

Rock Valley College

Employee Code of Ethics RVC Administrative Procedure (3.10.050)

Purpose

This procedure supports Rock Valley College's commitment to maintaining the highest standards of ethical conduct and professionalism. It is designed to guide employee behavior, safeguard the integrity of the institution, and promote a culture of respect, responsibility, and transparency across all levels of the College.

Scope

This procedure applies to all employees of Rock Valley College, including full-time, part-time, temporary, adjunct, and student employees.

Ethical Responsibilities and Conduct

Personal Integrity and Work Ethic

Employees are expected to:

1. **Demonstrate high standards of personal conduct, integrity, and honesty**

Employees are the face of the college and must maintain the highest level of ethical behavior.

- Be honest, reliable, and fair in all interactions with students, colleagues, and the public.
- Present yourself in a manner that reflects positively on the college, including maintain appropriate professional behavior and communication.
- Avoid any conduct, on or off campus, that could harm the nature of the college.

2. **Maintain Attendance and Performance Standards**

Regular attendance and quality work are essential to supporting the mission of the college.

- Arrive on time for work and scheduled commitments, and notify supervisors of absences or delays promptly.
- Complete tasks to the best of your ability, meeting the required performance standards.
- Avoid negligence, inattention, or behaviors that disrupt the operation of the college.

3. **Honor Responsibilities and Commitments**

Every employee has a duty to contribute to the success of the college.

- Take ownership of assigned duties and ensure that work is completed accurately and on time.
- Collaborate with colleagues, offer assistance when needed, and support the overall goals of the institution.

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- Avoid abandoning responsibilities or failing to follow through on commitments.

4. Follow Lawful and Ethical Directions

Employees must adhere to all applicable laws, regulations, and institutional policies,

- Comply with college policies, state and federal regulations, and any lawful instructions from supervisors.
- Uphold academic and professional integrity in all duties.
- Refuse to engage in activities that are illegal, unethical, or that compromise the values of the college.

Violations of this Code of Ethics, including dishonesty, neglect of duties, or disregard for college policies, may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Employees are encouraged to report concerns to supervisors or HR without fear of retaliation.

Build Trust and Credibility

Employees are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that promotes confidence in Rock Valley College as an ethical and trustworthy institution. To do so, employees shall:

- **Make decisions and take actions that foster trust** within the college community, ensuring that students, colleagues, and the public can rely on their honesty and fairness.
- **Avoid behaviors that could harm credibility or public confidence**, including any actions that may appear deceptive, biased, or self-serving.
- **Act with transparency and ethical intent**, making choices that are not only legally permissible but also reflect the right thing to do for the college and its stakeholders.

Respect for the Individual

Rock Valley College is committed to providing a workplace and learning environment free of discrimination, harassment, and hostility. Employees are expected to contribute to a culture of mutual respect and inclusion by adhering to the following:

- **Treat all colleagues, students, and visitors with dignity and respect**, ensuring that interactions remain professional and courteous at all times.
- **Support diversity, inclusion, and collaboration**, recognizing that the strength of the College comes from the unique backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of our community members.
- **Address and report discriminatory, offensive, or harassing behavior** promptly to a supervisor or Human Resources, in accordance with College policies.
- **Respect differing perspectives and backgrounds**, even in situations of disagreement, and foster an environment where all voices are valued.

Creating and maintaining a culture of respect is a shared responsibility, and failure to uphold these expectations may result in disciplinary action.

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Open and Honest Communication

Rock Valley College is committed to maintaining an environment where employees feel safe to voice concerns, ask questions, and report unethical behavior without fear of retaliation. To support this standard:

- **Managers are responsible for fostering a culture of trust**, where employees can raise ethical concerns, workplace issues, or potential violations openly and without intimidation
- **All ethics-related concerns must be taken seriously** and handled promptly, confidentially, and respectfully, ensuring the integrity of the reporting process.
- **The College enforces a strict non-retaliation policy** for employees who report concerns or violations in good faith. Any act of retaliation against a reporting employee is strictly prohibited and subject to disciplinary action.

By encouraging transparency and ethical dialogue, the College strengthens accountability and upholds its commitment to integrity.

Professional Misconduct

Employees of Rock Valley College are expected to adhere to the highest standards of conduct. **Misconduct** is any behavior that violates these standards and undermines the College's mission or community. Misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- **Violations of College policy, procedure, or applicable law**
- **Insubordination or refusal to follow lawful directives** from supervisors or College leadership
- **Incompetence, inefficiency, or willful neglect of assigned duties** that impacts operations or student services
- **Dishonesty, unethical behavior, or unprofessional conduct**, including falsification of records or misuse of college resources
- **Any behavior that harms the College's students, employees, or property**, whether intentional or negligent

Violations of this Code or acts of misconduct may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, and in some cases, legal action. Disciplinary measures will follow applicable College policies and procedures.

