Employee Handbook
WELCOME

Thank you for being a part of the Georgia Regents University and the Physicians Practice Group. I am pleased you are a part of our mission to meet the state’s health education and biomedical research needs, and I am confident you will contribute to our reputation for excellence. It is my hope that your association with GRU and PPG will be a long and satisfying career experience. Your work will be vital to our success.

Ricardo Azziz, M.D., M.P.H., M.B.A.
President, Georgia Regents University
President and CEO, Georgia Regents Health System
WHO WE ARE…

We are Georgia Regents, and this name refers to the entirety of our operation. Whether you are a member of the faculty, staff, student body, clinical system or a practice group, you are a part of Georgia Regents. GRU is an academic health center, with many units aligned by their role in research, education, or clinical care.

First, in our role as a University System of Georgia Research University, we have five colleges, each focused on different aspects of our mission of better health:
The College of Allied Health Sciences (formerly the School of Allied Health Sciences)
The College of Dental Medicine (formerly the School of Dentistry)
The College of Graduate Studies (formerly the School of Graduate Studies)
The College of Nursing (formerly the School of Nursing)
The Medical College of Georgia (formerly the School of Medicine)

We are also the MCG Health System, Inc., doing business as Georgia Regents Health System. The health system is a non-profit organization which coordinates the strategic activities of the Medical Center and the Physicians Practice Group, Georgia Regents Medical Associates. These are also non-profit organizations focused on clinical care. MCG Heath, Inc. manages several key assets including the Georgia Regents Medical Center, the Children's Hospital of Georgia and the Medical Office Building; PPG manages the GR Medical Associates and various related outpatient facilities.

Physicians Practice Group was established as the academic faculty practice plan of the School of Medicine of the Medical College of Georgia (MCG) in 1958. Physicians Practice Group is a cooperative organization of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia and its purpose is to support the clinical care, educational and research purposes of Georgia Regents University (GRU). PPG is a separate entity governed by a Board of Trustees consisting of the Clinical Department Chairs, elected faculty physician members, the President of GRU and CEO of GR Health System, the GR Health System Executive Vice President, Clinical Affairs and CEO of PPG, the Dean of MCG, the COO of GR Medical Center and the COO of PPG.

In addition to management of several outpatient facilities, as noted above, a core business of PPG is billing and collecting for the services of faculty physicians and other healthcare providers.

PPG provides monetary support to the Departments of MCG in the form of salary supplements, equipment and supplies, fringe benefits to faculty, residents, and fellows; as well as additional means of support approved by the Departments and Board of Trustees. PPG also provides support in various administrative capacities to the Departments, such as personnel services, accounting services, fringe benefit administration, and third party reimbursement research.

There are approximately 400 Members of Physicians Practice Group and approximately 300 employees. The Members are the faculty physicians in the clinical departments of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine, Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, Medicine, Neurology, Neurosurgery, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Ophthalmology, Orthopaedics, Otolaryngology and Head and Neck Surgery, Pathology, Pediatrics, Psychiatry, Radiology, and Surgery.

All information contained in this handbook is subject to change at any time at the discretion of PPG with or without notice.

Physicians Practice Group is an Equal Opportunity Employer. It is the policy of PPG to recruit, hire, promote, and terminate employees based solely on the individual's qualifications and merit without regard to race, color, religion or creed, national origin, sex, age, disability, or veteran status.

This handbook is presented as information only and should not be interpreted as an express, implied or inferred contract of employment between Physicians Practice Group and any of its employees. This handbook is only a summary of our policies. All previous editions of the Employee Handbook are obsolete. Information contained in this handbook is subject to change with or without notice.
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CLASSIFICATION OF EMPLOYEES:

Employees will be classified as one of the following:

**Full-Time Regular Employee.**

A full-time regular employee works a regular schedule of 40 hours per week and receives certain fringe benefits afforded to full-time employees as specified in the benefits section of this handbook.

**Part-Time Regular Employee.**

A part-time regular employee works a regular schedule of less than 40 hours per week. Part-time regular employees who work less than 20 hours per week are not eligible to receive benefits. Part-time regular employees who work more than 20 hours each week on a regular basis are eligible to receive benefits on a pro-rated basis as permitted under the benefit contracts. (health benefits - 20 hours or more each week: disability insurance - 30 hours or more each week: life insurance - 20 hours or more each week.)

**Full-Time Temporary Employee.**

A full-time temporary employee works a regular schedule of 40 hours per week for a specified period of time, usually not to exceed six calendar months. Full-time temporary employees are not eligible for any employee benefits.

**Part-Time Temporary Employee.**

A part-time temporary employee works a regular schedule of less than 40 hours per week for a specific period of time. Part time temporary employees are not eligible for any employee benefits.

**Student Assistants/Internships**

A student assistant is an employee who is currently enrolled in high school, college, or graduate school and may be employed to meet the needs of a specific department or group on a defined temporary basis. Students are encouraged to work at PPG as interns to gain work experience. Because student assistants are temporary, they are not eligible for employee benefits.

**Contract Employees**

Executive management staff and physicians employed by PPG may be employed under a contract. The terms and conditions of employment, as well as benefits provided to contract employees which are specified in the employment contract will take precedence over information contained in this handbook.

PPG employees will also be classified as exempt or non-exempt based on the Fair Labor Standards Act and will be classified according to a graded compensation system. (See Wage and Salary Administration for more information)
EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity

PPG has an obligation to ensure compliance of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity laws at PPG by:

1. Providing equal access and opportunity to employees, applicants for employment and service providers without regard to age, disability, gender, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation or status as a Vietnam War Era Veteran.

2. Taking affirmative action in employment and advancement of women and minorities, individuals with disabilities and covered veterans.

PPG is dedicated to preventing illegal discrimination and to guiding the institution towards a diversified workforce.

Gender Discrimination

It is the policy of PPG to prohibit the use of gender preference when advertising and/or recruiting. No positions exist within PPG for which any bona fide occupational requirements, based on gender, exist. There are, however, positions that do have physical qualifications as prerequisites that are job related and are neither gender-based nor utilized to provide a basis for not hiring applicants of a particular gender.

The use of gender preference in all employment practices of PPG is prohibited. PPG is non-unionized and as such has no bargaining agreement. PPG adheres to a formal policy and practice of equal opportunity for both genders as evidenced in its formal policies and workforce utilization analysis.

Marital or parental status is not a factor in employment or in consideration of employment at PPG.

PPG, to the best of its knowledge, complies with all state and federal laws, rules, orders, and regulations and complies with federal laws affecting discrimination when conflicts occur with state or local laws.

It is the policy of PPG that leaves of absence apply equally to all employees regardless of gender. Employees availing themselves of sick leave incidental to pregnancy or childbirth are permitted to work as long as it is verified by competent medical authority and can return to work using the same standard. No mandatory time limits exist for such leave. Employees using sick leave incidental to pregnancy or childbirth are reinstated at such time as they are medically certified to return to work in their regular position or to a similar position. PPG’s policies do not permit any penalties on reinstatement.

The retirement benefits of PPG are offered to all employees without regard to gender.

Salaries are determined on the basis of comparable wage rates for similar positions at other organizations and apply to all employees regardless of gender or race. The rate of pay is based solely on the actual job duties and the responsibilities of the position.

Religious and National Origin Discrimination Guidelines

It is the policy of PPG that no person employed in the organization or being considered for employment at PPG will be discriminated against in any manner because of his or her religion or national origin. Further, PPG recognizes the various religious practices and special days associated with each religion and provides appropriate leave time to all employees for participation in their respective observances.
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires employers to reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with disabilities. It is the policy of PPG to comply with all Federal and state laws concerning the employment of persons with disabilities.

It is PPG’s policy not to discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in regard to application procedures, hiring, advancement, discharge, compensation, training, or other terms, conditions, and privileges of employment.

PPG will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with a temporary or long-term disability so that they can perform the essential functions of a job. An individual who can be reasonably accommodated for a job, without undue hardship, will be given the same consideration for that position as any other applicant.

All employees are required to comply with safety standards. Applicants who pose a direct threat to the health or safety of other individuals in the workplace, which threat cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation, will not be hired. Current employees who pose a direct threat to the health of safety of the other individuals in the workplace will be placed on appropriate leave until an organizational decision has been made in regard to the employee’s immediate employment situation.

The Human Resources Department is responsible for implementing this policy, including resolution of reasonable accommodation, safety, and undue hardship issues.

Definitions

As used in this policy, the following terms have the indicated meaning and will be adhered to in relation to the ADA policy.

- “Disability” refers to a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual. An individual who has such an impairment, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment is a “disabled individual.”

- “Direct threat to safety” means a significant risk to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated by reasonable accommodation.

- A “qualified individual with a disability” means an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the employment position that the individual holds or has applied for.

- “Reasonable accommodation” means making existing facilities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, job restructuring, part-time or modified work schedules, reassignment to a vacant position, acquisition or modification of equipment or devices, adjustment or modification of examinations, adjustment or modification of training materials, adjustment or modification of policies, and similar activities.

- “Undue hardship” means an action requiring significant difficulty or expense by the employer. The factors to be considered in determining an undue hardship include: (1) the nature and cost of the accommodation; (2) the overall financial resources of the facility at which the reasonable accommodation is to be made; (3) the number of persons employed at that facility; (4) the effect on expenses and resources or other impact upon that facility; (5) the overall financial resources of the Company; (6) the overall number of employees and facilities; (7) the operations of the particular facility as well as the entire Company; and (8) the relationship of the particular facility to the Company. These are not all of the factors but merely examples.

- “Essential job functions” refers to those activities of a job that are the core to performing said job for which the job exists that cannot be modified.
Compliance with the Vietnam Era, Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act 1974, as amended (38-USC 2012)

It is the policy of PPG to ensure that all Vietnam Era and/or disabled veterans, who are current employees of the organization or applicants for employment, are afforded equal opportunity in maintaining a present position and/or being considered for a position for which they are qualified. This policy includes all aspects of employment: hiring, demotion or transfer, promotion, advertising, recruitment, layoff or termination, equal pay and other compensation, and selection for training. The organization also affirmatively seeks the employment and advancement of the veterans covered under this act.

