

Bethany Lutheran College
Administrative and Staff Handbook
Section 3: General Policies and Processes

INTRODUCTION

Section 3 provides information about policies and processes that affect all Bethany Lutheran College employees. Employees should use this information to guide their personal and work-related behavior while in service to the College.

ALCOHOL (see DRUGS AND ALCOHOL in this section)

CLOTHING ALLOWANCE

The College provides a clothing allowance only for:

- Residential advisors, Admissions staff members and tour guides, and athletic coaches for clothing to be worn at appropriate events
- Physical plant staff
- Laboratory apparel

The College does not purchase clothing from any national, regional, or state tournaments. Clothing can be purchased through an agency account for special events and other fundraising programs.

COLLEGE CREDIT AND CHARGE ACCOUNTS (approved 1/12/07)

Bethany Lutheran College's charge accounts and credit cards are to be used only for College-related purchases. Using these accounts to purchase items for personal use is a violation of College policy and is subject to discipline under the College's corrective action and discipline policy.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Employees, as part of their job-related duties at Bethany Lutheran College, may have access to confidential College, employee, and student information. As a condition of employment, new hires will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement that will be placed in their official personnel file.

Confidential internal College business is to be discussed with coworkers only on an as-needed basis and is not to be disclosed to any external parties, except as authorized by College officials or to governmental authorities as required by law. Unauthorized disclosure of any confidential College information during employment with Bethany Lutheran College is subject to disciplinary action, including immediate termination.

The federal Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (effective June 1, 2005) requires the destruction--shredding or burning or smashing or wiping--of all paper or computer disks containing personal information that is derived from a consumer report before it is discarded. See PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION in this section for additional information.

Additional information regarding confidential student records can be found under FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS PROTECTION ACT (FERPA) in this section.

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CORRECTIVE ACTION AND DISCIPLINE (approved 2/17/06)

It is important that all Bethany employees perform to the best of their abilities at all times as outlined in STANDARDS in Section 1 of this Handbook. There may be occasions, however, when an employee performs at an unsatisfactory level, violates a policy, or commits an act that is inappropriate. Examples of inappropriate acts include, but are not limited to:

- Refusal to accept or uphold the mission of the College
- Violation of College policy
- Conduct or job performance inconsistent with accepted professional or moral standards
- Neglect or unwillingness to perform assigned duties
- Unacceptable quantity or quality of work
- Incompetence or ineffective service
- A felony conviction
- Tardiness/absenteeism

Bethany Lutheran College may exercise its discretion to utilize forms of corrective action and/or discipline depending upon the individual case. Examples of corrective action and/or discipline include oral warnings, written warnings, probationary status, suspension, demotion, and termination. Although one or more of these forms of corrective action/discipline may be taken in connection with a particular employee, no formal order or process is necessary for appropriate action. The College may also terminate the employment relationship without following any particular series of steps whenever it determines, in its own discretion, that such action should occur.

A record of all corrective and/or disciplinary actions taken will be kept on file in the Human Resources office. Employees will be given a copy of all corrective/disciplinary actions taken, which the employees must sign to indicate that they received the document and read and discussed it with their supervisor. By signing the document, employees are not acknowledging that they agree with its content, only that they received the document and discussed its content.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL (revised 8/8/06; 1/12/07)

Bethany Lutheran College is committed to maintaining a safe, healthy work and educational environment, free from the unlawful use of alcohol and drugs. We are also committed to complying with the requirements of the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1998 (DFWA) and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 (DFSCA).

The DFSCA requires that the College certify that it has adopted and implemented a drug and alcohol policy as a condition of receiving federal funds. This policy is included as Appendix D.

The drug and alcohol policy also contains requirements for complying with the DFWA. Bethany Lutheran College conducts a biennial review of its alcohol and drug program to determine its effectiveness, implements changes if they are needed, and ensures that the

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sanctions are consistently enforced.