Conflicts of Interest

Employees of Rock Valley College are expected to make decisions solely in the best interest of the College and to avoid any actions or relationships that could compromise—or appear to compromise—their impartiality or professional judgment. Conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to:

- **Financial interests or personal relationships** that could influence—or be perceived as influencing—professional decisions or actions.
- **Use of College resources, property, or confidential information for personal gain** or for the benefit of another party.
- **Outside employment, consulting, or business activities** that interfere with the employee's ability to fulfill their responsibilities to the College.

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Employees are required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest to Human Resources or their immediate supervisor immediately. The College will review and address conflicts in accordance with its policies to maintain fairness, integrity, and public trust.

Gifts and Business Courtesies

To maintain public trust and avoid any perception of impropriety, employees of Rock Valley College must conduct all business dealings with integrity and impartiality.

- **Employees must not accept gifts, favors, or gratuities** that could influence—or appear to influence—their decisions or actions on behalf of the College.
- **Occasional nominal gifts and customary business courtesies** (e.g., items under \$100 in value or reasonable shared meals) are permissible only if:
 - They are infrequent and not excessive
 - They are not offered in exchange for preferential treatment or business advantage
 - They are disclosed to management when appropriate, in accordance with College policy
- **Employees involved in purchasing, contracting, or vendor selection** must exercise extra caution to avoid any situation that could compromise—or appear to compromise—their objectivity.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action and could impact vendor or partner relationships.

Confidentiality and Use of Resources

Employees are entrusted with the College's information, property, and technology, and must use these resources responsibly and in the best interest of Rock Valley College.

- **Employees must protect confidential information** regarding the College, its students, employees, and partners, and must not disclose such information to unauthorized individuals.
- **Use of College property, technology, and time** must be for legitimate, business-related purposes, except for occasional incidental personal use that does not interfere with work duties or College operations.
- **Misuse of College resources**—including equipment, email, internet, or other technology—for offensive, inappropriate, or personal business purposes is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.

By following these standards, employees help maintain trust, security, and the efficient operation of the College.

Health, Safety, and Legal Responsibility

Rock Valley College is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and legally compliant workplace. Every employee plays a role in protecting the well-being of the College community.

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- **Employees are responsible for maintaining a safe and healthy work environment**, following all workplace safety practices, and exercising good judgment in all activities.
- **All employees must follow College safety protocols** and promptly report hazards, unsafe behavior, accidents, or potential threats to supervisors or the appropriate department.
- **Misuse of authority, illegal acts, or any behavior that endangers others**—whether physical, emotional, or reputational—will be addressed promptly and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

By embracing these responsibilities, employees help ensure that Rock Valley College remains a secure, professional, and lawful environment for students, staff, and visitors.

Reporting Violations and Whistleblower Protections

Rock Valley College encourages all employees to promptly report suspected misconduct, violations of this Code, or illegal or unethical behavior. Employees play a critical role in upholding the integrity of the College.

Employees are encouraged to report:

- Violations of this Employee Code of Ethics
- Illegal, unethical, or fraudulent conduct
- Conflicts of interest or misuse of College resources

Reporting Channels:

- Immediate supervisor
- Human Resources
- Confidential whistleblower reporting mechanisms as outlined in [RVC Board Policy 3:10.100](#)

Non-Retaliation:

Rock Valley College strictly prohibits retaliation against any employee who reports concerns in good faith. Any act of intimidation, harassment, or retaliation will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Accountability and Enforcement

Rock Valley College holds all employees accountable for upholding the standards of this Employee Code of Ethics.

- **Employees are responsible for understanding and complying with this Code**, as well as all applicable College policies and procedures.
- **Violations may result in corrective or disciplinary action**, up to and including termination of employment, and may also involve legal action when appropriate.
- **College leadership and Human Resources are responsible for fair and consistent enforcement** of this Code, ensuring that all concerns are addressed objectively and in alignment with College policies.

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By embracing accountability, every employee contributes to maintaining the integrity, safety, and reputation of Rock Valley College.

Questions and Guidance

For questions or clarification, contact:
Rock Valley College Human Resources Department

Reference: Board Report 6122

Implemented: October 7, 2025