Invitation to Identify:
PPG is a government contractor subject to Sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and to Section 402 of the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974. These acts require government contractors to take affirmative action to employ and advance qualified disabled individuals as well as qualified veterans and veterans of the Vietnam era. If you have such a disability, handicap or are a disabled veteran and would like to be considered under the affirmative action programs, please tell us. The willingness to provide the information is voluntary and refusal will not subject you to discharge or disciplinary treatment. All employees and applicants for employment are protected from coercion, interference, intimidation or discrimination for filing a complaint or assisting in an investigation under this Act. Information obtained concerning individuals shall be kept confidential except that:

- Supervisors and managers may be informed regarding restrictions on the work or duties of disabled individuals, and regarding any necessary accommodations;
- Supervisors and managers may be informed, when and to the extent appropriate, if the condition might require any emergency treatment. In order to ensure proper placement of all employees, we do request that you answer the following questions:
  1. If you have a disability that might affect your performance or create a hazard to yourself or to others in connection with the job for which you are applying, please state the following:
     a. The skills and procedures that you use or intend to use to perform the job notwithstanding the disability and
     b. The accommodations we would make that would enable you to perform the job properly and safely, including any special equipment, changes in the physical layout of the job, elimination of certain duties relating to the job or other accommodations.
- Government officials investigating compliance with the Acts shall be informed. If you are disabled, we would like to be able to include you under the affirmative action program. It would assist us if you tell us about:
  1. Any special methods, skills and procedures that qualify you for positions that you might not otherwise be able to do because of your disability, so that you will be considered for any positions of that kind, and
  2. The accommodations we could make that would enable you to perform the job properly and safely, including special equipment, changes in the physical layout of the job, elimination of any certain duties relating to the job or other accommodations.
Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is illegal. It is offensive and demeaning. It can create an inhospitable employment or environment and can seriously interfere with an individual’s work or ability to work. Such behavior is in direct conflict with the mission of PPG and threatens the careers and well-being of all employees. PPG is committed to maintaining our organization as a place of work and professionalism for our employees, free of sexual harassment and all forms of sexual intimidation and exploitation.

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated at PPG. We are prepared to take all necessary action to prevent and correct such behavior, and individuals who engage in such behavior are subject to discipline. To promote mutual respect and courtesy among all members of the organization, and to further discourage sexual harassment from occurring in our organization, every employee is expected to become aware of and support this policy. In addition to all of the employees of PPG, this policy also applies to all non-employed professionals, consultants, independent contractors and their employees and employees of contract services.

It is a violation of PPG policy for any member of the PPG community to engage in sexual harassment, or to retaliate against any member of the PPG community for:

- Raising an allegation of sexual harassment;
- Filing a complaint alleging sexual harassment;
- Participating in a proceeding to determine if sexual harassment has occurred.

Retaliation shall be considered a serious violation of this policy and shall be considered independent of whether a charge or informal complaint is substantiated. Encouraging others to retaliate also violates this policy. Examples of retaliation include, but are not limited to, unfair evaluation, public or private ridicule, and/or threats of any kind. PPG prohibits sexually harassing behavior including that made unlawful by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Sexual harassment can take many forms, but it generally falls into three categories: verbal, written/pictorial or physical. Some of the defining characteristics of sexual harassment are that the behavior is unwanted and tends to be repetitive in nature. Under PPG policy sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, any requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature. These conditions constitute sexual harassment when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly or is a condition of an individual’s employment or continued employment;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a reason for employment or employment decisions affecting an individual; or
- Such conduct unreasonably interferes with an individual’s work or performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, the following: slurs, epithets, unwelcome jokes and derogatory comments that would make a reasonable woman or man experiencing such harassment or conduct uncomfortable in the work environment or that would interfere with a person’s job or performance; verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature by an employee, supervisor, manager or other person including any sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other conduct such as uninvited touching and sexually related comments that tend to create an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. More specific behaviors might also include:

- Promising, directly or indirectly, an employee a reward, if the employee complies with a sexually oriented request;
- Threatening, directly or indirectly, to retaliate against an employee, if the employee refuses to comply with a sexually oriented request;
- Denying, directly or indirectly, an employee an employment-related opportunity, if the employee refuses to comply with a sexually oriented request;
- Engaging in sexually suggestive physical contact or touching another employee in a way that is unwelcome;

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, the following: slurs, epithets, unwelcome jokes and derogatory comments that would make a reasonable woman or man experiencing such harassment or conduct uncomfortable in the work environment or that would interfere with a person’s job or performance; verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature by an employee, supervisor, manager or other person including any sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other conduct such as uninvited touching and sexually related comments that tend to create an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment. More specific behaviors might also include:

- Promising, directly or indirectly, an employee a reward, if the employee complies with a sexually oriented request;
- Threatening, directly or indirectly, to retaliate against an employee, if the employee refuses to comply with a sexually oriented request;
- Denying, directly or indirectly, an employee an employment-related opportunity, if the employee refuses to comply with a sexually oriented request;
- Engaging in sexually suggestive physical contact or touching another employee in a way that is unwelcome;
• Displaying, storing, or transmitting pornographic or sexually oriented materials using EMPLOYER equipment or facilities;

• Engaging in indecent exposure; or

• Making sexual or romantic advances toward an employee and persisting despite the employee's rejection of the advances.

Depending upon the circumstances, any of the above types of conduct may be deemed sexual harassment and subject to disciplinary action, even if that conduct only occurs once. Sexual harassment can be physical and/or psychological in nature. An aggregation of a series of incidents can constitute sexual harassment even if one of the incidents considered on its own would not be harassing.

Sexual harassment can occur in all types of circumstances and relationships including those between or among individuals of different sexes or of the same sex; in relationships of unequal power (for example, between supervisor and employee, healthcare provider and patient, employee and job applicant); and in relationships of equal power (for example, between fellow employees).

To report incidents of sexual harassment or retaliation, employees may contact the PPG Director of Administrative Services at 706-724-6100. All employees of PPG are required to cooperate in any investigation of a sexual harassment complaint. In any case, a complainant need not report directly to his/her immediate supervisor but may report the situation directly to the appropriate individual named above.

Each manager or other person with supervisory responsibility is required to report any complaint of sexual harassment to the appropriate individual named above. Supervisors and managers shall not take disciplinary action, contract action, nor shall they remove a person from a PPG sponsored activity with regard to the alleged violation of this policy prior to consultation with the Director of Administrative Services. In situations where a supervisor reasonably believes there is imminent danger of serious bodily harm, the supervisor should take immediate and appropriate action, including separating the complainant and the alleged harasser and/or notifying the appropriate law enforcement agency.

To the extent permitted by law, the confidentiality of each party involved in a sex harassment investigation, complaint or charge will be observed, provided it does not interfere with the ability of PPG to investigate the allegations or take corrective action.
Compliance

The Georgia Regents University (GRU), the Georgia Regents Medical Center and The Medical College of Georgia Physicians Practice Group Foundation (PPG) have a strong and abiding commitment to ensure that their affairs are conducted in accordance with applicable law. PPG strives to prevent and detect violations of state and federal laws, rules and regulations and the policies and procedures that have been established. To maintain a high standard of service and integrity, PPG expects all personnel to act lawfully and to exercise sound judgment in the execution of all responsibilities. PPG recognizes that there are many segments of its operations that require compliance with applicable laws.

It is our goal that our actions, as an entity, as employees, and as individual citizens of the Georgia Regents family, be legal, fair, honest and above reproach.

**Professional Fee Billing**

It is the policy of PPG that all claims for reimbursement use the proper code for the service provided, that the documentation in the medical record supports the code, and that the claim is submitted in the name of the appropriate provider. It is the policy of PPG to manage its billing operations in a manner that ensures compliance with federal and state laws and federal, state and private payor health care program requirements. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place for Billing Operations, training, monitoring, reporting and investigation, as well as correction action plans, when needed.

**Privacy and Confidentiality**

Individuals have entrusted personal information, including protected health information (PHI), that PPG uses in its daily operations. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) articulated requirements, but privacy, confidentiality and security have long been cornerstones of PPG’s business. Appropriate policies are and will be in place to ensure compliance with HIPAA, as required. All employees are required to complete privacy training that includes an overview of the HIPAA regulations. Additional training may be required based on the functions performed in each department. Each employee is responsible not only for maintaining the confidentiality of patient information and security, but also for reporting any violation. All employees will sign a confidentiality statement agreeing to this.

**Work Environment**

The workplace is governed by many regulations. PPG policies contained in the Employee Handbook address issues such as sexual harassment, Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, COBRA, discrimination, Family Medical Leave, etc. Any questions or concerns should be addressed to your supervisor or the Director of Administrative Services.

**Administrative Practices**

PPG is also governed by many regulations promulgated by other local, state, and federal laws and agencies. For example, as a not-for-profit entity, PPG has a responsibility to comply with applicable IRS regulations to maintain its tax-exempt status. Any questions or concerns about compliance should be addressed to your supervisor or the PPG Compliance Officer.

**Your Concerns**

It is your responsibility to raise your concerns and questions about compliance to your supervisor or the PPG Compliance Officer/Privacy Officer. All inquiries will be handled confidentially.

The GRU Campus maintains toll-free 24-hour Compliance Hotline at 1-800-576-6623. This line may be used for concerns, not only about PPG, but also about GRU, GR Medical Center or the Children’s Hospital of Georgia. If you prefer, you can remain anonymous and will be issued an identifier to use to contact for responses. All campus entities pledge to refrain from retaliatory actions in reaction to good faith reporting of compliance concerns. Review and investigation of reports of possible PPG violations will be done by the PPG Compliance/Privacy Officer. Corrective action will be implemented, where appropriate.

Compliance is a commitment to the legal and ethical aspects of the business of PPG by individual employees, Members and by PPG, as an entity. Your individual commitment is integral.
Employment Application Procedures

Applications and/or resumes are received via mail, fax, email or in person during normal working hours when a vacancy exists. Applications remain on file for consideration for two years.

Notification of Vacant Positions

When there is a vacant position, employees are notified via email. PPG employees are given an opportunity to apply for a position. If there are no internal applicants or the internal applicants do not meet the necessary qualifications, external applications that best meet the qualifications are reviewed from those on file and/or requested via classified advertisements.

Selection of Employees

Qualified candidates are interviewed by the hiring manager, supervisor, and/or the Director of Administrative Services. The applicant who best fulfills the qualifications, who has the potential ability to develop and perform the job, and who can provide satisfactory work references will be the individual selected. If the qualified applicant requires reasonable accommodations to conduct the physical job requirements, efforts as directed by the Americans with Disabilities Act will be taken by PPG.

