

Side-by-side comparison

For Classified employees who participate in the Traditional Sick Leave Plan (TSLP) and are in positions nonexempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

Under the new [Working@VCU: "Great Place" HR Policies](#), many things are staying the same, some things are changing for everyone, and some things change only for employees who become part of the new University and Academic Professionals employee group. A comparison of current provisions and provisions for the new University and Academic Professionals employee group is available in the tables below. What is provided here is a summary of the key differences in each policy. See the full policy for more information.

This publication is intended to provide a summary of the provisions applicable to Classified Employees and to University and Academic Professionals at Virginia Commonwealth University, and is deemed to be accurate at the time of publication. In the event of any discrepancy between this publication and the Working@VCU: "Great Place" HR Policies, the latter shall prevail. Virginia Commonwealth University reserves the right to change the programs and provisions applicable to University and Academic Professionals at any time.

What's staying the same

The following programs will continue for all Classified Employees and University and Academic Professionals.

- State employee health coverage (COVA plans, Kaiser, TRICARE Supplement)
- State employee flexible spending plans
- Virginia Retirement System group life insurance
- Virginia Retirement System retirement benefits (VRS Plan 1, VRS Plan 2, VRS Hybrid Plan, VaLORS)
- Tuition waiver and tuition reimbursement eligibility
- State employee workers' compensation program
- VCU 403(b) Tax Deferred Annuity Plan (TDA)
- Commonwealth of Virginia 457 Deferred Compensation Plan
- VCU Cash Match Plan
- Time and leave reporting in VCU RealTime
- Work/life and wellness programs
- Access to state retiree health coverage and state retiree life insurance at retirement

What's changing for everyone

The following new programs apply to all University and Academic Professionals as well as Classified employees.

Performance management

A new performance management process focuses on cascading goals, core competency demonstration, and measurable outcomes. The program aligns goal setting, performance review, and career development to school/unit and university priorities using our Talent@VCU software. There are six performance ratings in the new process. For Classified employees, the

six performance review ratings will be converted to the three-rating scale used by the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management for state reporting purposes.

Career development

Collaborative career planning engages employees and managers in a structured process to formulate and realize career development goals. New career development tools, such as the Learning Management System in Talent@VCU, provide easy access to university-wide learning opportunities, and track training participation as well as external learning experiences.

Career communities

New communities that bring together employees in the same or similar job families throughout the university, and are open to all others seeking to learn about or explore movement to another job family.

Mentoring

Creation of new formal and informal mentoring programs.

Leadership development

Defined leadership competencies used for hiring, performance management, and development for employees who manage others.

Employee Group

For a comparison of employee groups, see the table below.

Employee Group	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
Classified employees in positions at VCU, covered by the Virginia Personnel Act (Va. Code Sections 2.2-2900 through 2.2-2905) and the policies of the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM).	University employees who support the mission of the university in non-faculty roles and are covered by the Working@VCU: "Great Place" HR Policies.
Appointment Type	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
No specific term of employment. Continued employment subject to satisfactory performance and in accordance with the policies of the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM)	No specific term of employment. Continued employment subject to satisfactory performance and in accordance with the Working@VCU: "Great Place" HR Policies.

Employment

For a comparison of employment provisions, see the topics below.

