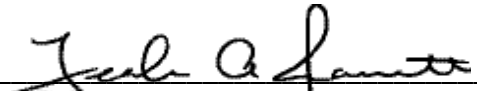# NORTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Monitoring Report
EL-03 Treatment of Employees
May 8, 2025

I hereby present my monitoring report on the **Executive Limitations Policy EL-03: Treatment of Employees** according to monitoring report schedule (BPD-04). I certify that the information contained in this report is true and represents compliance with a reasonable interpretation of all aspects of the policy unless specifically stated otherwise.

Signed _____   Date___1 May 2025___

Leah A. Barrett, President

The President shall not cause or allow a workplace environment that is unfair, disrespectful, unsafe, disorganized, or otherwise interferes with employees' ability to do their jobs.

INTERPRETATION

Whether a person is being treated fairly or with respect, or whether a person feels organized, is a matter of perception, so asking employees in surveys is a reasonable way to assess. Northeast Community College administered an Engagement Survey in the Fall of 2024. The results provide a benchmark score for each driver. Therefore, I interpret a workplace environment that is not unfair, disrespectful, unsafe, disorganized, or otherwise interferes with employees' ability to do their jobs that has an Inclusion Driver and Employee Empowerment scores at or above the benchmark score for higher education institutions that work with our consultant, McLean & Company. Furthermore, the Title IX Climate Survey administered in the Spring of 2024 allowing employees to rate their perceptions of working conditions. A reasonable benchmark of 75% aligns with the national average for similar institutions. An expectation of 100% on a survey would not be reasonable because surveys measure perception, not fact.

A. Not unfair to mean a benchmark score or higher on the Engagement Survey 75% positive response or higher on the Title IX Climate Survey to the question: "I believe this school is trying hard to make sure that all students and employees are treated equally and fairly."

B. Not disrespectful to mean a 75% positive response or higher on the employee climate survey to the question: "I believe that students and employees at this school respect one another."

C. Not unsafe to mean a 75% positive response or higher on the employee climate survey to the question: "I believe the school is trying hard to make sure that all students and employees are safe."

EVIDENCE

For the Title IX survey, the results are all higher than the previous survey.

A. A 78% positive response on the 2024 employee Title IX climate survey to the question: "I believe this school is trying hard to make sure that all students and employees are treated equally and fairly."

B. A 80% positive response on the 2024 employee Title IX climate survey to the question: "I believe that students and employees at this school respect one another."

C.   A 93% positive response on the employee 2024 Title IX climate survey to the question: "I believe this school is trying hard to make sure that all students and employees are safe."

D. The overall results from the engagement survey are positive compared to the benchmark. The Engagement Survey is in its second year of administration, and it provides data to assist us in the continuous improvement efforts. As indicated, we are above the overall benchmark for Inclusion. We are also above the overall benchmark for Employee Empowerment when considering the first seven measurements (71% vs a benchmark of 67%).

Driver: Inclusion

Overall Driver Average Score: 79%

Overall Benchmark Average Score: 74%

Statement	Northeast Response 2024	Previous Survey	Benchmark
I am not discriminated Against at Northeast Community College.	90%	85%	80%
I am emotionally safe at work (not bullied or harassed).	85%	84%	80%
I am comfortable being myself at Northeast Community College	74%	75%	71%
Northeast Community College supports an inclusive environment where individuals can thrive.	68%	66%	65%

Driver: Employee Empowerment

Overall Driver Average Score: 71%

Statement	Northeast Response 2024	Previous Survey	Benchmark
I am not afraid of trying out new ideas in my job.	80%	79%	76%
I am satisfied with the workplace flexibility offered by Northeast Community College.	79%	80%	67%
I am empowered to make decisions about how I do my work.	77%	78%	73%
I clearly understand what is expected of me on the job.	76%	80%	79%
I am given the chance to fully leverage my talents through my job.	67%	66%	58%
I have all the resources and information I need to do a great job.	66%	61%	54%
If I make suggestions to improve something in my department, I believe it will be heard.	63%	68%	62%
I am comfortable holding my peers accountable for their work.	57%	54%	-

… the President shall not:
1. Allow employees, or those seeking to be employees, to be without current, enforced, written human resource procedures that clarify expectations and working conditions provide for effective handling of grievances, and protect against wrongful conditions.

