

**LONE STAR COLLEGE SYSTEM DISTRICT
BOARD POLICY MANUAL
Fifth Edition**

pay by direct deposit to a bank account of their choice or a Direct Pay Card. Part-time and work-study employees are paid every 14 days.

IV.D. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

IV.D.1. Benefit Plans

IV.D.1.1. Policy

The College offers employee benefit plans as an additional incentive to attract and retain quality employees. The College offers group benefits, paid professional development, standalone disability insurance, and other benefit plans. The College's Office of Human Resources facilitates most employee benefits.

(a) Group Benefits

The College offers group benefits through the Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS) to eligible employees and their dependents. ERS-provided group benefits are healthcare, dental care, life insurance, accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D) insurance, disability insurance, flexible spending accounts, and any other ERS-determined benefit. Eligibility, contribution schedules, and coverage details are ERS-determined. Details and procedures, including waiting periods and open enrollment dates, regarding these group benefits are available by contacting the College's Benefits Department in the Office of Human Resources.

The College may also offer non-ERS group benefits. These non-ERS plans may include prepaid legal services and any other group benefits as the Chancellor determines and as allowed by law.

(b) Lone Star College Short-Term Disability

The College offers a standalone short-term disability plan to all designated full-time employees. This plan is independent of ERS's disability insurance. This plan offers short-term, reduced compensation to eligible employees with a documented personal illness, injury, or medical condition preventing them from performing their respective jobs.

(c) Employee Professional Development

Certain employees are eligible for paid professional licensure renewals, professional association or organization membership dues, and established continuing education requirements. The Chancellor or a designee decides which employee positions are eligible for this benefit. Additionally, the College may provide time-off and cost-reimbursement for job-specific training required for all employees, including but not limited to, orientation, legal compliance training, systems training, process training, and other position-specific training.

(d) Limited Employee Educational Assistance

Eligible employees may participate in the Limited Educational Assistance Program. The College may exempt from tuition and required fees eligible employees (up to six credit

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hours per term for a maximum of 18 credit hours per academic year) for approved College courses taken under this policy. Additionally, the College will do the same with state-funded continuing education courses for eligible employees for approved College courses taken under this policy—subject to space availability. The College may exempt tuition and required fees for a course that includes a laboratory fee. The College may set additional conditions for this program.

(e) Expense and Travel Reimbursement

Employees may be reimbursed for College-related travel expenses. Employees are eligible for reimbursement if such travel is (1) necessary and important to achieve College business objectives, (2) approved by the employee's direct line supervisor, (3) documented with appropriate receipts, and (4) funds are available from the appropriate budget. Employees using personal vehicles for College business are reimbursed on a mileage basis except for employees who receive a car allowance. Employees using personal vehicles for College business must maintain state minimum insurance coverage. Any personal vehicle damage that occurs while on College-related business must be covered by the employee's automobile insurance.

(f) Wellness Release Time

The College encourages employees to practice simple, positive lifestyle habits that increase quality of life, productivity, and longevity. Employees who engage in a minimum of three hours of exercise or community service each week may receive up to 1.5 hours of release time from their duties to participate in such activities. Wellness release time may only be used if participation does not reduce institutional productivity and the employee's supervisor approves.

(g) Unpaid Leave of Absence

An eligible full-time employee may request an unpaid leave of absence for an extended absence not otherwise covered by other leave types (e.g., vacation, FMLA, Jury Duty).

(h) Worker's Compensation

Employees who experience an on-the-job illness or injury during the course and scope of employment may be eligible for workers' compensation benefits.

(i) Faculty Leave Banking

Full-time faculty may convert compensation earned through extra service assignments into a future leave pool. This program allows eligible employees who have earned the equivalent of a full-semester of banked leave plus an additional service assignment to take a semester's leave with full pay. The Chancellor maintains procedures that govern this program consistent with applicable law.

IV.D.2. Paid Time Off

IV.D.2.1. Policy