Career Advancement	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
<p>Competitive selection process is required for all available positions in the same or higher state pay band except for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management initiated transfers and reassignments within the same state pay band • Placement in the event of layoff under Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) policy 1.30 "Layoff" 	<p>Career advancement opportunities are available with and without competitive selection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees may compete for available positions through a competitive process. • Noncompetitive career advancement is available through "promotion in place," by acquiring additional competencies over time as part of a career development plan.
Recruitment waiver	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
<p>Recruitment waivers are not permitted for hiring of classified employees, except in the cases of classified layoffs with preferential hiring rights, management initiated reassignments with the same pay band, and involuntary demotions.</p>	<p>Competitive recruitment may be waived for career advancements and promotions in place that are part of an employee's career development plan. Competitive recruitment may also be waived in the following instances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reorganizations and reassignments, and/or management initiated transfers or demotions • Reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities, as defined by law • Emergency hires, interim and temporary appointments or assignments • Placements resulting from workforce reduction layoffs • Persons named to particular positions in a grant or contract • Dual career hires • Multiple hires from a competitive search
Probationary Period	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
<p>All classified employees are required to complete a twelve-month probationary period, which may be extended to as much as 18 months in certain circumstances. An employee selected for a position that requires certification following completion of a prescribed training program may be required to complete a new probationary period</p>	<p>All new hires and rehires are subject to a one-year probationary period, including state transfers. Probationary periods may be extended under extenuating circumstances. Employees who voluntarily change positions prior to completing the probationary period assume probationary status in the new position with the one-year clock restarted.</p> <p>Classified employees at VCU who convert to University and Academic Professionals with less than one year of continuous service at the time of conversion are considered to be in the probationary period for the remainder of the probationary year.</p>

Classified employees at VCU who convert to University and Academic Professionals with more than one year of continuous service are considered to have completed the probationary period.

A probationary period may be imposed following a Written Notice or unsatisfactory performance review. See “Employee Conduct” under Employee Relations below.

Compensation

For a comparison of compensation practices, view the topics below:

Pay Ranges	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
Pay bands for all Classified roles are determined by the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) and applied uniformly to state agencies regardless of industry. VCU determines pay ranges for individual jobs from within the applicable state pay bands.	VCU operates its own compensation plan based on market-based salary ranges matched to benchmark jobs and career paths that provide opportunities for growth and development. No salary increases are provided due to conversion.
Job Structure	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
The Classified job structure is organized by DHRM and consists of seven Occupational Families. These Occupational Families are divided into Career Groups. Individual jobs are assigned to a Career Group and a specific pay band. The most recent comprehensive update of the DHRM job structure took place in 2000.	The university job structure consists of 21 job families that incorporate university-established jobs spanning from operational, technical and administrative support jobs through seven levels of professional jobs, to management and executive leadership. All jobs are part of a career path for individual contributors as subject matter experts, distinct from career paths for supervisors/managers.
Annual increases	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
Across-the-board salary increases are approved by the General Assembly as part of the state budget process, and are subject to state funding. Implementation of the increases is subject to eligibility criteria and procedures published by the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM). DHRM typically limits eligibility for state increases to employees with satisfactory or better performance ratings, and may authorize greater increases for specific jobs. Employees at the top of the band may receive lump sum payments instead of increases. Cost of living increases are not provided.	The university compensation plan does not include across-the-board annual increases or cost of living increases. Salary increases are typically based on merit and career advancement. The Board of Visitors (BOV) has authority to implement broad salary increases to support university strategy. Employees with salaries at the top of the market range may continue to receive salary increases either in base salary or in a lump sum payment.