Employment of Relatives

PPG accepts applications of friends and relatives of current employees. New employment situations will not be permitted where relatives are employed within the same department, group, or unit, under the supervision or in a capacity where a relative may have a direct effect on the individual's progress, performance, income or general welfare. Relatives are defined as spouses, parents, children, brothers, sisters, grandparents, grandchildren, in-laws, or others considered to be members of the household and living under the same roof.

Re-employment

Former employees of PPG who resign in good standing are welcome to re-apply for employment at any time. Previous PPG employment will not be included in length of service calculations for any annual leave or benefit accumulation purposes except as defined by law for pension plan requirements. The anniversary date, if re-employed, will be the new date of employment, and all benefits will be computed from that date.

(Please see the Benefits Section for more information regarding the reinstatement of Pension Plan benefits.)

Immigration Reform and Control Act

The Immigration Reform and Control Act requires that all employees show documentation, upon hire, that establishes their identity, citizenship, and/or employment authorization for the United States within 3 days of employment or show proof of application. An Employment Eligibility Verification form (I-9) must be completed at the time of employment. Termination of employment is immediate if the proper documentation cannot be shown within 3 days; or within 90 days of employment, if proof of application was provided at employment; or if records are found to be falsified. PPG participates in E-Verify.

Employee Health

Some positions that are located at the hospital and clinics as well as PPG medical offices require health screenings as a condition of employment.

Orientation

Some employees will attend an Enterprise orientation session. Each employee will be further oriented to his/her new position by the immediate supervisor who will provide instruction on the specific duties and responsibilities of the job and orient the employee to PPG. The supervisor will introduce new employees to co-workers and will instruct the new employees about work hours and lunch periods.
Required Documentation of Licensure, Certification, and/or Education of Classified Employees

Any employee being hired for or promoted to a job classification requiring specified formal education and/or current license or certification must present proof of achievement(s) to the Director of Administrative Services before the effective date of employment or promotion. Subsequent proof of current license or registration in a job classification where this is required must be furnished to the Director of Administrative Services as soon as the license registration is renewed. Renewals are the responsibility of the individual. A copy of the document(s) should be made and forwarded to the Director of Administrative Services for retention in the employee’s permanent personnel record. No personnel action based upon attainment of a required license, certification and/or degree can be processed without documentation that these requirements have been met.

While PPG is not limited to these actions, in most cases, one or more of the following actions will occur when a candidate for employment or a current employee fails to provide proof of licensure, certification and/or educational degree: (1) Applicant seeking employment will not be hired; (2) Current PPG employee: counseling, notification of applicable licensing/certification board, leave without pay, and/or termination.

Criminal History Background Investigation

A person shall be disqualified for employment for any of the following reasons:
- Conviction of a criminal drug offense shall disqualify a candidate for not less than two years.
- Any candidate who has been convicted of a second or subsequent criminal drug offense shall be ineligible for employment or re-employment for a period of five years from the most recent date of conviction.
- Any false statement of material fact in the application.
- The candidate is or has been a member of an organization advocating the violent overthrow of the government of the United States.
- The candidate has been convicted of a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude, unless the applicant has been pardoned.

Work Hours

The PPG business office is open to serve physicians, patients, third party carriers, and others from 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Regular full-time employees are expected to work 8 hours per day. Employees have the option to take a one hour lunch break or a one-half hour lunch break, unless otherwise defined within the department. Employees may have assigned lunch breaks.

PPG operates on a flexible work schedule at its business office; however, work hours are scheduled to satisfy the operational needs of each department. Work schedules must be approved by the Department Manager and remain consistent. Work hours may be assigned to employees.

All non-exempt employees are required to record their hours worked using the Georgia Regents automated time and attendance system. Employees must use onsite computers, unless approved to access the system via VPN, and may not use a personal device to login. Exempt employees will enter leave requests via the automated time and attendance system.

Employees must be aware that any time off from work should be recorded as sick leave, annual leave, etc. (See the PPG Benefits section for more information on leave.)

Work Outside the Course and Scope of Your Employment With Physicians Practice Group

While PPG does not prohibit an employee from working another job, it should be clear that such activity falls outside the scope of the employee’s employment with PPG. PPG will not be responsible in any manner for the actions of the employee when performing such outside activity. Such activities are prohibited by PPG if they interfere with an employee’s work commitment to PPG.
Attendance

Employees are hired at PPG to perform certain job functions that are necessary in the overall operation of PPG. Punctuality and regular attendance are expected from all employees. An employee's tardiness or absenteeism interferes with the operation of their department and places an added burden on co-workers. Excessive absences or tardiness are causes for disciplinary action. (See the Disciplinary Procedures Section)

Employees are expected to report any impending absence or tardiness to their supervisor as far in advance as possible. If sick the day of work, the employee is expected to call and speak directly with their supervisor by 8:30 AM. Employees must also indicate to the supervisor the anticipated length of the absence. Failure to report an absence without good cause shall result in disciplinary action.

Should any employee fail to report to work or notify their supervisor for two consecutive work days, the employee will be considered to have voluntarily resigned from his or her position.

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather, the PPG business office will follow the GRU guidelines. GRU guidelines for closings or delayed openings will be communicated via the Alert email/text/phone messages and on the gru.edu website. PPG practice sites (Medical Associates) will follow the GR Medical Center guidelines which will be communicated by email or on the website.

When PPG remains open but an employee believes it is in his or her best interest to be absent, tardy, or to leave due to the weather, he or she may do so and this time will be reported as annual leave. If time remains within the pay period, employees will be allowed to make up the annual leave during the remainder of the work week. In the case of PPG’s or a practice site’s closure, the time taken off will not be reported as annual leave. Unless PPG has announced its closure, employees must notify their supervisors of their intended departure, absence, or tardiness.

Confidentiality

Employees of PPG have access to information in patients’ accounts and medical records and personal information regarding PPG physicians as well as PPG employees. All patient, physician, and business information involving PPG is to be held strictly confidential. Discussion of confidential information with anyone other than internal personnel, for business purposes only, is prohibited. Release of confidential information to an unauthorized party will result in immediate termination. All employees should ensure that computer screens are not visible by unauthorized personnel, patients or visitors to prevent viewing of protected health information.

At times, credit agencies and other organizations contact PPG for information about employees. All employee information should also be kept confidential. Direct any and all employment verifications and inquiries to the Director of Administrative Services.

Dress and Appearance

PPG considers it very important that employees are well groomed, neat and dressed appropriately for their job function. Employees are to present a business-like appearance by wearing clothing appropriate to their particular work area. Professional attire is the appropriate dress for PPG. PPG is confident each employee will use his or her best judgment in following this policy. At times, comfortable shoes may be allowed as an exception due to certain work responsibilities or due to medical necessity. The Department Manager is authorized to make the determination of appropriate dress and appearance.

On authorized casual days, “casual business” attire is permitted. This includes clothing that allows employees to feel comfortable at work, yet appropriate for an office environment.

Employees who report to work inappropriately attired will be required to change their attire. Time taken to change will be charged against the employee's annual leave time or additional make-up time may be approved. Employees may be reprimanded for failure to follow dress and appearance guidelines. Employees may be reprimanded for offensive behaviors that may have a negative influence on the work atmosphere such as heavy perfumes, body odor, etc.
Tobacco Free Workplace

Georgia Regents is committed to a tobacco free enterprise to promote a healthy environment for all persons, including patients, faculty, students, staff, visitors and others that visit the campus.

The use of tobacco products is prohibited on any property owned, leased or controlled by the enterprise. Employees, faculty, students, patients, visitors, vendors, contractors and all others are prohibited from using any tobacco product while on said property. Use of tobacco products in vehicles that are parked on those properties is also prohibited.

Substance Abuse

Substance abuse is the use or possession of any drug in a manner prohibited by law; and the use of alcohol or any legal drug or other substance in such a way that the user’s work performance is impaired.

Substance abuse is prohibited. Any employee who engages in substance abuse at work may be discharged. Employees who engage in substance abuse away from work and not during working hours may be discharged if their substance abuse does affect, or is likely to affect, their ability to perform official duties. Reasonable cause is evidence indicating that it is more likely than not that an employee has engaged in substance abuse and is supported by, but not limited to: the odor of alcohol or drugs; impaired behavior such as slurred speech and decreased motor coordination; marked changes in personality or job performance; and unexplained accidents.

Personal Telephone Use

The telephones within PPG are used to conduct PPG business. Personal long distance telephone calls may not be charged to PPG. Incoming and outgoing personal telephone calls, whether on the PPG telephone systems or on cellular phones, should be kept to a minimum. It is the employee’s responsibility to ensure that family and friends do not call except in necessary situations. The use of cellular phones should also be kept to a minimum and only when absolutely necessary. If used, ring tones and conversations should be kept respectfully quiet and private.

Internet, Email and Computer Network Use

The PPG computer network is the property of PPG and may only be used for legitimate business purposes. Users are provided access to the PPG computer network and the Internet to assist them in the performance of their jobs. All users have a responsibility to use PPG’s computer resources and the Internet in a professional, lawful and ethical manner. Accessing Internet sites that include offensive, sexually explicit and inappropriate material may result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination.

PPG reserves the right to monitor the use of its computer network, to the extent allowed by relevant laws, to ensure compliance with PPG’s Internet, Email and Computer Network Use policy. This may include the interception and/or reading of any messages sent or received. Employees should not expect that any email sent or stored through PPG’s network will be private.

Only PPG owned or approved portable devices are authorized to connect directly or indirectly to the PPG computer network. Portable devices include laptops, notebooks, PDAs, zip drives, read and/or writeable CDs/DVDs, cell phones with USB connectivity, flash drives that attach to USB ports, iPods/MP3 players, digital cameras, firewire devices or printers with internal storage.

The following activities are strictly prohibited:

- Using computer resources for personal commercial purposes or for personal financial or other gain;
- Forwarding email to outside persons or entities that include sensitive or protected health information (PHI) without appropriate encryption.
- Sharing accounts and passwords with anyone.
- Sending unsolicited emails, including the sending of “junk mail” or other advertising material to individuals who did not specifically request such material (email spam.)
- Installing a device on the network without consent of the Information Systems Department.
Conflicts of Interest

PPG requires its Members, elected and appointed Officers, Trustees, and employees (“Interested Persons”) to avoid any business or financial relationship, transaction or event that may be viewed, internally or externally, as a conflict of interest between the Interested Person and an outside party in order to protect PPG. “Conflict of Interest” means the interest an Interested Person has in a transaction effected or proposed to be effected by PPG (or a subsidiary), if the Interested Person or a Related Person is party to the transaction or has a beneficial financial interest or other business interest in the transaction, which would reasonably be expected to influence the Interested Person’s judgment in decisions regarding the transaction and is determined by the Board to be a conflict.

