



# **Handbook for Technicians & Research Assistants**

**September 2008**

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# Message from the President

At the heart of a great university lies research: the discovery, dissemination, and application of new knowledge to benefit the people of our greater communities. The University of British Columbia is a leading global institution of higher education that engages in research and scholarship in a broad range of areas.

The importance of Research is clearly acknowledged in UBC's strategic planning document, *Trek 2010*, in which it is one of five foundational pillars for the University, along with People, Learning, Community, and Internationalization.

In order to achieve our *Trek 2010* goals, we depend heavily on the contributions of our skilled and dedicated Technicians and Research Assistants (TRAs) who play a vital role in the research and learning that form the basis of our activity. And to ensure that TRAs are given every opportunity to contribute to their highest potential, we have established what we hope are the appropriate working conditions described in this handbook, to enhance the workplace and give our employees real job satisfaction.

There is no doubt that TRAs make a significant and integral contribution to UBC's research achievements, and we are all thankful for your dedication to excellence in your work.

Stephen J. Toope  
President and Vice-Chancellor  
The University of British Columbia

# **Message from the Vice President Research**

As part of UBC's vision to "conduct outstanding research to serve the people of British Columbia, Canada and the world," we are dedicated to fostering an environment that will incubate ideas, offer world-calibre and meaningful research, advance knowledge and impact the communities we serve.

We are deeply committed to supporting the development of outstanding research in all disciplines. The broad spectrum of research activities across UBC mesh to create a unique environment for idea exchange and research collaboration that stimulates creativity and innovation. This commitment could not be realized without the integral role played by technicians and research assistants, and we are determined to ensure a dynamic and engaging research environment that values the significant contribution of this group.

With our deepest appreciation,

John Hepburn  
Vice President, Research

# Introduction

Welcome to the University of British Columbia. We hope that your career here will be successful and satisfying. Working for the University as a Technician and Research Assistant (TRA) provides you with the opportunity to promote, support and contribute to the attainment of the University's goal of excellence in teaching and research.

We are pleased to be able to provide you with this Handbook of information about the University's existing terms, conditions, practices, and procedures as they relate to non-unionized TRAs. It is intended as a guide for all new employees as well as a reference for current employees.

Many TRAs are engaged in work paid from research grants or contracts awarded to faculty members at the University. Research grants and contracts are held in trust by the University and are not the property of any individual. Irrespective of the source of funds or work location, research staff appointed as TRAs are employees of The University of British Columbia, not of individual faculty members.

In this handbook, we have outlined many topics but there are a number of other sources of information about the University's policies and procedures. Some of these sources are referenced in this Handbook. Generally your first source of information should be your supervisor ("supervisor" is used to describe any one of the following: faculty member, manager, administrator of a unit, head of a department, director of an institute or a centre, or dean of a faculty). Another source is the UBC Policies and Procedures Handbook, which is available through your supervisor or departmental office, or online at <http://www.universitycounsel.ubc.ca/policies/policies.html>. A Human Resources Advisor in the Department of Human Resources is also available to assist you in understanding this Handbook and to provide advice on HR related matters. Your Service Representative in Financial Services can answer questions related to your pay and benefits. You can also access your pay, benefits and update personal information on the Self-Service site <http://www.msp.ubc.ca/auth/menuPeoplesoftPortals.jsp> using your Campus Wide Login.

The terms, conditions, practices and procedures described in this Handbook will change from time to time. It is both the commitment and the practice to make changes only after consultation with TRAs. Changes will be reflected in future editions of this handbook or in bulletins mailed or e-mailed to you from the Department of Human Resources. Where there is inconsistency between this Handbook and the University's Policy and Procedures Manual, the Policy and Procedures Manual will prevail.

# Learning about UBC and Your Job

## Orientation

To be a productive and satisfied member of the University's staff, you must feel comfortable in your environment. You will be oriented to your new position and department by your supervisor, administrator and/or co-workers. They will assist you in getting the training, equipment and anything else you need to get settled in your role. We would also like to direct you to the UBC Virtual Welcome Centre which is an online self-service orientation tool to help you upon your arrival. We encourage you to navigate through a Quick Start Orientation at <http://www.hr.ubc.ca/vwc/index.php> that will guide you through useful campus information on parking and access, transportation and housing, campus security, library privileges, and sports and recreational services.

To supplement any orientation you receive in your department, the University provides a formal orientation program every few months to which new staff and faculty are invited. This program concentrates on University-wide issues and policies. Please contact the Department of Human Resources for information on this orientation program.

The Department of Human Resources also provides an online Benefits orientation and sign-on program for staff. Your appointment letter from the University will outline the details of enrolling in the University's Benefits program.

## Probationary Period

TRAs hired on or after September 1, 2008, will serve a probationary period of twelve (12) months. TRAs hired prior to September 1, 2008 will serve a probationary period of six (6) months. An employee who has already completed a probationary period and is transferring or being promoted to a new job on or after September 1, 2008 will normally serve a 12 month probationary period; this requirement may be reduced or waived at the sole discretion of the administrative head of unit. During this probationary period, your supervisor will carefully review your performance. This is also your opportunity to evaluate the job and work environment.

