payroll deduction, employees must be paid by direct deposit.

This program is jointly administered through the office of the State Comptroller and the Higher Education Services Corporation, and is authorized under Section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code to allow for tax savings on the contributions up to specified limits. Contact your campus office that handles RF benefits matters for more information or to participate.

Savings Bond Deductions

The RF offers employees the opportunity to purchase U.S. Savings Bonds for any dollar amount through a payroll deduction. Once you have completed an application for a savings bond, the RF sends the application and the biweekly deduction to the National Bond and Trust Company. This company will manage all aspects of the process.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Many campus locations offer RF employees and their families assistance and confidential referral services for personal issues and concerns. For more information, contact your campus office that handles RF human resources matters.

Employee Newsletter

The RF publishes a newsletter entitled *Employee News*, which is designed to enlighten you about the interesting work that is ongoing at the RF. *Employee News* is sent to you at your home address during the academic year.

Bulletin Boards

Postings containing official notices on employee rights under various federal and state laws are displayed on bulletin boards at your campus location and at corporate headquarters.

These postings include, but are not limited to, information on equal employment opportunity, the Fair Labor Standards Act, Occupational Safety and Health Administration compliance, Workers' Compensation, New York State Short-Term Disability, Family and Medical Leave Act, and New York State Unemployment Insurance.

If you do not know the location of the bulletin board for official RF notices, contact your campus office that handles RF human resources matters.



Contacts

If you have any questions or suggestions about the Employee Handbook, please contact:

Barbara Pell

Affirmative Action/Employee Relations Manager

Office of Human Resources at central office

(518) 434-7197

barbara.pell@rfsuny.org



Employee Handbook Updates

Date	Section	Reason for Change
1/10/08	Table of Contents	Updated
1/10/08	Updated Executive Vice President's Message to President's Message; added information on RF's Statement and Standards of Ethical Conduct	Updated/ Added
1/10/08	Working at the Research Foundation – Introduction to Your Job –added section on having a positive attitude at work	Added
1/10/08	Workplace Issues—Procedure for Resolving Allegations of Workplace Discrimination—updated section with correct title and link to latest version of the procedure	Updated
1/10/08	Confidential RF Information Policy – added section on new RF policy	Added/Updated
1/10/08	Military Leave – added section on new leave requirements for spouses of members of the armed forces who have been deployed during a period of military conflict and are on leave.	Updated
1/10/08	Optional Life Insurance for Employees and Dependents – corrected dollar amounts for purchasing dependent life insurance for spouse/domestic partner and children	Updated
1/10/08	Basic Retirement Plan – changed vesting requirement from five-year period to three-year period of qualified employment	Updated
1/10/08	Voluntary Short-Term Disability Insurance – corrected maximum per week dollar amount for this coverage	Updated
05/17/05	Vision, Mission and Values	Updated
02/22/05	Acknowledgement & Agreement Form	Updated
01/18/05	Working at the Research Foundation: Employment Eligibility -“Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986” link	Updated
01/18/05	Leave: Holidays - sentence "You must use all accrued holiday leave within one calendar year"	Removed
01/18/05	Leave: Accrued but Unused Leave Time - Heading updated "Accrued but Unused Vacation Leave."	Updated
01/18/05	Leave: Accrued but Unused Vacation Leave - Upon separation from RF employment, eligible employees will be paid for up to 30 days of accrued vacation leave	Updated



Acknowledgement and Agreement

This is to acknowledge that I have received a copy or am able to access a copy of the Research Foundation of State University of New York (the "RF") *Employee Handbook* either on-line at https://portal.rfsuny.org/pls/portal/docs/PAGE/EMPLOYEEHANDBOOK/EMPLOYEE_HANDBOOK.PDF or through my local RF human resources office.

I understand that the *Employee Handbook* sets forth the terms and conditions of my RF employment as well as the duties, responsibilities, and obligations of RF employment. I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to read the *Employee Handbook* and to abide by the rules, policies, and standards it sets forth. I also understand that except for the New York State doctrine of employment-at-will which the RF follows, the RF reserves the right to revise, delete, and/or add to the provisions of this *Employee Handbook*. No oral statements or representations can change any provisions of this *Employee Handbook*.

I understand that, with the exception of written employment agreements, this *Employee Handbook* supersedes all prior agreements, understandings, and representations concerning my employment with the RF. I acknowledge that the on-line *Employee Handbook* includes the most up-to-date information. It is my responsibility to obtain the latest version of the *Employee Handbook*.

Date

Employee Name [printed]

Employee Signature

Date

TO BE PLACED IN EMPLOYEE'S PERSONNEL FILE

May 2007