Personal Visitors

Personal visitors will be received in the reception area only. Visitors must use the main reception entrance. Employees should ensure that family and friends do not visit them at the office except during lunch periods or in emergency situations. If visitors are found unescorted within the building they should be reported to a Supervisor, Manager, or Director of Administrative Services, and may be asked to leave. This policy is designed for security purposes.

Personal Mail

Employees should not have personal mail sent to them at PPG. PPG stationery is to be used for PPG business only.

Personnel Information

Every employee has a personnel file, which is maintained by the Director of Administrative Services. An employee's personnel file contains benefit and salary information, leave records, disciplinary actions, and performance evaluations, as well as other pertinent information relating to employment with PPG. An active employee may view his/her personnel file by making an appointment with the Director of Administrative Services. PPG reserves the right to withhold copies of references made to PPG.

From time to time, outside entities may inquire about an employee's work history, pay data, personal information, etc. Employees should not verify the employment or other information of a co-worker. All such inquiries should be directed to the Director of Administrative Services.

Change of Personal Information

It is each employee's responsibility to report any change in name, address, telephone number, number of dependents, marital status, or tax withholding requests to the Director of Administrative Services or Accounting Assistant for Payroll. These changes may significantly affect your benefits, tax withholding status, paycheck, etc. so changes should be reported as soon as possible. When making changes, please consider the impact on your health insurance, pension plan, life insurance, annual taxes, etc. Change forms must be completed by the employee for each benefit. A correct address and phone number must be provided for use in emergencies. Generally, changes to health/dental benefits must be reported within 30 days of the date of the event requiring a change.

PPG will not be held liable if the employee's failure to report this information and complete the necessary paperwork causes the employee financial distress or any other type of inconvenience.

Care of Equipment

Personal computers, office machines, and other valuable, delicate equipment are utilized in almost every position within PPG. All equipment should be handled with care and responsibility and properly maintained. A working knowledge of this equipment and how it should be cared for will make it last longer. If you do not know how to operate certain equipment, please ask for assistance. An employee should notify his/her supervisor of any breakage, loss, or malfunctioning of equipment as soon as the incident occurs.
Employees are prohibited from installing software or downloading software from the internet without approval from Information Systems personnel. Using software not installed by PPG increases the risk of virus infection which can cause serious damage to the computer systems.

**Use of Supplies**

PPG maintains many office supplies for business use. If certain supplies are needed to conduct business in a more efficient manner, employees may make supply requests through their Manager. Supplies should be used for PPG business only and should be used sparingly.

**Use of Personal Automobiles and Company Vehicles**

The essential purpose of the PPG vehicle is for the daily deliveries to and from the GRU campus and/or PPG practice sites. The Director of Administrative Services is responsible for authorizing the use of the van. Employees approved to drive the van must have a valid driver's license and a clean driving record.

At times it may be necessary in the course of your job at PPG to utilize your own car for business purposes. Please be aware that although your medical needs are covered under Workers' Compensation while working, should an accident occur, your automobile is not covered under any PPG policy. Your own automobile insurance policy would be utilized in the case of an accident while traveling for PPG business. PPG reimburses employees for their mileage when utilizing their vehicles for PPG business. The mileage reimbursement covers the components of gas, mileage, insurance, etc. Employees should seek approval from their Manager before utilizing their automobiles for PPG business.

**Shredding of Confidential Information**

Any paper with Confidential Information (for example: patient names or other identifying information, diagnoses pertaining to a patient, PPG confidential internal information, etc.) should be placed in the shredding bins located throughout the Business Office, in locations within the hospital and/or in the practice sites. This will ensure that papers containing confidential information will be shredded and recycled appropriately. Do not place confidential information in the trash.

**Safety**

PPG strives to ensure all employees' safety while at work. PPG and the Management Staff will make every effort to ensure that safe working conditions are provided. Employees are expected to make every effort to see that safe working habits are observed. All employees should be aware of the safety and well-being of those around them including fellow employees, patients, and visitors and should demonstrate safety consciousness at all times.

1) Report any and all hazards immediately to a supervisor or the Director of Administrative Services. Take immediate measures to prevent accidents from occurring.

2) Report any and all accidents that occur. If emergency care is necessary, call 911 immediately. A first-aid kit is available on the premises of all PPG sites should preliminary or non-acute care need to be administered. (See Workers Compensation benefits for on-the-job injury information.)

3) Report any suspicious-looking individuals or circumstances to a supervisor or Director of Administrative Services immediately. The PPG Business Office has access to the GR Public Safety Department and may telephone them directly in case of emergency at 721-2911. In an emergency situation, off-campus personnel should telephone the local Sheriff’s Department and then contact the Director of Administrative Services as soon as possible.

4) Medical office doors may be locked during business hours when no medical care is being provided and only one employee is present on-site. In addition, during such business hours, the employee may decide, based upon his or her discretion, whether to admit a visitor to the office.

5) Show caution when entering and leaving PPG premises. If an employee is unsure of walking to an automobile alone, they may call GR Public Safety at 721-2911 for an escort to the automobile. If
working in the building or a secluded area alone, please alert GR Public Safety of your location and status.

6) The PPG Annex Building is equipped with an alarm system. Alarm system codes will be distributed to employees on the management and supervisory staff and others as deemed necessary. The last person leaving the area that they occupy is responsible for setting the alarm system and making sure the appropriate doors are locked. If you have problems setting the alarm or if you are the last person in your area and you do not know the alarm code, please call Public Safety at 721-2911 to let them know the area needs to be secured.

Fire Safety Procedures

At the sound of a fire alarm, exit the building immediately and do not return until informed to do so according to the following guidelines:

**Business Office:** By the COO or a Vice President or a Director, or in their absence, a Manager.

**Medical Offices:** If fire or smoke is visible, first remove the patients in immediate danger of the fire and then ensure that all patients and visitors leave the building. If the alarm sounds and time permits, quickly log off of your computer and turn the computer off. Proceed out of the building through the exit closest to you. **DO NOT RETURN** to the building, even if the alarm stops, until you get clearance from the attending physician on site or the Practice Manager, or in his or her absence, the COO, a Vice President or a Director.

**Hospital and Clinics:** If fire or smoke is visible, leave the building immediately as rehearsed during fire drills. If the alarm sounds and time permits, quickly log off of your computer and turn the computer off. Proceed out of the building through the exit closest to you. **DO NOT RETURN** to the building, even if the alarm stops, until you get clearance.

Grievances

Misunderstandings, problems, and/or grievances with supervisors, co-workers, and others sometimes occur in the workplace. In most circumstances, situations such as these can be resolved by proper communications between the involved individuals. However, at times, the circumstance requires a third party's involvement to mediate the grievance. The first step, if appropriate, in resolving any concern is to discuss it with the immediate supervisor, then if there is no resolution, take the concern to the Department Manager. If no resolution occurs at that point, the employee should feel free to take it to the appropriate Vice President or Director of Administrative Services. If no resolution occurs after those consultations, the COO will become involved. If there is uncertainty about who to discuss a circumstance with, the Director of Administrative Services will act as a liaison.

Employee Training

PPG believes in training employees in their jobs so that the utmost in productivity is gained from employees and employees gain knowledge and self-esteem about the job they are doing for PPG.

Employees are sometimes required or have the option to attend meetings and seminars sponsored by PPG for training purposes.

Some positions require internal training and certification to remain in the position. Employees in positions requiring such certification are required to make arrangements for continuing education in order to maintain certification and must provide proof of current licensure, certifications, degrees or other credentials as required for the position.

Solicitation

PPG employees may solicit or sell items on PPG premises with the authorization of an Employee Relations Committee Member but only if the selling of such goods does not interfere with the productive work of employees. Items requested or sold may be charitable or fund raising items for churches, schools, or other community charitable organizations. Personal items such as those found in yard sales may not be displayed or sold in the office. A small note may be placed on the bulletin board describing such items for sale or those being requested. Solicitation
materials should not be passed around the office but can be left in the break room for viewing. Solicitation materials should be posted or take up minimal space without clutter. Materials can only be exhibited for a limited amount of time. Distribution of goods after the sale should occur during breaks or after work. Non-employees are not authorized to solicit anything.

Public Relations

PPG is a service organization. We deal with a variety of people during the average business day. Our top priorities are our patients and physicians. They, as well as other business associates, depend on us for cooperative assistance. It is extremely important, therefore, that all PPG employees take an active role in promoting and contributing to the best possible relationships between PPG and the various individuals with whom we have contact. The individuals we deal with may not understand the complexity of our organization, but they do understand the courtesy, concern, kindness, and assistance shown by PPG's employees in person as well as on the telephone. Please remember this as you go about your daily work functions.

Employees Located on the GRU Campus

Many PPG employees are not located at the PPG Annex location and may be required to abide by the policies and procedures of their specific locale. Policies at those locations may vary somewhat from the policies contained within this manual. Employees located off-site, outside of the main Annex locations, are to adhere to the guidelines set by the site in which they work. Leave time for those reporting to a PPG Supervisor or Manager may require the approval of the GR Department Manager or Supervisor as well as the PPG Supervisor or Manager. GR Medical Center schedules may take precedence over PPG holidays but the Department is required to arrange a mutually agreeable day in lieu of the scheduled PPG holiday. If a question or conflict arises, PPG employees, Department Managers or Supervisors should notify the PPG Director of Administrative Services.

In no event will any PPG employees receive more annual leave or paid holidays than outlined in this handbook.

Gifts/Gratuities

At times, patients and/or physicians show their appreciation for employees' efforts by giving gifts. PPG will follow the guidelines as outlined by the Board of Regents which states, “An employee of the Board of Regents shall not directly or indirectly solicit, receive, accept, or agree to receive a thing of value by inducing the reasonable belief that the giving of the thing will influence his/her performance or failure to perform any official action.”

Disciplinary Procedures

Employees of PPG are expected to maintain certain performance standards. If an employee fails to meet these standards, disciplinary actions may result. Disciplinary actions may consist of verbal counseling, written warnings or termination depending on the severity of the action. Employees of PPG are employed "at will" which means an employee may terminate his/her employment at any time voluntarily or PPG may terminate his/her employment at any time involuntarily. PPG maintains a fair and equitable standard for involuntary terminations. All disciplinary actions are discussed and/or documented with an employee’s knowledge so that each individual is made aware of any weaknesses which may exist in performance. In most cases an employee is given the opportunity to correct performance. At the discretion of the Manager, an employee may be placed on probation for a defined period of time to provide a time frame for monitoring work performance or behavior. Documentation of all disciplinary actions, including documentation of verbal warnings, must be given to the Director of Administrative Services for inclusion in the employee’s personnel file.