Good communication is essential at all times, but particularly during the probationary period. You should communicate with your supervisor about any difficulties you are experiencing and you should expect that your supervisor will bring to your attention any difficulties that he or she observes. Good communication between you and your supervisor is the best way to work together to solve any problems that may arise during your probation or at any time during your employment at the University.

No matter how carefully candidates and job requirements are matched, sometimes they don't fit together. Despite all best efforts, you may not be satisfied with your position or your

performance may not be satisfactory. If so, the employment relationship may be terminated by you or by your supervisor at any time during or at the end of the probationary period.

## **Respectful Work Environment**

The University recognizes the right of staff to work in an environment free from harassment and discrimination.

The University's policy on discrimination and harassment, addresses problems arising from grounds prohibited from discrimination under the Human Rights Code of British Columbia. The prohibited grounds of discrimination include: age, ancestry, colour, family status, marital status, physical or mental disability, place of origin, political belief, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation and criminal conviction unrelated to employment. If you have any concerns related to discrimination or harassment you should bring them to the attention of your supervisor who should consult immediately with the Equity Office.

The University's statement on Respectful Working, Learning & Living Environment addresses concerns an employee may have about personal harassment that does not involve prohibited grounds of discrimination covered under the Human Rights Code of British Columbia. Again, these concerns should be brought to the attention of your supervisor for investigation and resolution in a timely manner. Your supervisor should consult with their Human Resources Advisor.

## **Types of Employment**

The diversity of positions available to TRAs naturally lends itself to a variety of employment arrangements. Your supervisor should provide you with written details of your position. TRAs can be employed as ongoing or term. Ongoing employees are hired with no stated term of employment. Term employees are hired with a stated period of employment. At the end of the period, a term employee may be hired for another period of employment. Many TRA positions are supported by grant funding and are available as long as sufficient grant funding is available.

TRAs can be hired either on a full-time or part-time basis. If you are hired on a part-time basis, your salary and some benefits will be based on the hours you work. TRAs may also be paid on a salaried (monthly) or hourly basis. The minimum for some benefits eligibility is an appointment of at least three months and 50% time. Your department administrator or service representative in Financial Services can give you more information regarding the benefit entitlement of TRAs.

The provisions regarding termination of both ongoing and term appointments can be found at pages 19 and 20.

## **Hours of Work**

By the nature of the work performed by TRAs, it is possible that there will not be a strictly defined work schedule that will apply at all times, particularly if the TRA is engaged in an experimental research project. For jobs with these special requirements where scheduling flexibility is a fundamental aspect of the work, it is essential that you and your supervisor will meet at the outset of the appointment to discuss and agree on issues and expectations around the scheduling of work, including how overtime requirements will be handled.

However, it is the University's expectation that full-time work as a TRA will conform generally to the following guidelines and standards:

- a) Normal Work Week - The normal work week for all TRAs in all departments, except as noted below, is thirty-seven and one-half (37 1/2) hours per week.
- b) Normal Work Day - A normal work day is seven and one-half (7 1/2) hours, including two (2) fifteen (15) minute paid rest breaks during those hours. You will also be provided an unpaid meal period of at least one-half (1/2) hour in addition to the seven and one-half (7 1/2) hours of work. This is an uninterrupted meal period that should begin in the middle of your work day (the timing of this break should be arranged with your supervisor to meet operational requirements).
- c) Schedule Changes - Hours of work are subject to change to meet changing operational requirements. You will be consulted in advance regarding any changes in hours of work.

- d) Special Requirements - The hours of work may be spread over two (2) weeks. For positions that do not fit the normal work hours given, the hours of work and the calculation and disposition of overtime must be discussed and agreed upon by you and your supervisor.
- e) Overtime - Unless set out by prior agreement, all work exceeding the normal work day or work week will be considered overtime. All overtime work performed for which overtime payments will be requested must be approved by your supervisor in writing in advance of the overtime work. Overtime will be paid at double time. With mutual agreement between you and your supervisor, equivalent time off may be taken at a double time rate. You must use accrued paid days off within the calendar year or project year in which they are accrued unless there is prior written approval of the supervisor or the Department Head.

## **Pay Schedule**

If you are hired as a monthly paid employee, you will receive your pay by direct deposit twice a month, on the 15th (or the nearest working day before the 15th) and the last working day of the month.

If you are hired as an hourly paid employee, you will receive your pay by direct deposit twice a month, on the 8th (or the nearest working day before the 8th) and the 23rd (or nearest working day before the 23rd) of the month.

When you are initially hired, you will complete a Direct Deposit Form, providing pertinent information with regard to your bank account number. You may be required to pick-up your first cheque at Financial Services in the General Services Administration Building. To view or print your pay stubs, you can utilize the Self-Service payroll module at <https://www.msp.ubc.ca/auth/menuPeoplesoftPortals.jsp> using your Campus Wide Login.

# **During Your Career**

## **You and Your Supervisor**

Your supervisor is one of the most important links between you and the University. The University expects that the supervisor/employee relationship will be one of mutual respect and consideration. The policies and practices of the University are geared to equitable treatment of all employees with a measure of consistency; however, written materials cannot cover every situation. The person to whom you report has some latitude and discretion in handling individual situations as they arise.