Merit-based increases	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
There are no provisions for merit-based salary increases. Annual increase percentages are generally uniform for employees with performance ratings of “contributor” or above.	Contingent upon funding, an annual merit process determines salary increases based on the formal performance review process. Performance ratings serve as the basis for merit increases with higher performing employees receiving larger increases.
Pay adjustments for career advancements	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
In-band adjustments of up to 10% (cumulative) in a fiscal year are allowed based on application of new knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) obtained through education, certification, new licensure, or related forms of development. Exceptions above 10% must be reviewed and authorized by the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM). All other in-band adjustments for any other reason (e.g. retention, internal alignment) fall under the same 10% fiscal year limit. The availability of in-band adjustments is dependent upon available funding in a school or unit.	Career advancement increases are tied to achieving milestones in an employee’s career development plan. Salary increases typically range from 3% to 5%, with no annual dollar or percentage limit. The availability of career advancement increases is dependent upon available funding in a school or unit.
Promotions	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
Promotions occur through the competitive recruitment and selection process. A classified employee selected through the competitive process for a role in a higher pay band may receive a base pay increase negotiable from the minimum of the higher pay band up to 15% above the employee’s current salary. In cases where the hiring range minimum exceeds a 15% increase over current salary, the minimum of the hiring range may be offered.	Promotions may occur through the recruitment and selection process or through career advancement as part of the performance management process. Salary increases for competitive promotions are determined based on an analysis of pay factors including market-based salary range experience, and internal equity. Salary increases for non-competitive career advancement promotions are typically 3% to 5%. Managers may consult with VCU HR to justify larger salary increases when appropriate.
Rewards and recognition/non-base pay	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
The Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) policy allows for up to \$2,000 per fiscal year and up to five days of paid leave per leave year for individual employee recognition. Non-base pay bonuses of up to 10% per fiscal year are permitted in lieu of, and for the same reasons as, in-band adjustments. A retention bonus one time per fiscal year of up to \$10,000 is permitted for retention of an exceptional employee deemed to be mission critical, subject to availability of funds in a school or unit.	Non-base pay incentives of up to \$5,000 per fiscal year or 10% of base pay (whichever is greater) and up to five days of paid leave per leave year may be awarded to an individual employee. Other bonuses and lump sum payments, such as formal award programs and employee suggestion programs, are not subject to the maximum.

Other bonuses and lump sum payments, such as formal award programs and employee suggestion programs, are not subject to the maximum.	
Competitive starting pay	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
Classified pay practices of the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) permit starting pay negotiable from the minimum of the state pay band up to 15% above the candidate's current salary. Exceptions to the 15% limit must be approved by the agency head. Starting salary may not exceed the maximum of the applicable state pay band.	Starting pay is determined based on the market-based salary range for the position, the candidate's qualifications and experience, internal equity within the unit, financial resources available in a school or unit, current stang pattern, and/or stang goals.
Review of salary ranges	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
State pay band minimums and maximums are updated periodically through legislation approved by the General Assembly and applied uniformly to state agencies regardless of industry.	VCU HR conducts a three-year review cycle with analysis of one-third of the job structure occurring each year. Based on review findings, salary ranges may be updated, new job titles may be added, and unutilized job titles may be removed. Salary ranges may also be adjusted outside the formal review schedule as needed.

Paid Leave

For a comparison of paid leave plans, see the topics below.

Accrued Leave	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
<p>Employees have separate paid leave banks for annual and sick leave. Paid leave can be used only after it is accrued or credited to an employee's leave bank.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Leave is accrued based on years of state service and full-time equivalency. Accrual rates are determined by the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM). This leave can be used for any reason. Sick Leave is accrued based on full-time equivalency. Fulltime employees accrue ve hours each pay period. Accruals are prorated for employees who work less than full-time. A portion can be used for absences due to a family member's routine illness, or for a family member's serious health condition covered by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). 	<p>Employees accrue one bank of university leave that can be used for any reason. Accrual is based on years of state service and full-time equivalency. The full yearly amount of paid leave is available to use at the beginning of the leave year, before it is accrued. Employees who convert to the University and Academic Professionals employee group after the beginning of the leave year accrue a prorated amount of university leave for the year of entry, all of which is available to use at the time of conversion. Employees who separate and have used more leave than was accrued must repay the overspent leave balance upon separation. Leave accrual rates are determined by VCU in accordance with the Working@VCU "Great Place" HR Policies</p>
Carryover and Payout	