An employee may be subject to disciplinary procedures and/or immediate termination for certain offenses, including, but not limited to the following:

1. Reporting to work under the influence of alcohol or narcotics or partaking of these substances while at work.
2. Possession or use of any type of weapon at the workplace.
3. Malicious destruction of property related to work.
4. Personal violence toward another individual.
5. Theft or dishonesty.
6. Failure to comply with PPG policies, rules, and procedures or those of a related organization.
7. Insubordination and/or disobedience of a direct instruction.
8. Neglect of duty.
9. Excessive absences or tardiness.
10. Unauthorized release of confidential information or accessing confidential information not directly related to job duties or to which employee has authorized access.
11. Falsification of documents, records, or reports.
12. Failure to satisfactorily perform all of the requirements of a job as set forth in the job description, including falling behind in the various job duties and causing other employees to continuously assist with that work.
13. Leaving work early without permission.
14. Behavior which interferes with the work performance of others or disrupts any activity of PPG.
15. Wasting materials or spoiling work.
16. Sleeping while on duty.
17. Misusing PPG Employee Benefits.
18. Failure to report important work-related events to your Supervisor.
19. Taking excessive unauthorized absences from your assigned work area.
20. Excessive use of the telephone or other resources for personal reasons or utilizing other PPG resources for personal gain.
21. Failure to notify the Supervisor of absence for two (2) consecutive days.
22. Modification of a PPG account for reasons outside the scope of job responsibilities.
23. Failure to report an absence without good cause.
24. Conviction of a felony as described on page 17.

An involuntary termination requires the review and authorization of the Supervisor, Manager, Director, Vice President and Director of Administrative Services.

In all cases, the employee will receive a letter of termination, which will outline the facts and reasons for the dismissal.

*COBRA privileges are not extended when termination occurs due to gross misconduct.
WAGES AND SALARY ADMINISTRATION

Job Analysis

The base of any wage and salary is determined by the job itself. Jobs are analyzed by the preparation of a job description, which outlines the essential functions of a job. The Supervisor or Manager will draft the job description with assistance from the Director of Administrative Services. If a position changes in any way, it is the responsibility of the Supervisor and/or Manager to alert the Director of Administrative Services so that a proper analysis of the changed responsibilities is conducted.

Compensation Classification

Once the description is formalized, the job is compared to others within the organization and to positions of similar nature within the local and regional geographical area. Based on the findings, an entry-level wage rate is assigned for that job and placed within the classification system established by PPG. The PPG classification system consists of various grades. The higher the grade is, the higher the compensation.

An employee will also be classified as directed under the Fair Labor Standards Act as Exempt or Non-exempt. Exempt employees are usually managers, accountants, directors, and other professionals who must meet certain professional, educational, administrative, or executive criteria. Non-exempt employees receive the benefit of regulated work hours and a minimum wage establishment. Classification and salary administration for contracted employees will be set forth in the contract.

Performance Evaluations

Performance evaluations are used to evaluate the quality and quantity of work performed by the employee. A Manager or Supervisor will complete the performance evaluation and discuss all the relative facts with the employee. The employee will be counseled about the areas in which work improvement is necessary. Each employee will review his/her evaluation and be given the opportunity to make any comments. All performance evaluations become part of the employee's personnel file.

New employees or employees in a new position will have an evaluation performed between three and six months of employment or taking a position. After that, all evaluations take place annually.

If the annual evaluation process takes place within three months of a promotion or transfer, the employee will be evaluated on their former position and at their former wage rate unless the employee has accepted a decreased wage in a lower grade classification.

Performance evaluations do not guarantee wage increases.

Merit Increases

When possible, after the annual evaluations are conducted, a merit increase will be established based on work performance. The amount of merit increase varies from year to year based on the budget approved by the PPG Board of Trustees. Merit increases are not guaranteed.

Probation

If an employee's performance is evaluated and found to have a deficiency, the employee may be placed on probation. In a probationary status, an employee is not eligible for a merit increase until the deficiency is corrected. Employees on probation are not eligible to apply for other positions within PPG.
Market Adjustments

From time to time, employees' salaries may be adjusted due to the results of salary surveys and market conditions.

Promotions

It is the policy of PPG to fill vacant positions through internal promotions whenever possible. All vacant positions are posted so employees may apply. An employee must meet the following criteria to be eligible for a promotion: must have served at least six months in their current position; must have no record of disciplinary actions during the past six months; and must have an acceptable attendance record during the previous six months. Exceptions may be made with the approval of the Manager, Director, and Director of Administrative Services. Internal applicants will be interviewed and, if the requirements of the job are adequately met, the most qualified candidate will be selected for the job. If internal applicants do not meet the necessary qualifications or if there is an external candidate who is more qualified, the external candidate will be chosen for the job. An employee selected for promotion will receive at least a five percent (5%) increase or their salary will be brought to the minimum of the new grade classification - whichever amount is greater. When the most qualified internal applicant is chosen and there remains a lack of experience or knowledge in certain areas of the new position, which will require substantial training, a training wage may be assigned for a 3 to 6 month period. A training wage will be greater than the employee's current salary but less than the established rate for the position. After completion of a satisfactory 3 to 6 month training period, the salary will be raised to the appropriate rate for that position providing the individual has gained the skills necessary to carry out the position.

Transfers

Employees may desire to expand their knowledge into other areas of PPG by moving laterally within the same grade level to another position. If such a position is vacant and the employee is chosen as the most qualified candidate, the lateral transfer is made without any type of salary increase.

An employee must meet the following criteria to be eligible for a transfer: must have served at least six months in their current position; must have no record of disciplinary actions during the past six months; and must have an acceptable attendance record during the previous six months. Exceptions may be made with the approval of the Manager, Director, and Director of Administrative Services.

Demotions

In some cases, employees may for various reasons want to lessen their amount of responsibility or be unable to perform their duties at their current level. If such a situation occurs, a review of the position and the individual will be made to determine at what level the employee can function. This may occur voluntarily or involuntarily. If it is determined that the individual can no longer function at a certain level and that they must be removed from their current position, a demotion may occur at the discretion of PPG Management. A demotion may occur at the discretion of PPG Management only if there is a vacant position available. Otherwise, the employee may be terminated. If a demotion does occur, the salary may be lowered or frozen for a period of time in accordance with the classification level of the position.

Overtime Compensation

At times, employees may be required to work additional hours or additional days (weekends or holidays) to complete work for PPG.

In compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Georgia Department of Labor regulations, PPG provides overtime compensation for all non-exempt employees for time worked in excess of 40 hours per workweek. Overtime is paid at the rate of one and one half (1 ½) times the employee's hourly rate. Exempt employees are not compensated for any hours worked in addition to their normal workweek.

Hours for which an employee receives compensation, but does not physically perform work, such as sick leave, annual leave, or holiday pay, do not count as hours worked in determining overtime pay.
No compensatory time off shall be given in lieu of overtime pay to compensate for hours worked over 40 in a given work week by non-exempt employees; however, an employee's work schedule may be adjusted to accommodate additional hours worked, but these hours can only be adjusted within that week with the mutual consent of the employee, supervisor and manager. (i.e. working 2 extra hours on Monday and arranging to come in 2 hours later on Tuesday.)

All overtime must be authorized in advance by the employee's supervisor and must be during the supervisor’s normal work hours.

Extra Duty Pay – employees in selected classifications who work shifts in addition to their scheduled workday will receive extra duty pay at a specified rate.

Weekend Premium – employees in selected classifications whose regular work schedule includes work on Saturdays and/or Sundays will be paid a weekend differential for all hours worked on the weekend. The rate of pay will be one and one half (1 ½ ) times the regular rate of pay, regardless of the number of hours worked Monday through Friday.

Work performed on a holiday – employees in selected classifications may be asked to work on a scheduled holiday and may choose not to reschedule the holiday time off. In these situations, the employee will be paid for the holiday and will be paid an additional rate equal to one and one half (1 ½ ) times the regular rate of pay for the number of hours worked on the holiday. If the holiday is rescheduled, regular holiday pay will apply.

Garnishment of Wages

Courts may direct that certain deductions be made from an employee's pay. Wage garnishments for debts owed are court orders and must be accepted and honored by PPG. When a wage garnishment is court ordered, the Accounting Assistant for Payroll must follow state and federal laws and make the necessary deductions from your pay. Questions regarding garnishments should be directed to the Payroll Manager or the Director of Administrative Services.

Pay Periods

PPG provides most employees with wages earned on the basis of a two-week pay period, which consists of 14 consecutive days. PPG normally pays 26 times per year. Paychecks are distributed biweekly. Some employees may be on a monthly pay period in which paychecks are distributed on the last date of the month.

Withholding Tax Statements – W-2’s

For tax-reporting purposes, W-2 forms will be given to the employee in January of each year to show earnings of the previous year. In the event an employee terminates employment during the year, the W-2 forms will be mailed to the employee's last home address recorded in the personnel file.
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

PPG Fringe Benefits Statement

PPG realizes that fringe benefits are important for attracting and retaining quality employees. Though PPG strives to sponsor all plans indefinitely, the management staff of PPG or the PPG Board of Trustees reserves the right to modify, amend, suspend, freeze, terminate, or revoke any or all of the benefits or other terms of administration provided by the Plans at any time and for any reason. Amendments to benefits will become effective on the date of adoption or on such other date as designated, to the extent not otherwise prohibited by law, and such amendment shall be reduced to writing and incorporated in the Plan documents or summary descriptions as soon as administratively practicable. In the event such amendment is made to a benefit or administrative term of a plan, which is then funded or administered through an insurance or other third party contractual arrangement, such amendment shall not become effective without the consent of such third party.

In any case, there is no vesting or continuing right to any of the benefits, except those specifically described herein.

Employees should realize that the information provided in this manual is only a summary of the benefits. For detailed plan information, employees should refer to the individual policies. If employees do not possess these policies, they may request the policies from the PPG Director of Administrative Services.

PPG Fringe Benefits Summary for Regular Employees

Health Benefits

PPG provides a health insurance benefit to regular full-time employees or regular part-time employees working 20 or more hours per week. Employees are responsible for a portion of their health benefit costs. Coverage is available for individual, employee + spouse, employee + child(ren) or family benefits.

