

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER**

**EMPLOYEE RELATIONS COMMITTEE (ERC)/
EXEMPT STAFF COUNCIL (ESC)
MID-YEAR JOINT MEETING MINUTES**

June 15, 2010

Time: 10:10 a.m.

Location: Student Alumni Center, Room 305

Members Present: Lisa Aitken, Chandra Alston, Michael Alston, Vicki Antwine, Beverly Avis, Anita Bell, Jeff Bogue, Brian Bowling, Lisa Bronte, Judy Brooks, Tonya Brown, Debra Clark, Doug Cook, Darlene Crownover, Chasity Davis, Tabitha Davis, Brenda Deane, Jane Hall, Jerry Hall, Ronald Johnson, Joyce Jones, Felicia Martin, Carol Mason, Jackie McClarin, Horace Mincey, Elise Moore, Linda Risby, Felecia Shaw, Eloise Tate, Cynthia Tooley, Tiffany Trice, Stanley Tyler, Barbara Vick, Netia Watson, Karen Weatherly

Members Absent: Darnita Brassel, Angela Cody, Joycelyn Gray, Veronica Horton, Ramona Jackson, Creshunda Phillips, Vada Singleton, Shirley Sullivan

Welcome: Cynthia Tooley welcomed ERC and ESC representatives to the meeting and gave invited guest the opportunity to greet representatives.

- Rusty Johnson, PhD, *Vice Chancellor for Research*
- Cheryl Scheid, PhD, *Vice Chancellor for Academic, Faculty & Student Affairs*

Office of Equity & Diversity Updates:

Michael Alston, Office of Equity & Diversity (OED) Director, discussed the format of the grievance hearing process, which falls under the Disciplinary Action Policy (HR Policy 0525). The goal of OED is to help employees improve performance and keep their jobs. OED also assists supervisors with establishing a performance improvement plan in hopes the employees will improve performance. If the employees do not improve, the supervisor has to establish cause for recommending termination to Human Resources (HR), and the performance improvement plan serves one of those purposes.

Michael also highlighted the Code of Conduct (HR Policy 0580) and stated the majority of employees who are terminated from the University are because of work performance and/or standards of attendance.

During the disciplinary action process, the employee will receive letter(s) from the supervisor concerning the nature of the matter. The letter will state what type

of letter (counseling, warning or final warning), where the letter will be filed (departmental or HR file), and indicate which code of conduct was violated.

Once the supervisor has reached the tolerance level of working with the employee and OED is in agreement, the recommendation to terminate can be forwarded to HR.

Jerry Hall, HR Director, will review documentation and if termination is warranted he will send the employee a pre-termination letter and schedule a pre-termination hearing. During the pre-term hearing, the employee is given an opportunity to appeal to the supervisor, HR director and OED as to what he/she would do differently to keep their job.

After the pre-term hearing, HR and management team will make a decision to allow the employee to return to work or proceed to the termination process. If the decision is to terminate, the employee will receive a final termination letter.

Only non-exempt employees can file a grievance. A staff exempt employee cannot file a grievance; however, can file a complaint in the Office of Equity which will forward the complaint to the Office of the Chancellor. The Chancellor will review the complaint and make a decision.

The non-exempt employee can file a formal (employee has an attorney and University has an attorney) or informal (panel of UT employees) grievance. After the employee has received the final termination letter, he/she has 15 days to contact OED to make a decision to file a grievance. OED (Tiffany Trice) has 15 days to schedule the hearing. After the hearing, the Chancellor has 15 days to review the video tape and recommendation letter from the panel. The Chancellor will make a decision to overturn or uphold the termination.

Campus Police and OED have developed a handicapped parking permit application. To apply for a handicapped parking permit and to request accommodations, please complete application at the following website and return application to the Office of Equity and Diversity:
[http://www.uthsc.edu/oed/forms/HandicappedParkingPermitForm\(UTHSC\).pdf](http://www.uthsc.edu/oed/forms/HandicappedParkingPermitForm(UTHSC).pdf)

Human Resources (HR) Updates:

Jerry Hall, HR Director, informed representatives that HR will host a Benefits Fair on Friday, June 18, 2010 from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. and 2 – 4 p.m. Employees will be able to do the following:

- Verify/change beneficiary on life insurance, unpaid compensation and TCRS retirement
- Receive information regarding ORP changes
 - Information has been mailed to individuals who participate in the programs. It is important that employees read the information and make the necessary changes.
- Speak with the insurance staff regarding pharmacy and insurance changes

- Join the Sick Leave Bank
- Review insurance benefit package
- Receive information on educational assistance

Twenty (20) vacant positions are posted to HR website; the majority of jobs are in research which are grant funded positions. HR will continue to post jobs for “UT employees only” that are on state funded accounts. HR forwards qualified applications to the department and if the department feels the applicants are not compatible with the mission of the department; with proper documentation positions can be opened to outside applicants.

Representatives shared updates.

Meeting adjourned