Standard of conduct: The unlawful or unauthorized possession, use, consumption, sale, or distribution of illicit drugs and/or alcohol by any Bethany Lutheran College employee or student on College property or as part of the College's activities is strictly prohibited. All College employees are asked to report illegal activities (observed incidences and circumstantial evidence) to Security Services, Dean of Student Services (students), Human Resources office (employees) or to any senior administrator.

Disciplinary sanctions: Employees and students who violate the drug and alcohol policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, counseling, mandatory participation in an appropriate rehabilitation program, oral warnings, written warnings, probationary status, suspension, demotion, and referral to the proper law enforcement authorities for prosecution.

Drug and alcohol counseling: Employees may voluntarily request assistance in dealing with drug or alcohol issues. The following local facilities, programs, or counselors provide drug and alcohol counseling, assessment, treatment and/or rehabilitation programs:

- Addiction Recovery Technologies of Mankato; 507-345-4670
- Alcoholics Anonymous and Alanon; 507-388-8989
- Alano; 507-387-2772
- House of Hope; 625-4373
- Mankato Family Focus; 507-625-3372

Employees covered by Bethany's medical plan may also contact Medica Optum (employee assistance program) at 1-800-626-7944 or www.myMedica.com.

Additional listings can be found in the green and yellow pages of your local phone book.

Alcohol use at events sponsored by the College: The College will not purchase or reimburse employees, for alcoholic-related expenses or activities undertaken in the course of their work, with the exception of the president, Board of Regents or trustees, any activity sponsored by or in conjunction with the Development Office or Alumni Affairs, or any activity sponsored by the president of the College or by the College in general. This policy is in no way intended to limit a person from consuming alcohol while representing the College.

E-MAIL (revised 8/17/06)

Bethany Lutheran College owns the computer hardware, software, and servers that it provides to employees to use in accomplishing their job-related duties. Use of these resources is a privilege and only appropriate uses are permitted. E-mail messages, including personal e-mail messages, are monitored in an attempt to control spam and viruses.

Addresses: E-mail addresses are in the form of firstname.lastname@blc.edu. Employees are asked to use this form on their business cards.

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Distribution lists: E-mail distribution lists exist to assist employees in contacting each other. The address book directory in *Outlook* shows all lists in **bold**; membership can be viewed by double-clicking on the item.

The following distribution lists should be used only for job-related matters:

- allsem (seminary faculty and staff)
- students (all BLC students)
- seminary students (all seminary students)
- freshmen (all BLC freshmen)
- sophomores (all BLC sophomores)
- juniors (all BLC juniors)
- seniors (all BLC seniors)

Bethany realizes that employees may also need to send occasional work-related (e.g., health insurance) and personal messages (items for sale, birth announcements, etc.) to their colleagues. Employees should use the following distribution lists, as appropriate, for these messages:

- faculty (BLC faculty; staff by special request)
- staff (BLC staff)

EMPLOYMENT OF CLOSE RELATIVES (approved 8/8/06)

Bethany Lutheran College avoids hiring, transferring, or promoting close relatives of employees into situations where the possibility of favoritism or conflicts of interest might exist. Therefore, close relatives of persons currently employed by Bethany may not be hired or promoted into a position that would place that person in a supervisory relationship with another close relative. If already employed, close relatives cannot be transferred into such a reporting relationship. This policy will be administered in accordance with applicable laws.

For the purposes of this policy, a close relative is defined to include spouse, parents (including in-laws), children (including in-laws), brothers and sisters (including in-laws), step-parents, step-siblings, and step-children.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Bethany Lutheran College accords its students all rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 and will notify students and their parents, annually, of their rights pursuant to FERPA through notifications in the Student Guidebook and Daily Bulletin and during orientation. The College will not disclose information from student education records without student written consent, except to:

- personnel within the institution
- officials of other institutions in which students seek to enroll
- persons or organizations that provide student financial aid
- accrediting agencies carrying out their accreditation function
- persons in compliance with a judicial order
- persons in an emergency when needed to protect the health or safety of students or other persons

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At Bethany, only those persons acting in the students' educational interest are allowed access to student education records, including personnel in the offices of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, Vice President of Student Services, Dean of Students, Registrar, Admissions, Financial Aid, and Career Services, and to faculty members within the limitations of their need to know.