Coverage becomes effective immediately upon employment or on the first day of the month following employment if previous coverage extends through the month. New employees must enroll themselves and all other individuals to be covered within 31 days of employment or they must wait until the open enrollment period of each year. An employee may make changes to their coverage when there is a change in family status. An event must occur in order to change coverage and the event (marriage, birth, adoption, death, etc.) must be reported within 30 days. Otherwise, changes to coverage may only be made during the open enrollment period, which occurs around November of each year.

Please refer to the policy manual for further information on covered and non-covered services and for information on age limitations of dependents.

Additional Health Benefits

When services are sought within the GR Health System, deductibles, copays and co-insurance on covered services of the health plan, and the difference between private and semi-private rooms are waived and/or reimbursed by PPG. If there is an emergency circumstance outside of the Central Savannah River Area or if the required services are not available within the GR Health System, an exception may be approved. The employee is to report the circumstances in writing to the Director of Administrative Services.

Reimbursement is provided for covered prescription medications regardless of where prescriptions are filled. The pharmacy receipts or print-out of prescriptions from the pharmacy must be submitted to the Benefits Coordinator or Benefits Assistant for reimbursement of prescription copays. Reimbursement is limited to $25 per prescription. The use of generic drugs is encouraged and PPG reimburses the copay for generic drugs purchased through a generic drug discount program available at some pharmacies. Employees are encouraged to utilize the Medical Center Employee Pharmacy located on the first floor of the Children’s Hospital of Georgia.

It remains the employee's responsibility to submit the appropriate documentation to the Benefits Coordinator or Benefits Assistant for clarification and reimbursement.
Coordination of Benefits

If you, your spouse or dependents have health coverage under any other group or individual health policy, HMO, or PPO, or any local, state, or governmental program, health benefits payable under the PPG plan will be coordinated with the benefits under the other plan(s). If a balance remains after all carriers have considered the charge, the remaining amount may be considered for payment if it falls within the PPG plan guidelines.

If co-insurance is waived and PPG later discovers the waiver was made in error or before coordination of benefits, PPG reserves the right to request reimbursement.

When requesting reimbursement from PPG, any person with more than one coverage must provide EOB's from all carriers.

All employees are expected to report any changes in coverage to the Director of Administrative Services.

COBRA

The Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) and the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) gives employees and/or their dependents who lose their health coverage, for reasons defined as qualifying events, the right to purchase that same insurance coverage at group rates plus an administrative fee for a defined period of time through PPG. Qualifying events include:

- A covered employee's termination of employment for any reason except gross misconduct.
- A covered employee's reduction in hours to fewer than the number required for plan participation.
- A covered employee's divorce or separation.
- A covered employee's death.
- A covered employee's entitlement to Medicare.
- A covered child's loss of dependent status under the generally applicable terms of the plan.

Employees must alert the Director of Administrative Services to possible qualifying events.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP) Through GRU

GRU sponsors free counseling to GRU and PPG employees and their immediate families. Counseling is offered to employees on all issues that may be affecting an employee's life. Individual counseling, child therapy, and marriage counseling are just a few of the services that are available from the counseling center. Visits and circumstances are kept confidential. Employees are seen free for a limited number of visits. If extended care or specialized therapy is needed, the employee is referred to an appropriate entity and at that point, becomes responsible for payment, personally or through health benefits.

Employees may set up an appointment by calling 721-2599. For more information, you may contact the PPG Director of Administrative Services.

Life Insurance

A group term life insurance policy is provided in the amount of two (2) times the employee's annual salary, rounded to the closest $1,000 with a maximum benefit of $200,000. PPG pays the premium for the employee’s coverage.

A family rider is available to cover eligible family members. The employee pays the premium for dependent coverage as a payroll deduction. The coverage is $25,000 for the spouse, and $10,000 per child. Please refer to the policy for dependent age limitations.
Travel Accident Insurance

Employees are automatically covered by a business travel/accident insurance policy while they are on approved PPG business. In the event of an accidental death, this policy will pay whatever the policy allows to the beneficiary designated under the employee's group term life insurance policy. In the absence of a designated beneficiary, the benefit will go to the employee's estate. Full or partial benefits are provided for certain accidental dismemberments.

Dental & Optical Reimbursement Benefit

PPG offers a dental and optical reimbursement program for each employee. $345.00 is reserved for each employee and their family members beginning in July of each year. An employee can accrue up to $690.00 over a two year period. This benefit may not be used to reimburse dental insurance premiums. The monies can be utilized for reimbursement of dental and/or optical expenses for employees and their families. Dependency and dependent age requirements will follow those set forth under the PPG health benefit plan. Because this is a reimbursement program, the employee must pay for the services first and obtain a valid paid receipt stating the specific services received to be turned in for reimbursement.

Receipts for services received from July 1 to June 30 each year must be submitted for reimbursement by August 31 of the following fiscal year. No services received in the previous fiscal year will be reimbursed if the employee’s account for that fiscal year has been depleted.

Requests for reimbursements are administered through the Benefits Coordinator. Receipts are accepted from all dentists. Optometry or ophthalmology services received within the GR Health System will be covered as a major medical benefit; however, for those optical services not available within the Health System, reimbursement will be provided through the Dental & Optical Reimbursement Benefit. Dental and optical supply expenses are reimbursed only if prescribed by a dentist, optometrist, or ophthalmologist. Purchases that can be bought in a non-regulated environment are not reimbursable such as prescribed toothbrushes or optic solutions.

PPG/GRU Dental PPO

The GRU Dental School Foundation offers a dental preferred provider organization (PPO) arrangement for PPG employees and covered dependents of a 10% discount on all dental services. This benefit is helpful to PPG employees because it stretches the dental reimbursement dollar further. All services are provided by the faculty dentists of the College of Dental Medicine. To arrange an appointment, employees may call 721-2696 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The services are provided in the Faculty Clinic in the College of Dental Medicine, Employees are not required to utilize this service.

Long Term Disability Insurance

Long term disability coverage is provided for active employees working at least 30 hours per week. There is a 90-day waiting period for new employees. The policy provides a benefit of 60% of employee’s salary to a maximum of $5,000 per month after a 90-day elimination period for covered disabilities. In the event of a pre-existing condition, benefits are limited to $1,000 per month. Benefits continue to age 65 or until limitations apply as outlined in the policy. After the 90-day elimination period, if sick leave is being paid, the disability benefits are not paid until the sick leave accumulation is depleted. Employees may also qualify for a supplemental disability coverage and will be contacted if applicable.
Money Purchase Pension Plan

PPG provides a fully-funded defined contribution pension plan. As of January 1, 1989, PPG makes a contribution equal to 10% of the employee’s annual salary. Eligible employees must be 19 years old or older and must have completed one year of employment with PPG to be eligible for the plan. The pension plan is administered by TIAA/CREF.

The vesting schedule is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of Service</th>
<th>Vested Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effective 1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;2</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 years and over</td>
<td>100%</td>
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</table>

A Pension Plan participant’s account will be considered 100% vested if, while an employee, the participant dies, becomes disabled, or reaches the age of 65.

After five years of employment with PPG, an employee is considered 100% vested in his/her account. Upon vesting, if employment is terminated with PPG, the employee is entitled to the vested portion of the money which has accumulated in his/her account. A Summary Plan Description is provided to each employee annually.

(For more information about withdrawing pension monies, please see the Termination of Employment Section)

Pension plan participation & Re-employment:

Under federal law, if an employee is rehired and the employee had participated in the PPG pension plan during previous employment, the employee is eligible to re-enter the plan at the vesting level that he/she left. Also, a rehired employee who took a partially vested distribution upon previous termination has the option of paying back the distribution to the Plan in order to restore the non-vested portion to their account.

Compensation Leave From Work

General Leave Provisions:

1. A new employee begins accruing leave from the date he/she begins work.

2. Upon termination, an employee will be compensated for accumulated annual leave up to a maximum of 45 days or 360 hours, unless otherwise stated in an employment contract. No other accumulated leave will be compensated.

3. A PPG paid holiday that occurs during leave will be considered a holiday and the use of accrued leave will not be required.

4. Any illness that occurs during a scheduled annual leave shall remain as annual leave unless proof of hospitalization or a doctor’s excuse is provided.

5. Only leave accrued through the most recent pay period may be used.
6. If an employee has exhausted his/her sick leave, annual leave shall be used to keep the employee on the payroll. However, an employee may not use sick leave for annual leave.

7. A Request for Leave form must be filled out, submitted, and authorized when requesting leave in advance. These forms may be obtained from your supervisor.

8. Part-time regular employees will receive pro-rated leave.

**Vacation/Annual Leave**

PPG recognizes the need for time off from work to relax, enjoy family and friends, take vacations, etc. A full-time or part-time regular employee may take advantage of annual leave after six months of employment with PPG. Annual leave should not be used during the first six months of employment except in extreme circumstances and only if approved by the Department Manager. Employees must have accumulated annual leave in order to be compensated.

All annual leave must be approved by an employee's supervisor and scheduled as far in advance as possible. Annual leave should be taken at the mutual convenience of the employee and PPG. Every effort will be made to accommodate requests for leave; however, the supervisor will take into consideration other employees' requests as well as the needs for appropriate staffing in the specific group or department.

The rate of annual leave accrual is based on the following years of service scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>NON-EXEMPT</th>
<th>EXEMPT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 5 years</td>
<td>Accrues at 3.38 hours per pay period</td>
<td>0 – 5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – 10 years</td>
<td>Accrues at 4.92 hours per pay period</td>
<td>5+ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 10 years</td>
<td>Accrues at 6.46 hours per pay period</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The maximum allowed annual leave accrual is 45 days or 360 hours, unless otherwise stated in an employment contract. Throughout the fiscal year an employee may accumulate over 360 hours. No more than the maximum 360 hours can be carried over to a new fiscal year. Any amount over 360 hours will be forfeited on July 1 of each new fiscal year.

*Note: Employees who have an employment contract should refer to the contract for information about paid leave.*

**Sick Leave**

Sick leave accrues at 3.69 hours per pay period regardless of years of service. Sick leave may be used by an employee when ill, injured, or for routine medical and dental appointments. Sick leave may also be used for time spent arranging for the care or treatment of members of the employee's immediate family if they are unable to do so for themselves. Immediate family includes spouses, dependent children, parents and those individuals living in the same household. Routine or non-immediate appointments should be approved in advance by the immediate supervisor. Employees must have sick leave accumulated in order to be compensated.