The table on the following pages provides an interpretation of each policy condition and a description of the evidence to support compliance.

Policy Condition	Interpretation	Evidence
Current, written documentation that clarifies expectations and working conditions and their enforcement	There are written human resource policies and procedures in place, reviewed at least every five (5) years, that address terms of employment, expected hours of work, compensation and benefits, leaves, absenteeism, access to personnel records, emergency procedures, employee evaluation processes, progressive discipline, job classification, criteria for accessing employee professional development funds, and procedures for fair hiring practices. All Human Resources Policies and Procedures are publicly accessible on the College's website.	Continuous and ongoing review of policies and procedures is conducted; potential, necessary revisions are made due to changes in federal and state labor laws. Automatic review schedules within PolicyStat ensure policies and procedures are reviewed and implemented based on the five (5) year review schedule. Policies and procedures related to Human Resources are reviewed by the Human Resources Standing Committee and the VP of Human Resources. Additional feedback and insight is sought from the VP of Administrative Services & General Counsel and outside Legal Counsel as needed. This content is consistent with the industry norms for human resource policies and procedures guided by the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) and the Colleges & University Professional Association – Human Resources (CUPA-HR).

Policy Condition	Interpretation	Evidence
Clarifies expectations and working conditions	If the 2024 Engagement Survey results related to expectations and working conditions are at or above the benchmark, we are aligned with meeting this objective. If the results fall below the benchmark, it is understood this is a perception and appropriate actions need to be taken to rectify. The College has a Performance Evaluation process focused on clarifying goals and expectations of each employee.	The Employee Empowerment Driver score on the Engagement Survey was above the overall benchmark. Those related to Working Environment, as measured by the Engagement Survey, scored well above the benchmark at an overall score of 80%. Job descriptions are reviewed during the performance review process. This will help ensure expectations and working conditions are current based on each position. Employees and supervisors are refreshed each year regarding the Performance Review process. The performance management program integrates job description reviews through an HRIS software system, PeopleAdmin. Performance Evaluations were revised for 2024-2025 to align better with the role (Exempt; Non-Exempt; Supervisor; Faculty) and with the Strategic Priorities, and Mission, Vision and Values.
Enforcement	All employees have signed an agreement to adhere to all policies and procedures. This provides documented proof employees know about and have agreed to abide by the policies and procedures.	A review of HR files was completed in 2019, confirming 100% of employees had a signature on file indicating an agreement to the policies and procedures. All new employees onboarded to the College have been required to sign this agreement prior to starting their position. The HR representative processing onboarding documents audits this when reviewing new hire signatures to ensure form completion. The HR executive assistant does a second check of signatures upon digitally filing the employee records.

Policy Condition	Interpretation	Evidence
Effective handling of grievances	There are written policies and procedures describing how to report a grievance, including details of the process and deadlines, and the process provides for a fair hearing and legal counsel confirms they are consistent with the principles justice and procedural fairness. This information is stated in AP-7710.0 Employee Grievance Procedures.	The College utilizes Maxient software to provide an electronic complaint process for all grievances and harassment complaints. This software also has reporting modules for academic integrity, student conduct, and Title IX. The software provides required documentation and reporting, meeting investigation timelines, and ensuring adequate, consistent processes that ensure compliance and effective communication with parties involved. The Employee Grievance or Complaint form can be accessed on our website: Employee Grievance or Complaint

There were no grievances submitted in 2024. |
| Protects against wrongful conditions | Written policies and procedures provide clear guidelines explaining employees' options if they are unfairly treated by a supervisor or unfairly disadvantaged in comparison with others who are related to a supervisor. Wrongful conditions include unfair treatment, nepotism, discrimination, and harassment.