The full FERPA policy can be found in the Human Resources office.

HARASSMENT (see SEXUAL HARASSMENT in this section and Appendix E)

HIPAA (see PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION in this section)

LEAVES OF ABSENCE (approved 1/12/07)

Regular full-time and regular part-time employees with at least two years of continuous service may request an unpaid leave-of-absence of up to one year's duration. With the exception of Family and Medical Leave absences, insurance benefits for which the employee is eligible will end on the last day of the month in which the leave begins, unless the employee elects to continue insurance coverage as provided by law. To continue insurance coverage, the employee must pay the full insurance premium, including both the College's and the employee's share, on the first day of each month. In addition, the employee must submit a completed insurance continuation form to the Employee Relations office prior to the start of the leave.

A written request for a leave-of-absence must be submitted to the respective senior administrator at least six weeks prior to the proposed beginning date of the leave, when possible. The written request should state precisely the purpose of the leave and anticipated return date.

Several factors may affect administration's decision to grant or deny a leave-of-absence request, including:

1. The expected availability of a qualified replacement
3. The years of service of the employee
4. The impact of such an absence on the entire institution

An unpaid leave-of-absence is not an earned right or privilege and should not be confused with other types of leave.

LOGO

Use of the Bethany logo for any reason must be approved by and meet the standards developed by the College's Marketing and Public Relations Department (x427).

MEETINGS (see Section 6, Educational Opportunities: Off-Campus)

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PROTECTION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION

Bethany Lutheran College exercises the utmost care in protecting employee personal information, including social security numbers, home address and phone number, dependent information, and banking information. Employees have access to other employees' personal information on a need-to-know basis related to the performance of their job duties.

Bethany does not sell employee personal information nor distribute it to any outside person or agency without the express written consent of the employee or in accordance with a court order.

Health information: Bethany Lutheran College is required by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) to implement policies and procedures to protect the privacy of employee personal health information as it relates to Bethany's Section 125 Flexible Benefits Plan. This Act was put in place to prevent employers from using personal health information to make job-related decisions.

In order to be in compliance with the Act, Bethany appointed Ralph Miller as its Privacy Officer. Mr. Miller (x302) is responsible for enforcing policies and procedures established to safeguard protected health information against inappropriate access, use, and disclosure.

The Notice of Privacy Practices provides further information about Bethany's policy, which took effect April 14, 2004 ([www.blc.edu/hr, Policies](http://www.blc.edu/hr/Policies)).

Disposal of personal information: The federal Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (effective June 1, 2005) requires the destruction--shredding or burning or smashing or wiping--of all paper or computer disks containing personal information that is derived from a consumer report before it is discarded. The Act also covers personal information maintained in College files.

PURCHASE ORDERS AND CHECK REQUESTS

All requests for reimbursement for pre-approved job-related expenses must be submitted according to the policy and process established by the Business Office and located on the campus intranet at <http://internal.blc.edu/Administrative/BusinessOffice/>. Ask your supervisor or department support staff for additional details.

RETALIATION (approved 8/8/06)

Bethany Lutheran College expressly prohibits retaliation against any individuals who make formal complaints (e.g., harassment) against the College, its witnesses, supporters, and any advisors, regardless of the outcome of the complaint. If a member of the campus community believes that he or she is experiencing retaliation, the individual may pursue a grievance through the Human Resources office.

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SEXUAL HARASSMENT (approved 1/12/07; amended 8/8/07)

Bethany Lutheran College is committed to maintaining high standards of respect and civility, including a working and learning environment that is free of unlawful harassment. The College's policy regarding sexual harassment applies to all employees, student employees, and students, and to all on- and off-campus College-sponsored activities.