Next to you, your supervisor is the person most responsible for your continuing development as a staff member. The University encourages individual growth and your supervisor is in a good position to help you determine what actions should be taken to ensure your development within the University environment.

There may be times when you and your supervisor disagree. Although informal consultation and discussion are preferable between yourself and your supervisor, there is a formal appeal procedure which gives you the opportunity to resolve any problems you may have with your supervisor. Appeal procedures are handled by the Department of Human Resources, Advisory Services Section. Your Human Resources Advisor will ensure that your rights to due process will be observed.

Further information can be obtained from your supervisor or Human Resources Advisor.

## **Job Suggestions**

The University encourages suggestions for improvements to procedures, workflow, or any other areas that would make your job more productive or satisfying. If you have suggestions, discuss them with your supervisor.

## **Performance Evaluation**

The University believes that it is important for the performance of each staff member to be evaluated at least once in each calendar year. This performance evaluation is designed to give you and your supervisor an opportunity to discuss the effectiveness of your performance as compared to established departmental standards. It is also an opportunity to discuss developmental opportunities and strategies for achieving the goals of the department. Both you and your supervisor are responsible for seeing that performance evaluations take place. You are both responsible for the quality of the evaluation. Take some time to assess your performance over the last year objectively, decide what actions you might take to improve your performance, and give some thought to the things your supervisor might do to assist you. Also, take the time to consider a personal development plan.

## **Professional Development**

The University recognizes the value of professional development and has established a fund that will be administered by the Human Resources Department. The fund allows for incremental annual funding commencing April 1, 2005 and will accumulate for a total of \$124,000 on April 1, 2009. The University's ability to maintain this fund is subject to the provision of funding from the Provincial Government. To determine your eligibility and to access the Professional Development Guidelines and applicable application forms you can go on-line at <http://www.hr.ubc.ca/odl/funding/TRA.html>.

## **Job Postings**

All vacancies for regular positions and term positions with terms exceeding twelve (12) months shall be posted for a minimum of one (1) week. Postings can be viewed on the HR Website. Application should be made on or before the closing date of the job posting. All promotions and transfers are subject to a new probationary period.

Hiring is based solely on merit and is within the University's sole discretion. You have the right to apply for any position for which you feel you are qualified.

## **Compensation Policy and Practice**

The University expects that its total compensation policy (salary, benefits including paid time off and other perquisites) will attract and retain highly qualified staff. In order to administer salaries fairly, the University has developed and is maintaining a salary structure system based on job content.

Job content is detailed in a formal written position description that was developed by your operational unit. Position descriptions act as a guide to illustrate the key functions of a position. A copy of each position description is kept in the unit. The position description forms part of your conditions of employment. No job remains exactly the same forever and position descriptions may be updated periodically to reflect the actual content of the job as it changes. Position descriptions are then compared to standard job descriptions developed for TRAs to determine the classification and the position level.

The classification levels are assigned a salary range. The salary range has a minimum salary, midpoint salary and maximum salary. You are initially placed within the salary range depending on your expertise and experience for that particular position, usually between the minimum and midpoint of the range. Upon successful completion of the probationary period, the department may put through an optional increase of between one and four percent.

Up-to-date salary scales/ranges are accessible on-line at [http://www.hr.ubc.ca/comp/salary\\_admin/salary\\_scales.html](http://www.hr.ubc.ca/comp/salary_admin/salary_scales.html)

### ***Career Progress Increments***

The University shall ensure that you are compensated at the midpoint of your salary range by the end of your second year in the position, subject to satisfactory performance.

### ***Salary Increases Beyond Midpoint***

Movement of your salary beyond the midpoint of the salary range will be based on meritorious job performance. Generally, you must have completed your probationary period and already be at or above the midpoint of the salary range to be eligible for a merit increase. A formal merit program is under review by the University Executive with an expected implementation date of late 2009. The compensation package for TRAs is reviewed by the Department of Human Resources annually. Any recommendations from this review are forwarded to the President and the Board of Governors for approval or amendment.

### ***Definitions of Job Changes***

A **promotion** is a job change to a position with a higher salary grade. A promotion may be permanent or temporary. To apply for a promotion you must apply for a posted position on the job posting website.

A **temporary promotion** may occur when you fill a vacant position in a higher paygrade on a temporary basis or you are assigned a significant portion of additional duties from a higher paygrade on a temporary basis. An employee who is temporarily promoted shall be advised of the commencement date of such promotion and of the date upon which it will end.

A **reclassification** is the recognition through evaluation that a position should be in a different salary range. Reclassification occurs because the accountability and responsibility for the position have changed significantly. Reclassification is not dependent on the individual who presently holds the position or how well he or she performs the job. You or your supervisor may request a review of your job classification at any time.

A **reassignment** is a change in job duties at the request of the University. Your former position is not affected. A reassignment may occur for reasons such as special project work, professional development or better use of available personnel. If the reassigned duties are from a similar or lower paygrade, you will continue to receive salary based on your original position. If the reassignment is temporary, you will be returned at the end of the reassignment period to your original position.

