



## Academic Affairs Administrative Handbook

### **Guidelines for Faculty/Exempt Staff Personnel File Management**

It is the policy of Texas Christian University (1) to recognize and protect the privacy of all applicants and employees, (2) to comply with related federal, state and local laws and regulations, (3) to protect the confidentiality of all personal and personnel information in its records, and (4) to limit the availability of such information only to those persons with a legitimate need to know by ensuring that proper administrative, technical and physical safeguards are established and followed.

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide academic units with information and procedures for the management of personnel files for faculty and exempt staff members.

### **Number and Type of Personnel Records**

The official personnel file for each faculty and exempt staff member in academic units is maintained by the office of the Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Personnel files may also be maintained by the appropriate school/department/unit for management purposes. Personnel files are also maintained for all employees in the Human Resources Office. Files in the Human Resources Office contain personnel, payroll, personal data and benefit information. Personnel information on the Human Resource Information System (HRIS) for faculty and exempt staff is maintained by the Chancellor or appropriate Vice Chancellor and for nonexempt staff by the Human Resources Office.

### **Collection and Retention of Personnel Data in Academic Units**

Categories of information related to personnel decisions which should be maintained in a personnel file include copies of: initial appointment recommendation, appointment letter/contract; vita; annual tenure review letters, Faculty Annual Reports and Exempt Staff Performance Appraisals; annual salary letters/contracts; student evaluations (in department or college office as appropriate); tenure and/or promotion recommendations, leave of absence requests and/or approvals or denials; graduate faculty nominations and related correspondence; miscellaneous correspondence pertaining to professional/scholarly activities.

Categories of information which should be maintained in a separate file include: (1) student or other complaints for which no formal action has been taken (i.e., letter written or conference held); (2) letters of recommendation; (3) pre-employment information.

Departmental personnel files for terminated faculty/University staff members should be forwarded to the appropriate dean's office. It is recommended that such files be retained for

no longer than five years after which they should be destroyed by the appropriate dean's office. Personnel files maintained by the Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs for terminated faculty/University staff will also be retained for no longer than five years.

### **Confidentiality Safeguards**

To ensure confidentiality of employment records and to protect the privacy of the faculty/University staff member, information contained in personnel files should be available only to authorized users for authorized purposes. All personnel records should be stored in locked files.

### **Access to Personnel Files**

Access to a faculty/exempt staff member's personnel records is restricted to the Chancellor, Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Affirmative Action Officer, Human Resources Office, and appropriate Dean/Chair/Unit Head. Access by the office requesting information is limited to pertinent documents only.

All faculty/exempt staff have the right to review their personnel records--i.e., those maintained by the department/ school or college, Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs or Human Resources Office. They may request correction of inaccurate information or express written disagreement with material contained in the records. Personnel files may not be removed from the office in which they are maintained.

### **Changes to Personnel/Personal Records**

Name changes should be reported to the Human Resources Office. An updated Social Security Card is required before this change can be made officially to the personnel and payroll records.

Changes in marital status or number of dependents should be reported to the Human Resources Office as such changes can affect taxes and insurance benefits.

Other changes (i.e., changes in department/home address, etc.) may also be reported to the Human Resources Office as necessary or may be made on the Personal Data Form which is reviewed annually by all employees.

Changes in biographical information should be reported to Communications Office as necessary.

### **Disclosure of Information**

Data mandated by federal, state and local agencies and information necessary to process benefits are released by the University only to those outside agencies with a legitimate need to know.

Personnel information is released to law enforcement agencies for investigations, summonses, subpoenas and judicial orders upon presentation of duly authorized requests. All such requests involving faculty or exempt staff members in academic units should be referred to the Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The Provost/Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs will inform the faculty/exempt staff member that information has been released to such agencies, unless such notification is prohibited by law.

In general, personnel information (with the exception of dates of employment, title or position and name of department) is to be released only with written authorization from the faculty/exempt staff member who must specify the nature of the information to be disclosed.

Approved by Academic Deans, 10-15-86

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