Sexual harassment is contrary to God's moral law, subverts the educational mission of the College, undermines the sense of community, and interferes with the social and spiritual development of employees and students. Sexual harassment is prohibited under Minnesota and federal law, and it will not be tolerated by Bethany Lutheran College.

Individuals (employees or students) who violate this policy by sexually harassing others are guilty of misconduct and are subject to immediate corrective action that may include discipline, termination of employment, or expulsion from the College. Other instances of misconduct include individuals who permit employees or students under their supervision to sexually harass others, and individuals who retaliate or permit retaliation against an employee or student who reports such sexual harassment.

Employees and students are not to be penalized for proper use of the sexual harassment complaint process. However, it is not considered proper if an employee or student abuses the process by raising complaints in bad faith or solely for the purposes of delay or harassment or by repeatedly raising complaints that a reasonable person would judge as having no merit.

Employees and students are advised that consensual romantic or sexual relationships between faculty and students, administrators and students, or supervisors and employees, are inappropriate, with pre- or extra-marital sexual relationships being contrary to God's moral law. The power differential inherent in such relationships compromises one's ability to decide freely. Employees who enter into a romantic or sexual relationship with a student or a subordinate where a professional power differential exists must realize that, if a charge of sexual harassment is made, it will be exceedingly difficult to prove mutual consent.

The complete policy and reporting process can be found in Appendix E.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE (approved 1/12/07; amended 8/8/07)

Bethany Lutheran College is committed to maintaining high standards of respect and civility, including a working and learning environment that is free of sexual violence. The College's policy regarding sexual violence applies to all employees, student employees, and students in both on and off-campus College-sponsored activities.

Sexual violence is contrary to God's moral law, subverts the educational mission of the College, undermines the sense of community, and interferes with the social and spiritual development of employees and students. Sexual violence is also unlawful and will not be tolerated by Bethany Lutheran College.

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Individuals (employees or students) who violate this policy by committing acts of sexual violence against others are guilty of gross misconduct and are subject to immediate corrective action that may include discipline, termination of employment, or expulsion from the College.

Employees and students are not to be penalized for proper use of the sexual violence complaint process. However, it is not considered proper if an employee or student abuses the process by raising complaints in bad faith or solely for the purposes of delay or harassment or by repeatedly raising complaints that a reasonable person would judge as having no merit.

The complete policy and reporting process can be found in Appendix F.

SMOKING (see Tobacco-Free Buildings, this section)

SOLICITATION

Employees: Generally, solicitation of employees is not allowed on-campus. However, Bethany Lutheran College frequently receives promotional offers directed at employees that may benefit them in a non-compulsory way. It is our policy to make available to employees only the offers that come from organizations with which Bethany has an ongoing, working relationship (e.g., MAYSO, MAYBA, Art Guild, Chamber of Commerce, etc.).

Any promotional offers from these organizations will be announced under **Employee Special Offers** in the monthly *news¬es*. The documents will normally be available in the Old Main breakroom; however, there may be the occasional distribution of time-related offers that will need to be placed in employee mailboxes.

Students: Solicitation of students of any kind is not allowed on-campus. All such activity should be reported to the dean of student services.

STORAGE - PERSONAL ITEMS

Employees may place personal items in their personal work space, but should exercise good judgment in the items they bring on campus. The College is not responsible for any personal items that are lost due to damage or theft. Storage of personal items elsewhere on campus is not permitted.

STUDENT WORKERS (8/17/06; amended 8/8/07)

U.S. Students: The Financial Aid and Human Resources offices work together to hire student workers. Contact your supervisor/department head for additional information.

International Students: Federal law places many restrictions on our international students:

- They may work only up to 20 hours per week during the academic year (40 during the summer), regardless of the number of jobs they hold. Any hours worked beyond 20 (40 in summer) in one week will not be paid.
- Stipends must be included in the 20 hours (40 in summer) per week maximum allowed by law. A per-hour rate will be used to calculate the number of hours the student may work; this information will be sent to the supervisors.