A **transfer** is a permanent job change to a different position at a similar or lower salary grade. To apply for a transfer you must apply for a posted position on the job posting website.

## **Benefits Information**

The University provides the following benefit plans as part of the total compensation package for TRAs. Your eligibility for these plans is determined by your position, your type of appointment, whether you are salaried or hourly, the length of your appointment and whether or not you are in receipt of pension benefits as required by law. Your eligibility is also dependent upon whether you are below the Normal Retirement Date (the first of the month following the month in which you turn 65) or above it. You and the University share the cost of these plans. Please see the Human Resources Benefits web site at [www.hr.ubc.ca/benefits/index.html](http://www.hr.ubc.ca/benefits/index.html) for the most current information. Questions regarding your eligibility for benefit programs can be directed to your Service Representative in Financial Services.

The information provided here are brief summaries only. If there is a discrepancy between the information provided here and the official plan documents, the information in the plan documents and/or University's Policy and Procedures will prevail.

### **Health And Welfare Plans**

The University offers the following plans to help offset some medical, dental, and personal counseling costs.

**Medical Services Plan (MSP)** of British Columbia is the provincial medical insurance plan. It pays for medically required services of physicians and surgeons, and for dental and oral surgery, when it is medically required to be performed in a hospital. Fair PharmaCare subsidizes eligible prescription drugs and designated medical supplies. Registration is required for Fair PharmaCare, please refer to the benefit information specific to your employment group on the web in the link above.

Enrollment in the Medical Services Plan at the University is optional. However, as a resident of British Columbia you are required to be enrolled in this plan, whether on an individual basis or as a dependent on your spouse's/common-law partner's plan.

There is a three month waiting period for BC Medical Services Plan benefits if you are a new employee or a returning resident of BC and provided you and your family arrives at the same time. Employees should ensure that they are covered by their former province for this waiting period if they are coming from another province in Canada or obtain private coverage if they are coming from out-of-country. For further information, please see: [http://www.hr.ubc.ca/benefits/employment\\_group/ooc\\_private\\_med.html](http://www.hr.ubc.ca/benefits/employment_group/ooc_private_med.html).

The UBC **Extended Health Care Plan** is an optional benefit plan for you and your eligible dependents. It provides reimbursement for some medical services and supplies expenses which are not covered under any government program. Emergency medical assistance is also provided when traveling outside of your home province. Vision care benefits are also provided under the Plan.

The **UBC Dental Care Plan** is an optional benefit plan for you and your eligible dependents. It provides coverage for a wide range of dental services, from your regular check-ups to major procedures such as root canals and crowns. These procedures may be provided by a licensed Dentist, Denturist, Dental Hygienist and Anesthetist.

The **Employee and Family Assistance Program**, for which enrollment is mandatory, provides confidential and personal counseling and referrals by professional counselors to you and your eligible dependents for a variety of issues affecting personal, family or work life.

The **Income Replacement Plan (IRP)** is an employee-funded plan that provides you with a monthly tax-free income if you are unable to work for six months or more due to illness or injury. Enrollment in the IRP plan is mandatory.

The **Basic Group Life Insurance Plan (BGL)** provides benefits for your beneficiary should you die, due to any cause. Spouses and dependent children are not covered under the Basic Group Life Insurance plan. Enrollment in the BGL plan is mandatory.

The **Optional Life Insurance Plan** provides coverage in addition to your Basic Group Life Insurance through UBC, or any other life or accident insurance you may have. You may also elect to purchase Optional Life Insurance coverage for your spouse. Spousal coverage provides, free of charge, limited coverage for each of your dependent children. If you are a single parent, this dependent child coverage is provided through your Optional Life Insurance coverage. To be eligible to apply for the Optional Life Insurance Plan, you will need to be enrolled in the Basic Group Life Insurance Plan.

The **Optional Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance Plan** provides benefits for accidental death, or accidental loss of limbs, sight or hearing. This is in addition to your Basic Group Life Insurance, or any other policy you may have. It does not cover your spouse or dependent children. To be eligible for the Optional Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance plan, you will need to be enrolled in the Basic Group Life Insurance Plan and the Optional Life Insurance Plan and the amount of coverage purchased must be equal to that purchased under the Optional Life Insurance Plan.

Enrollment in the Optional Life plans is optional, and you will be required to complete a health questionnaire.

After a three-month qualifying period, the **Tuition Fee Benefit Plan** provides tuition assistance to eligible employees up to a maximum of twelve credits of undergraduate credit courses per year, or the dollar equivalent in tuition for non-credit courses offered by UBC Continuing Studies. For purposes of clarity, “per year” is defined as one year from the start date of the first course you take in which you use the tuition fee benefit. This date is called your tuition fee benefit anniversary date. The benefit also covers up to the normal program fees for some graduate programs. There is opportunity to participate in courses during normal working hours provided you have approval from your supervisor with regard to the amount of time off and make-up time arrangements. You may transfer part or all of your credits to your spouse or your eligible dependent children for undergraduate credit courses. For greater detail with regard to

this benefit, including eligibility requirements, courses covered, application procedures etc. we refer you to: [http://www.hr.ubc.ca/benefits/employment\\_group/non\\_union\\_tech/ppd/tuition.html](http://www.hr.ubc.ca/benefits/employment_group/non_union_tech/ppd/tuition.html)

## **Staff Pension Plan (SPP)**

The University sponsors a Staff Pension Plan (SPP) for monthly paid (salaried) staff who meets the eligibility requirements.