Classified	University and Academic Professional
<p>Annual Leave is subject to carryover maximums based on length of service. Carryover and payout maximums are determined by the Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM). Payout maximums may be less than carryover maximums. Sick Leave carryover is unlimited, however payment for unused sick leave upon separation is capped 25% of unused hours or \$5,000, (whichever is less). Traditional sick leave payment may be used to purchase Virginia Retirement System service credit.</p>	<p>Carryover and payout maximums are based on length of service and apply to the entire university leave bank. Payout maximums are the same as carryover maximums. Carryover and payout maximums are determined by VCU in accordance with the Working@VCU "Great Place" HR Policies and apply beginning in December, 2019.</p>
Short-term disability	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
<p>No short-term disability coverage is provided. Employees must use their own accrued paid leave banks to continue income during periods of disability. After exhausting paid leave banks, an employee may apply to receive donated paid leave from the leave sharing program. Employees continuously covered by the traditional sick leave program since prior to July 1, 1999 are eligible to apply for VRS Disability Retirement in the event of permanent disability.</p>	<p>Income replacement at 100% of pre-disability salary during approved periods of non-work related short-term disability after a seven calendar day waiting period. Maximum benefit period is 125 work days.</p> <p>Employees are enrolled in the Virginia Sickness and Disability Program (VSDP) upon conversion to the University and Academic Professionals group. VRS Disability Retirement is not available.</p> <p>Non-work related disabilities are covered as soon as employment begins, however the VSDP does not cover nonwork related disabilities during the first year of VSDP participation.</p> <p>When an employee becomes eligible for Virginia Sickness and Disability Program (VSDP) short-term disability benefits, the VSDP provides 60%, 80%, or 100% income replacement based on program provisions. Leave granted by VCU supplements any partial income replacement provided by VSDP to bring the employee to 100% income replacement. Prior to eligibility for VSDP short-term disability benefits, employees must use their own banked traditional sick leave for periods of short-term disability. Upon exhaustion of the traditional sick leave bank, VCU's own short-term disability program provides 100% income replacement for approved periods of non-work related short-term disability.</p>
Long-term disability	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
<p>Long-term disability coverage is not provided. Employees must use their own paid leave accruals to continue income during periods of disability unless</p>	<p>Income replacement at 60% of pre-disability salary during approved periods of long-term disability is provided by the Virginia Sickness and Disability</p>

<p>they have purchased voluntary long-term disability coverage via payroll deduction. After exhausting paid leave banks, an employee may apply to receive donated paid leave from the leave sharing program.</p> <p>Employees continuously covered by the traditional sick leave program since prior to July 1, 1999 are eligible to apply for VRS Disability Retirement in the event of permanent disability.</p>	<p>Program (VSDP), unless the disability began prior to eligibility for VSDP benefits. VRS Disability Retirement is not available.</p> <p>Non-work related disabilities that began prior to eligibility for VSDP benefits are not covered. Employees may purchase voluntary long-term disability coverage through VCU via payroll deduction prior to becoming eligible for VSDP benefits. Employees with unused, banked traditional sick leave may use this banked leave during periods of long-term disability.</p>
<p>Parental leave</p>	
<p>Classified</p>	<p>University and Academic Professional</p>
<p>No separate paid parental leave is provided. Employees may use their own accrued paid leave or request a leave of absence without pay. To the extent that an employee qualifies, Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave runs concurrently.</p>	<p>Separate paid parental leave is available after one year of continuous salaried VCU service as a Classified employee, faculty member, and/or University and Academic Professional. For maternity, 12 weeks of paid leave are provided through a combination of short-term disability benefits (generally 6-8 weeks) and paid parental leave. For second parents, adoption, surrogacy, and foster care, six weeks of paid leave are provided. This leave is not charged against the employee's university paid leave bank. To the extent that an employee qualifies, Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave runs concurrently.</p>
<p>Caregiving leave</p>	
<p>Classified</p>	<p>University and Academic Professional</p>
<p>No separate paid caregiving leave is provided. Employees may use their own accrued paid leave or request a leave of absence without pay. To the extent that an employee qualifies, Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave runs concurrently. Employees who have exhausted their own paid leave balances may apply to receive leave sharing donations during FMLA leave due to a family member's serious health condition.</p>	<p>Separate paid caregiving leave is available from the leave sharing program after one year of continuous VCU salaried service as a Classified employee, faculty member, and/or University and Academic Professional. Up to 80 hours of paid leave may be provided, subject to availability of leave sharing donations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Employees who use 40 hours (ve days) of their own paid leave are then eligible for 40 hours (ve days) from the leave sharing pool. ● Employees may be eligible for an additional 40 hours (ve days) from the leave sharing pool if they use an additional 40 hours (ve days) from their own paid leave. <p>The maximum paid leave granted under this policy is 80 hours when an employee uses 80 hours of their own paid leave. All amounts are prorated for employees in jobs with less than 100% full-time equivalency.</p>