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- The student must work on campus. Bethany employees should be aware that hiring international students to work at off-campus locations and paying them with cash is a violation of federal law and could result in a fine for the College.

Supervisors must obtain approval from the Chief Financial and Administrative Officer before hiring any international students for summer work.

All student workers are subject to the Administrative and Staff Handbook.

TECHNOLOGY (revised 8/17/06)

Information Technology Services (ITS) supports the mission of Bethany Lutheran College by seeking to provide students, faculty, staff, and the larger campus community with the knowledge, skills, and technical resources to learn, teach, work, and excel in an increasingly technological campus and world. Employees should contact the IT Services Help Desk (x411; helpdesk@blc.edu) with technology questions/problems.

Bethany Lutheran College owns the computer hardware, software, and servers that it provides employees to use in accomplishing their job-related duties. Use of these resources is a privilege, and only appropriate uses are permitted. Accepting an account and/or using any College information system will be considered an agreement by the user to abide by and be bound by the provisions of Bethany's technology policy. All users of College technology are expected to observe the highest standards of responsibility and ethics and to comply with policies and applicable laws regulating appropriate use of these systems.

Bethany Lutheran College's sexual harassment policy (Appendix E) applies fully to the use of the Internet, and any violation of this policy is grounds for discipline as outlined in the corrective action and discipline policy found in this Handbook. Material that is fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, sexually explicit, profane, obscene, intimidating, defamatory, or otherwise unlawful, inappropriate, offensive (including offensive material concerning sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, or other characteristic protected by law), or otherwise in violation of Bethany's policies may not be downloaded from the Internet or displayed or stored in Bethany-owned computers.

Personal use of computer resources is allowed as long as it does not interfere with College operations or a user's responsibilities as a College employee. Employees must also keep in mind that e-mail messages, including personal e-mail messages, are monitored in an attempt to control spam and viruses.

Employees who abuse their right to use Bethany's computer resources will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the corrective action and discipline policy found in this section.

Complete information about the Information Technology Services policy, terms, and conditions for use can be found at <http://www.blc.edu/itpolicy/>.

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TOBACCO-FREE BUILDINGS (amended 8/7/07)

The use of tobacco in all its forms (includes chewing) is not permitted in any campus building, including personal rooms, tunnels, lounges, or other public areas. Smoking is also not allowed outside the entrance areas of any building, in the patio area between Trinity Chapel and the Memorial Library, or along the colonnade outside the Great Room. The presence of an ashtray does not necessarily indicate a smoking area. Employees who chose to smoke during their break times should dispose of their cigarette butts and other trash in the appropriate receptacles. Employees may smoke in designated areas:

- Old Main near Bookstore parking
- Ylvisaker Fine Arts Center (rear)
- Communication Center
- Teigen Hall
- Gullixson Hall
- Edgewood Place

Tobacco use is permitted in personal motorized vehicles and on city-owned property (e.g., Division or Marsh Streets).

USE OF COLLEGE PROPERTY (8/17/06)

Bethany Lutheran College owns many types of property (equipment, land, buildings, etc.) that its employees may use in accomplishing their job-related duties. Use of these resources is a privilege, and only appropriate, College-related uses are permitted.

WEBPAGE

The Bethany Lutheran College homepage (www.blc.edu) and associated upper-level pages are official publications of the College. Bethany's web manager, under the guidance of the coordinator of publications, guides decisions related to content and access to the site. All postings must be channeled through the web manager to ensure consistency, to maintain the timeliness of the site, and to ensure that content conforms to Bethany publishing guidelines. Departments are responsible for the design and content of their web pages and may contact the web staff for assistance as needed (webmaster@blc.edu; x324).

WORKSHOPS (see Section 6, Benefits)