If you are a full-time monthly paid employee with an ongoing appointment, you are eligible to join the Plan when you are first appointed. If you are a full-time monthly paid employee and you have continuous appointments totaling twelve months or more with no breaks in service, you are eligible to join the Plan. Contact the Pension Administration Office for an application form and confirmation of your eligibility for membership

If you are a part-time monthly paid employee, you are eligible to join the Pension Plan once you have completed at least two years of continuous employment with no breaks and have earned at least 35% of the Yearly Maximum Pensionable Earnings (YMPE) in two consecutive calendar years

Once eligible, both full-time and part-time employees must join the Plan on the first of the month after completing three years of employment or your 30th birthday, whichever occurs later.

Once you have joined the Pension Plan, you must remain a member of the Plan for as long as you are an employee or until you receive pension benefits as required by law.

## **Vacation**

The University believes that time away from your job is both necessary and desirable for your well being. Your vacation entitlement depends on your length of continuous service.

During the first calendar year, you will accrue vacation entitlement at one and one-quarter (1 1/4) days per month on a pro-rata basis depending on the amount of time worked in the calendar year.

After your first calendar year, you will accrue vacation entitlement according to the following table:

<b>CALENDAR YEARS OF SERVICE</b>	<b>DAYS OF VACATION</b>
2 to 5 years	15 days (112.5 hours)
6 to 8 years	20 days (150.0 hours)
9 to 14 years	25 days (187.5 hours)
15 years	26 days (195.0 hours)
16 years	27 days (202.5 hours)
17 years	28 days (210.0 hours)
18 years	29 days (217.5 hours)

19 or more years

30 days (225.0 hours)

It is expected that you will take your vacation entitlement in the calendar year in which it is earned. **A maximum two weeks (10 working days) may be carried over into the next calendar year with the advance written approval of your supervisor or departmental office.**

If your supervisor requests that you forego any part of your vacation and it cannot be scheduled within the calendar year, the full amount of that vacation may be carried over into the next calendar year with the advance written approval of your department head. If approval is not obtained, accommodations will be made to schedule your vacation within the calendar year.

If you leave the University before you have taken all your earned vacation, you will receive a lump sum payment with your final cheque in lieu of the vacation time not taken. If you have taken vacation in excess of what you have earned, an amount equivalent to the payment of the unearned vacation will be deducted from your final cheque.

Part-time employees will receive vacation, as described above; pro-rated on the basis of the hours worked as compared to the hours a full-time employee works.

## **General/Statutory Holidays**

The University recognizes eleven general/statutory holidays and you will receive these holidays with pay if eligible:

New Year's Day	Labour Day
Good Friday	Thanksgiving Day
Easter Monday	Remembrance Day
Victoria Day	Christmas Day
Canada Day	Boxing Day
BC Day	

To be eligible for pay for general/statutory holidays, you must have earned wages or performed work for a minimum fifteen days of the thirty calendar days immediately preceding the general holiday.

If you are a part-time employee, the amount of any general holiday pay will be equal to the average of earnings, exclusive of overtime, for the days worked in the four week period immediately preceding the week in which the general holiday occurs.

If any of these holidays falls on a Saturday or Sunday, another working day, as determined by the University, will be observed as the holiday.

If you are required to work on a general holiday, but are eligible for general holiday pay, you will be entitled to overtime pay for the hours worked on that day as well as another regular day off with pay, to be taken at a time which is mutually agreed between you and your supervisor.

Overtime pay is attached to the actual date of the paid holiday, not a day declared in lieu by the University. If you work on a “in lieu” day you will receive straight time for the hours worked on that day, plus any stat pay to which you are entitled (or, if mutually agreed, a different day off in lieu).

## **Christmas Paid Leave**

All employees who are normally scheduled to work will be given three (3) days leave of absence with pay to be taken between Boxing Day and New Year’s Day unless they are required to work for operational reasons. If you are required to work you will be given three (3) paid days off at some other mutually agreeable time.

## **Absence from Work**

### ***Medical/Dental Appointments***

TRAs are eligible for up to one-half day per month with pay for medical/dental appointments; however you are expected to make a reasonable effort to schedule routine, non-emergency and specialist medical and dental appointments outside of normal working hours. Excessive use of medical or dental appointments may require medical or dental certificates. Please check with your supervisor regarding specific leave request procedures for your unit.

### ***Illness***

From time to time, all of us have an illness or injury that prevents us from performing our jobs.

Full-time staff members will have 1 1/4 days added to their sick leave reserve for each month during which they work at least eleven days. The maximum sick leave that may be accumulated in the reserve is 152 days.

Part-time staff members will have days added to their sick leave reserve, as outlined above, pro-rated according to the number of hours they work.

If you are absent from work due to illness or injury, you will receive your normal salary up to the number of days you have in your sick leave reserve.