	Caregiving leave granted under this policy is not charged against the employee's university paid leave bank. Caregiving leave is not restricted to caregiving for family members denied in the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).
Community Service leave	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
Full-time 12-month employees are eligible for up to 16 hours of paid Community Service Leave per leave year. The amount is prorated for twelve-month employees in jobs with less than 100% full-time equivalency.	Full-time 12-month employees are eligible for up to 16 hours of paid Community Service Leave per leave year. The amount is prorated for twelve-month employees in jobs with less than 100% full-time equivalency. Up to two additional days (16 hours) of paid Community Service Leave are available to full-time twelve-month employees for volunteer service activities sponsored by VCU or VCU Health. This amount is prorated for eligible employees in jobs with less than 100% full-time equivalency.

Employee Relations

For a comparison of employee relations provisions, please read the information below.

Dispute Resolution	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
Informal dispute resolution may include facilitated discussions, access to an ombudsperson, and mediation. A grievance may be led under the State Employee Grievance Procedure and, if qualified, the grievance proceeds to a hearing conducted by a Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) hearing officer. No panel hearing is available. Equal Employment Opportunity and dispute resolution issues led with DHRM are reviewed and decided concurrently by DHRM.	<p>Informal dispute resolution is required prior to formal dispute resolution, and may include one-on-one meetings, facilitated discussions, access to an ombudsperson, and mediation. A VCU grievance may be led for certain performance and behavior issues; not all grievances will proceed to a hearing. Formal dispute resolution includes a peer panel hearing held by VCU employees and a chairperson. Equal Employment Opportunity concerns are addressed separately through the VCU Office of Equity and Access.</p> <p>Formerly Classified employees at VCU who were hired from job postings prior to July 1, 2016, and who converted from Classified to the University and Academic Professionals employee group with no break in VCU service, may access either the Classified dispute resolution process or the University and Academic Professionals dispute resolution process but may not access both processes for the same dispute.</p>
Employee Conduct	
Classified	University and Academic Professional

<p>Governed by Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) policy 1.60 "Standards of Conduct."</p> <p>Counseling Memorandum may be issued prior to proceeding with Written Notice.</p> <p>Group I Written Notice: Three active written Group I Written Notices can lead to suspension. A fourth active Group 1 Written Notice can result in termination of employment. In lieu of termination, an employee may be suspended without pay for up to 30 workdays and/or demoted or transferred with disciplinary salary action.</p> <p>Group II Written Notice: A second active Group II Written Notice, or a Group II Written Notice in addition to three active Group I Written Notices, normally results in termination of employment. In lieu of termination, an employee may be suspended without pay for up to 30 workdays and/or demoted or transferred with disciplinary salary action.</p> <p>Group III Written Notice: A Group III Written Notice normally results in termination of employment. If employment is not terminated upon issuance of a Group III Written Notice, any subsequent Written Notice during the active life of the Group III Written Notice may result in termination of employment.</p> <p>Imposed probation is not permitted.</p>	<p>A process of "progressive discipline" is intended to foster productive working relationships and to resolve conduct issues at the earliest and least confrontational stage, whenever possible. While there may be exceptions to the use of the progressive disciplinary process dictated by the seriousness of the conduct in question, use of the process is preferred for all but the most serious disciplinary issues.</p> <p>The steps in the progressive disciplinary process are verbal warning, written warning, imposed probation, suspension, and dismissal. Verbal Warnings may be issued prior to proceeding with Written Warnings. Verbal Warnings are documented.</p> <p>Written Warnings document the severity of conduct. An employee who receives three Written Warnings during an 18- month period may be dismissed. Demotion may occur after a prior Written Warning of performance deficiency following which the employee failed to meet essential job requirements. Suspension may occur after a Written Warning or be imposed without notice when behavioral, performance, or misconduct issues pose an immediate risk.</p> <p>Dismissal may occur after three Written Warnings in an 18- month period, or when an employee has been convicted of a felony, committed an act of serious misconduct, or demonstrated a pattern of unsatisfactory job performance that has not been corrected after Written Notice and an opportunity to correct performance deficiencies through the progressive discipline process.</p> <p>Imposed probation is typically issued after a Written Warning.</p>
---	--