An employee is required to submit a physician's statement if they are off more than five consecutive days. However, in cases where sick leave abuse is suspected, a physician's statement verifying an illness may be requested for absences of less than five consecutive days. An employee who is absent from work due to caring for a sick child, spouse, or parent for five or more consecutive days must also provide documentation from the physician verifying that their presence was necessary to care for the dependent.

Accumulated sick leave is not paid upon termination. Accumulated sick leave compensation will be paid during approved sick leave until the sick leave accumulation is depleted.
Family and Medical Leave

FMLA requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to "eligible" employees for certain family and medical reasons. Employees are eligible if they have worked for their employer for at least one year, and for 1,250 hours over the previous 12 months, and if there are at least 50 employees within 75 miles. The FMLA permits employees to take leave on an intermittent basis or to work a reduced schedule under certain circumstances.

Unpaid leave must be granted for any of the following reasons:

- For incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
- To care for the employee’s child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- To care for the employee’s spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee’s job.

Military Family Leave Entitlements:

Eligible employees with a spouse, son, daughter, or parent on active duty or call to active duty status in the National Guard or Reserves in support of a contingency operation may use their 12-week leave entitlement to address certain qualifying exigencies. Qualifying exigencies may include attending certain military events, arranging for alternative childcare, addressing certain financial and legal arrangements, attending certain counseling sessions, and attending post-deployment reintegration briefings. FMLA also includes a special leave entitlement that permits eligible employees to take up to 26 weeks of leave to care for a covered service member during a single 12-month period. A covered service member is a current member of the Armed Forces, including a member of the National Guard or Reserves, who has a serious injury or illness incurred in the line of duty on active duty that may render the service member medically unfit to perform his or her duties for which the service member is undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy; or is in outpatient status; or is on the temporary disability retired list.

Family and medical leave is available for up to twelve weeks during a 12 month period. PPG employees must take whatever paid leave is accrued under sick and annual leave. Any remainder of the entitled twelve weeks leave will be leave without pay. Employees must have sick and/or annual leave accumulated in order to be compensated.

Family and medical leave is available on a rolling year basis. A rolling year basis means twelve months of work has been performed since the last family and medical leave was taken.

A doctor's certification is required to verify a serious health condition.

Employees must provide 30 days advance notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. When 30 days notice is not possible, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable and generally must comply with PPG’s normal call-in procedures.

An employee can take the 12 weeks of leave intermittently (take a day periodically when needed) or use the leave to reduce the work week or work day, resulting in a reduced hour schedule. PPG must approve such a schedule in advance if the leave involves the birth or adoption of a child. If the leave schedule is medically necessary due to a serious health condition, PPG will require medical certification.

Employees must provide sufficient information to the Director of Administrative Services in order to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform the Director of Administrative Services if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Employees also may be required to provide a certification and periodic recertification supporting the need for leave.

For the duration of approved family or medical leave, PPG will maintain all the employee's benefits at the same level prior to leave. The employee will remain responsible for the employee portion of the health/dental benefit. When an employee is on leave without pay, compensated leave accruals will not continue.
Upon return from FMLA leave, most employees must be restored to their original or equivalent positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms. Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee’s leave.

If more than twelve weeks of family medical leave becomes necessary and the employee is unable to return to work, the employee is considered terminated from PPG’s employment. Benefits are then offered for conversion in accordance with termination.

In situations, where both spouses work for PPG, their combined family leave entitlement will be limited to twelve work weeks during any 12-month period when the leave is taken due to the birth or adoption of a child or to care for a sick child or parent.

Note: 1) If an employee chooses not to return to work for reasons other than a continued serious health condition, PPG reserves the right to recover from the employee the premium that PPG paid for the employee's health coverage during the leave. 2) If it appears an employee's personal medical absence will extend past 90 days, the employee should apply for long-term disability.

**Holidays**

PPG observes the following scheduled holidays:


PPG provides one unscheduled holiday per year. A new employee must be employed six months before earning the unscheduled holiday. Unscheduled holidays should be scheduled as far in advance as possible with the immediate supervisor. The unscheduled holiday must be used by the end of each fiscal year, which occurs on June 30 of each year. The unscheduled holiday renews itself on July 1 of each fiscal year.

Scheduled holidays falling on Saturday are observed on the preceding Friday and those falling on Sunday are observed on the following Monday unless otherwise notified. An employee is not paid for any holidays, which occur while he/she is on Leave of Absence Without Pay (LWOP) or uncompensated leave, as defined below.

**Military Leave**

Upon presentation of official orders to the immediate supervisor and to the Director of Administrative Services, an employee will be granted compensated time off from work to serve in the National Guard or Armed Forces Reserve Component. Leave is granted for 15 working days per calendar year for this purpose. Military leave includes the starting and ending date of the designated training as stipulated in the official orders. The employee should give at least two weeks’ notice prior to the leave.

If an employee is called to serve for a period of time longer than two weeks, annual leave may be used for the additional time or an employee may elect to go to LWOP status during the duration of the military leave. Benefits will be paid as long as accrued leave remains.

**Court Duty Leave**

Full-time, regular employees submitting the proper authorization are given court duty leave for the purpose of serving as a member of a jury or as a subpoenaed witness in a federal, state, county, or city court. A statement must be obtained by the employee from the court bailiff that states the time the employee served each day. Employees are expected to come to work if they are not needed in court. There is no deduction in regular compensation for the absence even though a jury or witness fee is received.
Employees may not use Court Duty Leave to attend to personal legal matters which require the employee's presence in court such as traffic violations, divorce proceedings, etc. To attend to personal legal matters, an employee may take annual leave.

If an employee is on LWOP, Court Duty Leave will not be compensated.

**Funeral/Bereavement Leave**

An employee may receive up to three days funeral leave in the event of death in the employee's immediate family. Immediate family includes husband, wife, child, parent, brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, mother-in-law, father-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandparents and/or great-grandparents of employees, grandchildren, and/or others living in the same household.

If an employee is on LWOP, Funeral/Bereavement Leave will not be compensated.

**Rescheduled Time**

PPG extends the opportunity for employees to reschedule time when approved by the supervisor or manager. Rescheduled time can be used when the employee has had to be absent from work excessively with good reason and would like to put forth the effort to catch up on work. It is also extended in the extreme cases when an employee has no other leave accumulated and would like to make up the time absent from work. Rescheduled time must be requested by the employee and approved by the supervisor and it must be scheduled during the same week as the time of absence.

**Uncompensated Leave/Leave of Absence Without Pay (LWOP)**

It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that compensated leave is accumulated for emergency circumstances, vacations, etc. Leave of Absence Without Pay may be granted in accordance with the procedures and for the reasons outlined below. Please refer to the Family & Medical Leave policy first to determine if your situation meets the FMLA guidelines.

An employee is automatically placed on leave without pay when he/she is absent from work and no compensated leave is available to draw upon. It is expected that most LWOP situations are known in advance and therefore, requests for LWOP must be made in writing and directed to the employee’s manager and Director of Administrative Services. Requests for LWOP should be made as far in advance as possible and can only be granted for emergency, critical situations only. LWOP not fitting into one of the following categories may result in disciplinary action being taken for excessive leave as described on page 23.

Sick Leave of Absence Without Pay may be granted for situations that are not covered by the Family Medical Leave. This type of LWOP will be limited to 90 days (3 calendar months). A physician’s statement, outlining the requirement for an estimated period of absence must be provided to the Director of Administrative Services. The employee is responsible for their portion of the health insurance premium while on Sick LWOP.

Personal Leave of Absence Without Pay may be granted on a case-by-case basis; however, it shall not exceed 14 days, consecutive or non-consecutive. A written request must be made to the employee’s manager and must be approved by the Director of Administrative Services. The employee is responsible for their portion of the health insurance premium while on Personal LWOP.

An employee is to return to work on or before the date agreed upon. If an employee fails to do so, and no other arrangements are made, the employee is automatically terminated.

Having exhausted Family and Medical Leave time, an employee may not then apply for Sick LWOP or Personal LWOP as a means of extending his/her leave beyond the 12 weeks per 12 month period allowed by the FMLA.

**Parking**

PPG provides parking for all employees by paying for the monthly GRU parking fee for each employee located at the Annex. Parking is provided at no cost to employees working at the hospital and clinics or other medical offices.
All employees must be registered with the Parking Office and must display an authorized parking permit except for employees working at off-campus PPG practice sites.

Upon termination of employment, parking permits must be returned to the PPG Director of Administrative Services or to the GRU Parking Office.

**Dependent Care Expense Reimbursement**

PPG recognizes that many employees in today's work force are faced with dependent care expenses. To assist employees with these expenses, PPG offers employees the opportunity to participate in a Dependent Care Expense Reimbursement Plan. This plan allows you to pay for dependent care expenses with before-tax dollars, by making before-tax salary reductions to an expense reimbursement account. This arrangement saves the employee money on Federal, State, and Social Security taxes.

Dependents must be living in the employee's household, or they must rely on the employee for more than half of their support or be physically or mentally unable to care for themselves. For example, a spouse or parent may qualify if he/she is unable to care for himself or herself and is living with the employee. All dependent children under the age of 13 automatically qualify under this plan. Please see the Director of Administrative Services for more information on this benefit.

**Direct Deposit of Payroll Checks**

At the employee's request, PPG will electronically transfer payroll checks into the employee's account at the financial institution of his/her choice. Employees should contact the Accounting Assistant for Payroll to sign up for direct deposit.

**403(b) Retirement Plan**

A 403(b) contribution account is available for employees to participate in voluntarily. The 403(b) account provides an additional benefit to employees to assist in retirement savings and planning. To participate, employees elect to have tax deferred monies taken from their wage and applied to their 403(b) account. Income tax is deferred on the contribution and any investment gains until the money is withdrawn, presumably at retirement when most people might be in a lower tax bracket.

Tax will be assessed at time of withdrawal and there may be a penalty fee if permitted to withdraw the money before age 59 1/2.

Three companies are available from which employees may choose investment options. PPG does not promote or endorse any particular company or plan.

The IRS sets the maximums that an individual may place in 403(b) accounts each year. Employees may obtain more information on participation from the Director of Administrative Services or Vice President-Finance/CFO.