All absences from work due to illness or injury must be reported to your supervisor prior to the commencement of your shift. Your supervisor may request medical documentation on your health from your physician if you have been or are expected to be, absent for more than five (5) days. If you have recurring absences or an extended absence, or you are unable to do your job, a medical examination and report, or an independent medical examination, may be requested by the University. If you do not produce a satisfactory medical report on your health or fail to undergo the required treatment resulting from an examination, the University may cancel your sick leave and terminate your employment.

When returning to work after an extended absence, the University may request a note to confirm fitness to return to work.

You may use up to three (3) days of dependent leave in any calendar year to care for the illness or injury of a dependent living in the same residence as you. Any use of dependent leave will be deducted from your personal sick leave credits, but will be recorded as dependent leave. This provision is subject to you maintaining a personal annual accumulation of sick leave credits in excess of twelve (12) days. You may use up to an additional two (2) days as dependent leave provided you have sufficient accumulated sick leave credits carried over from a previous calendar year.

### ***Subrogation***

If you receive monies from a third party, such as ICBC, and have used your sick benefits as a result of a third party, you will be required to return to UBC any monies paid for the sick leave. Sick leave benefits will be credited upon payment of these monies. The amount you are required to repay to the University for a claim of lost wages shall be net of verified, reasonable expenses incurred by you to recover that claim.

### ***Workers' Compensation***

Workplace injuries must immediately be reported to your supervisor as time loss and medical costs are generally compensable through the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB). While waiting for a claim to be adjudicated by the WCB, you will be on paid sick leave (provided that enough sick leave entitlement has been accumulated). If the claim is accepted by WCB, you will remain on UBC's payroll and WCB reimburses the University at 75% of your salary. One quarter of a day of sick leave is deducted from the employee's accumulated sick leave for each day the employee is away from work on WCB benefits.

If you have no available sick leave, the department will place you on an unpaid leave of absence and WCB compensates you directly.

### ***Maternity, Parental and Adoption Leave:***

Technicians and Research Assistants are entitled to Maternity, Parental and Adoption Leave as specified in this handbook and under the provisions and regulations of the Employment Standards Act of British Columbia, as amended from time to time. In addition, the University offers a Supplemental Employment Benefits (SEB) Plan that does not fall under the Act. The SEB Plan is outlined below.

### ***Maternity and Parental Leave (Birth Mother):***

A pregnant employee (birth mother) is entitled to seventeen (17) weeks of maternity leave and thirty-five (35) consecutive weeks of parental leave without pay from the University. If the birth mother does not take the maternity leave she is entitled to thirty-seven (37) consecutive weeks of parental leave without pay from the University beginning after the child's birth and within fifty-two (52) weeks after that event. The total number of weeks of maternity and parental leave is limited to fifty-two (52) weeks, plus any additional leave mentioned below.

Further leave without pay, of up to six (6) consecutive weeks for maternity leave, will be granted where the birth mother is unable to return to work for reasons related to the birth or the termination of the pregnancy, as certified by a medical practitioner. Additional parental leave without pay, of up to five (5) additional weeks, will be granted where the child is certified by a medical practitioner to be suffering from a physical, psychological or emotional condition.

The start of maternity leave must be no earlier than eleven (11) weeks before the expected birth date, and no later than the actual birth date. The end of maternity leave must be no earlier than six (6) weeks after the actual birth date (unless the employee requests a shorter period), and no later than seventeen (17) weeks after the actual birth date.

**Maternity Supplemental Employment Benefits (SEB):**

An employee who is the birth mother of a newborn child is eligible for the University's Supplemental Employment Benefits (SEB) if she is on maternity leave and has applied for and is eligible to receive Employment Insurance (EI) benefits and plans to return to work for at least six (6) months following the leave.

Employees who meet the SEB requirements will receive top-up benefits during the portion of their leave as follows:

- the two (2) week waiting period for EI maternity benefits (during which she will be paid 95% of the total salary by UBC); and,
- fifteen (15) weeks of EI maternity benefits (during which she will receive the top-up payment to 95% from UBC).

An employee on Parental Leave is not eligible for (SEB) top-up payments.

**Maternity SEB Plan Payments options:**

Before commencing the leave, the employee will be given the choice of receiving SEB top-up payments during the leave or after she has returned to work for at least six (6) months.

**Maternity SEB Plan Benefits during the leave:** If the employee chooses to receive top-up payments during the leave she will be required to sign an agreement prior to the commencement of payments. If she does not return to work or does not remain at work for six (6) months following the leave, she must repay the gross amount of SEB Plan benefits received. EI pays a fixed percentage based on their calculation of prior insurable earnings and UBC pays the difference between the EI payment and 95% of salary. The additional 5% of the total salary for the period the employee was receiving SEB Plan benefits is payable after she has returned to work for at least six (6) months. If the position is discontinued through no fault of the employee, the additional 5 % will still be paid.

**Maternity SEB Plan Benefits after returning to work:** if the employee chooses to receive SEB Plan top-up payments after returning to work, she must notify Financial Services to receive

the payment once the six (6) months have been completed. Copies of all EI cheque stubs must accompany the request.