Workforce Reduction

<p>Classified</p>	<p>University and Academic Professional</p>
<p>Layoffs may occur under Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) Policy 1.30 "Layoff." Layoff sequence is determined by years of continuous Classified state service. At least two weeks' advance notice of layoff must be provided. After notifying affected employee(s), the employer may request and approve substitute employees for voluntary layoff under 2009 Policy Exception. Employees subject to layoff are eligible for placement, preferential hiring, and/or severance benefits under the Workforce Transition Act (WTA) unless in restricted positions excluded by law or DHRM policy.</p>	<p><i>The workforce reduction provisions in this section do not apply to employees in restricted positions.</i> Workforce reduction includes layoff, reassignment, reduction in work hours, and/or involuntary demotion. Factors used in determining affected employees may include length of continuous employment at VCU, performance ratings, and disciplinary records.</p> <p>An employee whose position is terminated is entitled to six months (26 weeks) notice, however in the event that an employee receives less than six months (26 weeks) notice that employee is entitled to VCU severance pay for the period that falls short of</p>

<p>WTA severance benefits include 4-36 weeks of cash severance based on length of service, and up to twelve months of continued employee health coverage and life insurance under the same provisions as active employees. WTA severance benefits cease upon re-employment with any state agency. Eligible employees who retire immediately may request that the value of WTA severance benefits be converted to enhanced retirement under the Virginia Retirement System instead of being used for the cash severance, health coverage, and life insurance.</p> <p>Temporary Workforce Reductions (working or non-working) may occur under DHRM Policy 1.65 "Temporary Workforce Reduction" for up to 690 hours in a 365-day period. At the conclusion of the Temporary Workforce Reduction, affected employees are returned to their original positions and schedules, or may be subject to layoff.</p>	<p>six months (26 weeks). During the notice period, VCU Human Resources provides assistance in finding comparable positions within the university, and affected employees may apply for and be granted priority interview rights for one year for positions for which they meet the minimum qualifications. Preferential hiring rights at other state agencies may be exercised. An employee whose position is terminated due to workforce reduction is eligible for up to twelve months of continued health coverage and life insurance under the same provisions as active employees. These benefits cease if re-employment occurs within the twelve months.</p> <p>An employee may choose severance benefits under the Workforce Transition Act (WTA) effective immediately instead of the six months notice and priority interview rights described above, if eligible under the WTA. WTA severance benefits include 4-36 weeks of cash severance based on length of continuous service, and up to twelve months of continued employee health coverage and life insurance under the same conditions as active employees. WTA severance benefits cease upon re-employment with any state agency. Eligible employees who retire immediately may request that the value of WTA severance benefits be converted to enhanced retirement under the Virginia Retirement System instead of being used for the cash severance, health coverage, and life insurance.</p>
---	--

Alternative Work Arrangements

For a comparison of alternative work arrangements and telework agreements, please refer to the material below.

Alternative work arrangements	
Classified	University and Academic Professional
<p>Telework is permitted within the limits of Virginia Department of Human Resource Management (DHRM) policy 1.61. Alternative work schedules are permitted within the limits of DHRM policy 1.25 "Hours of Work."</p>	<p>Multiple types of alternative work arrangements are made available for employees and managers, including compressed schedules, flexible scheduling, job sharing, reduced schedules, staggered schedules, and telework. Non-exempt employees are eligible; the use of trial periods is recommended. Implementation and continuation of arrangements requires manager approval.</p>