**Credit Union**

The Health Center Credit Union (HCCU) functions as a banking and financial institution operating under a charter granted by the State of Georgia. The membership of the HCCU is composed of employees of all health, medical, and dental organizations with offices in Columbia and Richmond County. Any PPG employee is eligible for membership in the Credit Union. There is no fee for joining, however, a minimum balance of $25 must be maintained for a member to be in good standing. The benefits of membership include share draft or checking accounts, savings accounts with automatic payroll deductions, travelers checks, money orders, notary service, cashier's checks, Christmas Club accounts, Visa and MasterCard availability, competitive dividend rates, low interest rate loans, and recreational discounts to regional and local events and tourist centers. For information on membership, employees may contact the Director of Administrative Services or the HCCU direct at 721-2040.
Payroll Change Forms

Employees should complete a payroll change form when a change to one of their payroll deducted benefits is needed, such as credit union, federal or state withholdings, individual life, dependent care assistance, change of address, etc. These forms are available through the Director of Administrative Services or the Accounting Assistant for Payroll.

Workers Compensation

PPG provides coverage for the treatment of on-the-job injuries and accidents in accordance with benefits outlined under the Georgia Workers' Compensation Law. Benefits may include payment of medical and rehabilitation expenses within the limits of the law. Partial payment of lost compensation is also provided in some cases. Work injuries and accidents including accidental exposure to hazardous chemicals, substances, and diseases should be reported in writing by completing the Employee Incident Report available from the Director of Administrative Services.

Employees must report all accidents immediately to their supervisor. The Director of Administrative Services should be notified as well. Failure to report an accident within 30 days may result in loss of the right to receive Workers' Compensation Benefits. Employees injured on the job must select a physician from the panel listed below. One change may be made from one physician listed to a second physician listed without permission of the employer or the State Board of Workers' Compensation. In case of emergency you should seek emergency care from the nearest hospital emergency room. However, all follow-up care must be provided by a physician on this Panel of Physicians or your medical expenses may not be covered by Workers' Compensation.

For information regarding the insurance company providing compensation coverage for PPG under the Workers' Compensation Law, please contact the PPG Director of Administrative Services.

Personal Insurance Plan

Travelers Insurance offers a group policy for car, home and other valuable items. The coverage is administered by local agents at Blanchard and Calhoun. Premiums are discounted through a group policy and may be paid by the employee through payroll deduction. Employees may sign up to participate in this plan at any time during employment. Upon termination, the employee may continue the coverage at the discounted group rates, but becomes responsible for payment of premiums directly to Travelers.

For more information or to arrange for coverage, please see the Director of Administrative Services.

Discounts and Sponsorships

In coordination with GRU, PPG employees are eligible for special discounts offered by area businesses. Please see the Director of Administrative Services for a list of the companies which extend discounts.

Unemployment Insurance

PPG pays for the cost of unemployment insurance for employees. Employees who earn a qualifying, designated amount of money determined by the Department of Labor are eligible to receive unemployment benefits if the employee has been totally or partially unemployed through no fault of his/her own, physically able and available to work, and actively seeking full-time, continuous work. Most of all of the regular, full-time employees meet the designation and some regular, part-time employees may meet the designation. Unemployment benefits are not payable if the employee voluntarily quits or is involuntarily terminated for just cause.

Social Security/FICA

All employees of PPG, regular and temporary, participate in Social Security and FICA (Federal Insurance Contributions Act). This program provides income for retirement (at a designated age) and disability as well as certain protection for some members of an employee's family in case of death. Supplementary medical insurance benefits for the aged, Medicare, is also provided under this program. Social Security benefits are financed by deductions from the employee's paycheck which are equally matched by PPG up to the annual maximum.
RETIREMENT BENEFITS

Employees should give as much advance notice as possible when retiring. PPG will extend the following benefits at retirement:

Money Purchase Pension Plan

As described in the Regular, Full-Time Employees' Benefits Section, PPG contributes monies to a pension plan account. After five years of employment, an employee has a fully vested interest in the monies in their account. Once vested, these monies are the employee's monies regardless of age. However, tax consequences vary depending on the age at which an employee takes a distribution. Employees should contact TIAA/CREF, the plan administrator, for more information or to request payout.

403 (b) Retirement Plan

If an employee has contributed to a 403(b)-contribution account, additional retirement monies may be available from the 403(b) company chosen by the employee. The retiree will have the responsibility of arranging for the withdrawal from his/her chosen company. The retiree should keep in mind the tax implications of withdrawals based on his/her particular situation.

Health Benefits

Retiring at age 60, 20+ years of service

PPG will provide up to the amount of two-person coverage costs toward the retiree health plan provided through PPG. Retirees must elect the health plan within 31 days of retirement or they will be ineligible for coverage at a later date. Any additional cost for family coverage will be the responsibility of the retired employee. The retired employee is responsible for paying his/her portion of premiums monthly or quarterly in advance. A failure to provide payment will result in the cancellation of the benefit.

Retiring at age 60, 10-20 years of service

PPG will provide up to 3/4 of the amount of two-person coverage costs toward the retiree health plan provided through PPG. Retirees must elect the health plan within 31 days of retirement or they will be ineligible for coverage at a later date. Any additional costs for two-person or family coverage will be the responsibility of the retired employee. The retiree is responsible for paying his/her portion of the premiums monthly or quarterly in advance. A failure to provide payment will result in the cancellation of the policy.

Retiring with less than 10 years of service

Employees who are at least 59 ½ years old who are actively employed in a benefits-eligible position for a minimum of 3 years prior to the retirement date may purchase a retiree health plan with the retiring employee paying the full cost of the premium. Retirees must elect the health plan within 31 days of retirement or they will be ineligible for coverage at a later date.

If the type of coverage required (i.e. single, employee + spouse, employee + child(ren) or family) changes during the retirement years, the retiree must alert PPG of the change so that the necessary adjustments may be made on the premiums. The change in coverage will follow the defined dollar benefit guidelines as stated above.

If a retiree dies, the spouse may continue coverage for up to three (3) years under COBRA regulations.

Age 65 – Medicare & Supplemental Insurance:

Based on Medicare guidelines, currently established at age 65, it is the retiree's responsibility to enroll in Medicare, Parts A and B. At age 65, the PPG health insurance will be converted to a Medicare Supplement Insurance and will become the secondary insurance. The cost of Medicare is the responsibility of the retired employee. If dependents, under age 65, are involved when the retiree reaches the age of 65, the retiree will have the option to continue the group health insurance at the retiree's cost.
**Life Insurance**

Employees retiring at age 60 or older with ten or more years of service have the option to convert to an individual life insurance policy with the existing carrier. The retired employee, after conversion, is responsible for the entire life insurance premium.

If age or service requirements for retirement benefits are not met at the termination date, employees may still elect to convert their existing life insurance to an individual policy. The premiums will become the full responsibility of the employee.
EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

PPG understands the need and importance of effective communications and friendly, cohesive relationships among all employees in all positions. In order to build and maintain these work relationships, PPG supports various employee activities, recognition programs, and communication tools.

Employee Relations Committee

The purpose of the Employee Relations Committee (ERC) is to plan and coordinate various employee activities according to the established guidelines and budget set by PPG. The ERC consists of one representative from each designated department within PPG and the Director of Administrative Services. A committee Chairperson and Secretary are chosen to direct the committee's efforts. These officers will represent PPG on the Employee Advisory Council Executive Board. The ERC Members are elected by their respective departments for one year terms. The ERC meets to plan events and discuss suggestions from employees. Employees are encouraged to suggest activities to their departmental representative.
TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Voluntary Termination/Resignation

An employee should give as much notice as possible when resigning from a position with PPG. A minimum of two weeks’ notice is required for consideration of re-hire. Annual leave should not be considered as part of the notice period unless special circumstances exist. Employees are required to work their last day of employment. Failure to give the required notice may result in ineligibility for re-hire.

Exempt employees hired under a contract agreement must adhere to those terms and arrangements regarding termination.

Involuntary Termination

As stated under "Disciplinary Procedures", PPG reserves the right to dismiss any employee at any time in compliance with the disciplinary procedures outlined in this handbook. If the involuntary resignation occurs due to gross misconduct, COBRA benefits as outlined in the "Benefits" section will not be extended.

Reduction of Workforce

There may be times when PPG will find itself in a situation where the work force must be reduced thus resulting in layoff of employees. A layoff may occur because reorganization requires the elimination of a position, or because a lack of funds exists due to economic conditions. Whatever the case, a layoff will occur on the basis of 1) job performance, 2) seniority, 3) job classification, or 4) department needs.

Exit Interview

Employees who voluntarily resign from PPG will have the opportunity for an exit interview with the Director of Administrative Services. The exit interview will usually be scheduled during the employee's last week on the job. The exit interview will consist of questions regarding the employee's impressions of working for PPG. The Director of Administrative Services will also provide information on health and life benefit conversions and retirement fund withdrawal options.

Payroll Policy Upon Termination

All employees who terminate employment with PPG will receive their paycheck and any accrued annual leave at the earliest regularly scheduled payday after the employee's last working day. Arrangements should be made to receive this check by leaving a correct mailing address or by making other arrangements. The payment of accrued annual leave will be made in one lump-sum payment.

The last working day for the employee will be considered the last day on the payroll.

Return of PPG Property

On or before the last working day, employees must return all PPG property, including ID badge, keys, parking hang tags and any equipment utilized by the employee. Failure to do so could result in legal action against the employee.

Benefit Privileges Upon Termination

With termination of employment, all benefits provided through PPG will terminate on the last date of employment with the exception of the health plan, which may continue until the end of the month of termination. The employee portion for the remainder of the month’s premium will be taken from the employee’s last check. The employee is given the opportunity to convert certain policies to individual policies as described below.
Continuation of Health Insurance - COBRA

Employees who terminate employment, with the exception of those terminating due to gross misconduct, have the right under federal regulation, known as COBRA, to continue health benefits at group rates for up to 18 months. The continuation premiums are the responsibility of the employee. Each employee is given the opportunity to accept or reject the continuation of this benefit.

(Other qualifying events other than termination may entitle family members to COBRA: See "Benefits" section entitled COBRA.)

Continuation of Life Insurance

Under the life insurance program provided by PPG, employees have the option upon termination to continue the term life insurance policy. The monthly premiums become the employee's responsibility.

Employees may obtain information regarding these benefits from the Personnel Office.

Money Purchase Pension Plan

If an employee has been employed with PPG for more than two years, the employee will have some vested interest in the PPG-sponsored money purchase pension plan.

The departing employee will have the responsibility of contacting TIAA-CREF to determine distribution options.

Separation Notice

The Georgia Department of Labor requires employers to issue a Separation Notice to all terminating employees. The reason for termination is stated on this notice to determine whether the employee is eligible for unemployment insurance.