***Parental Leave (Birth Father):***

An employee who is the birth father of a newborn child is entitled to thirty-seven (37) consecutive weeks of parental leave without pay within 52 weeks following the child's birth.

An employee on Parental Leave is not eligible for (SEB) top-up payments.

***Adoption Leave:***

An employee who is adopting a child is entitled to thirty-seven (37) consecutive weeks of unpaid adoption leave from the University. This leave must begin within fifty-two (52) weeks after the child is placed with the parents. Further adoption leave without pay, of up to five (5) additional weeks, will be granted where the child is certified by a medical practitioner to be suffering from a physical, psychological or emotional condition.

An employee on Adoption Leave is not eligible for (SEB) top-up payments.

***Leave Notice:***

To apply for maternity, parental or adoption leave, the employee is required to provide their supervisor written notice as follows:

- at least eight (8) weeks written notice prior to the anticipated start of the **maternity** leave and/or **parental** leave (birth mother);
- at least four (4) weeks written notice prior to the start of the **parental** leave (birth father) or **adoption** leave.

***Continuation of Benefits During Leave:***

The University will continue to pay for its portion of benefits if the employee continues to pay her/his portion of benefits during the maternity leave, parental leave and adoption leave.

***Vacation and Sick Leave Calculation:***

Vacation Leave Calculations: During maternity leave employment shall be deemed continuous for the purposes of calculating annual vacation entitlement but vacation pay will be pro-rated on the basis of the maternity SEB Plan benefit paid by the University.

While on parental, and/or adoption leave, time will accrue during the leave and will be included in the years of service for purposes of determining vacation entitlement.

Sick Leave Calculations: An employee on maternity leave who receives the SEB Plan benefit shall accumulate her sick leave reserve pro-rated on the basis of the SEB Plan benefit paid by the University. If an employee is on a maternity leave and does not apply for or qualify for the SEB Plan benefit above, she will not accumulate sick leave reserve beyond the month in which the leave or combined leave begins.

While on parental, and/or adoption leave, there is no accrual of sick leave.

***Remaining Current in Your Field:***

You are expected to remain up-to-date in your field during a leave. If your supervisor feels that you are not current when you return to work, you will be required to become current before resuming your position.

***Resignation (While on Maternity, Parental, Adoption Leave):***

If you resign before the end of your leave, you should give as much notice as possible, preferably at least six weeks. If you do not return to work at the end of any period of leave, it will be assumed that you have resigned. Please refer to the following website for a useful checklist of things to consider if you are leaving UBC: [http://www.hr.ubc.ca/leaving\\_ubc/](http://www.hr.ubc.ca/leaving_ubc/)

***Bereavement Leave***

If there is a death in your family notify your supervisor as soon as possible.

You will be entitled to five (5) days of paid leave of absence upon notification of the death of your parent, wife, husband, common-law spouse, same sex spouse, or child.

You will be entitled to three (3) days of paid leave of absence upon notification of the death of a brother, sister, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, grandmother, grandfather, grandchild.

In special circumstances, you may be granted further leave without loss of pay or benefits.

If special circumstances do not exist, additional time off may be granted as leave without pay or vacation time if available.

***Mourner's Leave***

Upon approval, an amount of time up to a maximum of half (½) day paid leave may be granted to attend a funeral or memorial service. The half day may be extended to a full day if you have a significant role in arranging or conducting the service or ceremony.

***Court Appearance/Jury Duty***

If you are subpoenaed as a witness or called for jury duty, you will receive your regular rate of pay for the days you would have normally worked. You must remit any payment from the Crown plus an accounting for any expenses for your appearance to your departmental office.

If you must appear as a plaintiff or defendant in a civil or criminal action, you will be granted a leave of absence without pay.

***Leave of Absence***

You may be granted a personal leave of absence without pay for up to six (6) months with the approval of your immediate supervisor and your Department Head.

Life insurance, disability insurance, Medical Services Plan, extended health care plan, dental plan and pension plan coverage will continue during your leave if you pay the full cost of these benefits **(including the University's portion)**.

You will not add to your sick leave reserve nor earn vacation entitlements while you are on leave of absence without pay.

You will be expected to keep up-to-date in your field during a leave. If your supervisor feels that you are not current at the end of your leave, you will be required to become current before you resume your position.

Other special leaves with pay may be approved by your Department Head and the appropriate Vice President. If you are on a paid leave of absence, you must maintain your benefits coverage and deductions will continue in the normal manner.

## **Your Employment File**

All of the official documentation concerning your employment with the University is retained by the Department of Human Resources. You have access to that file. If you want to review your file, please contact Human Resources. Please note that at least 24-hours notice is required to arrange for you to view your file.

# **Leaving the University**

## **Resignation**

If you decide to leave the University, a reasonable amount of notice will enable your supervisor and your fellow staff members to arrange a smooth transition. A minimum four weeks notice is desirable. If less than three weeks notice is received, any outstanding vacation will be calculated with the minimum requirements as set out under the Employment Standards Act.

## **Termination**

### ***General***

In some circumstances, it will be the University who decides to terminate the employment relationship. The University may terminate employment for just cause, for frustration of the employment contract, or without just cause.

Termination for Cause: An employee may be terminated for cause as a result of behavior or conduct that includes but is not limited to acts of dishonesty, insubordination, theft, destruction

of University property, unsatisfactory job performance, or harassment of fellow employees. An employee who is terminated for cause will have no notice entitlements.

**Frustration of the Employment Contract:** An employee may be terminated for frustration of contract, which means that the employment contract is at an end due to a specific unforeseen reason, whereby the employee can no longer carry out their work commitment. An example of this is where an employee may have a permanent disability, has exhausted short-term and long-term disability benefits and cannot be accommodated. An employee terminated for frustration of the employment contract will have no notice entitlements.

**Termination without Just Cause:** An employee may also be terminated without cause as a result of circumstances that include but are not limited to, redundancy, lack of funding, lack of work, changes to a program, restructuring, or unsuitability for a position. An employee who is terminated without cause will have notice entitlements.

### ***Term Appointments***

In these circumstances, the employment relationship is terminated automatically upon expiration of the stated term. The employee may be rehired at that time for another period of employment. In addition, both the employee and the University have the ability to terminate the employment relationship for any reason during the term appointment by giving four weeks' written notice to the other party.

An employee who has held three or more years of continuous term appointments with the University (i.e. no break in service) will be entitled to notice as if the employee held an ongoing appointment with the University. This includes working for successive grant holders.

### ***Ongoing Appointments***

An employee, in a position without an end date, who is terminated without just cause after completing their probationary period in the position will be provided with written notification of termination, in one of the following forms:

- \* working notice - in many cases, such as discontinuation of grant funding, the employee will be advised that the position will be discontinued on a specific date. During the working notice period, the employee will continue to work and receive salary and benefits as usual.
- \* pay in lieu of notice (salary continuance) - in some circumstances, the employee will receive an equivalent amount of pay in lieu of notice in the form of salary and benefits continuance. In these cases, the employee will be relieved of their employment obligations immediately and will continue on payroll for the period of their notice entitlement.
- \* a combination - in some circumstances, the employee will receive notice that consists of some period of working notice and some pay in lieu of notice, the combination of which gives the employee the total of their notice entitlement.

The amount of notice (or pay in lieu) an employee will receive will be as follows:

An employee with an ongoing appointment (i.e. no end-date) who has successfully completed the probationary period will be given a minimum three months' notice. An employee hired prior to September 1, 2008, with greater than three years continuous service will be given one month's notice per year of service and one week per quarter year of service to a maximum of 24 months' notice. An employee hired on or after September 1, 2008, with greater than three years continuous service will be given one month's notice per year of service and one week per quarter year of service to a maximum of 18 months' notice.

Employees who are receiving salary continuance payments as all or part of their notice period, shall make a diligent effort to find other employment, and will advise the University of his/her job search efforts. In the event that the terminated employee earns income through temporary, part-time or self-employment, an equivalent amount may be deducted from subsequent salary continuance payments.

When a terminated employee successfully finds other employment outside the University or outside the public sector they will be paid 50% of the salary of the remaining time left of their specified notice period. This will be paid as a lump sum and all benefits will cease at that time. If other employment is found within the University or public sector, the 50% payment will not apply.

## **Retirement**

Many employees finish their working careers at the University. There is no mandatory retirement age. We do refer to a "Normal Retirement Date" for the purposes of distinguishing differentiated benefits eligibility for those under 65 and those over 65. You may retire prior to your Normal Retirement Date or any time beyond your Normal Retirement Date. In order for the appropriate planning to occur, staff is encouraged to provide the University with three months of written notice. For those wishing to work beyond their Normal Retirement Date, further information can be found at: <http://www.hr.ubc.ca/retiring/>.

Upon retirement, employees will be entitled to the same vacation or vacation pay which he/she would have had if he/she continued working to the end of the calendar year. This provision will not apply to employees who have been on long term disability for more than three months prior to their normal retirement.

## **UBC Policies and Procedures**

Finally, it is important for you to be familiar with the policies and procedures that may guide certain aspects of your work at the University. The UBC Policy and Procedures Handbook are

accessible on-line at [www.universitycounsel.ubc.ca/policies/index.html](http://www.universitycounsel.ubc.ca/policies/index.html). These policies are subject to change in the future.

Listed below are some of the policies we encourage you to read as they may be applicable to your work at UBC:

Employment Equity (Policy #2)

Discrimination and Harassment (Policy #3)

University Safety (Policy #7)

The Reporting of Accidents and Hazardous Conditions (Policy #8)

Reduced Workload/Responsibility Appointment – Non-Academic Staff (Policy #49)

Crossing Picket Lines (Policy #64)

Patents and Licensing (Intellectual Property Policy # 88)

Conflict of Interest (Policy #97)

Responsible Use of Information Technology Facilities and Services (Policy #104)

## **Health, Safety and Environment Issues**

Please see the Health, Safety and Environment web site at [www.hse.ubc.ca](http://www.hse.ubc.ca) for up-to-date information on laboratory safety, Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS), and mandatory and optional laboratory training courses.

Each department also has an established Safety Committee. Please see your supervisor or department administrator for information regarding department specific safety policies and procedures.