Applicable procedures:
AP-1010.0 Nondiscrimination (includes Harassment and Nondiscrimination for all Faculty, Students, Employees, and Third-Parties attachment)
AP-1010.1 Harassment, (includes Harassment and Nondiscrimination for all Faculty, Students, Employees, and Third-Parties attachment)
AP-1030.0 Freedom of Speech
AP-7121.0 Nepotism and Personal Relationships | The Human Resource policies and procedures related to unfair treatment and wrongful conditions have been reviewed according to the policy review process.

There are clear written guidelines explaining circumstances that are not acceptable, the steps to be taken if an employee encounters such situations, including details of the process, and the consequences. This is reasonable as knowledge of the process to follow is a crucial part of protection.

The reporting process provides an option to submit a complaint without complaining directly to the immediate supervisor. This is reasonable as it is important for an employee to be able to submit a complaint without fear of retaliation.

The results from the 2024 Title IX Survey noted above are further evidence that employees feel they are treated fairly and work in a safe environment. Northeast seeks support from internal and external legal counsel experienced in labor relations and Title IX to review policies and procedures. |

…the President shall not:
1.1 Permit Employees to be without adequate protection from harassment and bias.

INTERPRETATION

I interpret <u>adequate protection</u> from harassment and bias to mean the organization has policies and procedures in place to address harassing conduct and hold employees accountable at the earliest possible stage before the conduct becomes "severe and pervasive, and/or objectively offensive."

[AP-1010.0 Nondiscrimination](#)
[AP-1010.1 Harassment](#)

This is reasonable because inadequate protection from harassment and bias for employees could result in severe consequences for the victims and those who witness it. Additionally, workplace harassment and/or bias can have a direct effect on the College in terms of increased absenteeism, lower productivity, higher employee turnover, loss of morale, and the potential costs of fighting or settling harassment lawsuits.

Furthermore, survey results from both the 2024 Engagement Survey and 2024 Title IX Climate Survey are indicators of the employees' perception of their working environment.

EVIDENCE

A. On August 5, 2024, the VP for Human Resources conducted an internal review of applicable policies and procedures to confirm the following conditions:
   a. consistent with all legal requirements. (see section #1).
   b. include descriptions of unacceptable circumstances and a detailed reporting process. (see section #1)
   c. a process to submit a complaint other than to an immediate supervisor is present. See section F.

   Source: Harassment and Nondiscrimination for all Faculty, Students, Employees, and Third-Parties Attachment from [AP-1010.0 Nondiscrimination](#) and [AP-1010.1 Harassment.](#)

B. A review by VP-HR of HR files on harassment confirmed there was one report (Year 2024) of harassment and after the investigation commenced, the accused was released from the College. When discipline is required, appropriate discipline is applied by VP-HR or designee, which is consistent with the progressive discipline procedures [AP-7322.0 Progressive Discipline for Non-Faculty Employees](#) and [AP-7322.1 Progressive Discipline for Faculty Employees](#).

C. Campus Engagement Surveys are administered regularly to attain feedback and metrics related to a safe and secure work environment. The Engagement Team reviews priorities and develops action plans to improve the culture and environment. The Working Environment driver (noted below) and the Inclusion driver (noted previously) are above the industry benchmark suggesting employees feel free from harassment and bias.

Driver: Working Environment
Overall Driver Average Score: 80%
Overall Benchmark Average Score: 67%

Statement	Northeast Response 2024	Previous Survey	Benchmark
I am physically safe while at work.	93%	90%	83%
Northeast Community College takes action to maintain the health and safety of employees.	79%	76%	61%
The physical work space is conducive to working effectively.	69%	67%	55%

D. Maxient Software is utilized for managing student and employee reporting of misconduct, harassment, or discrimination. This tool provides an effective, efficient process when responding to reports. Moreover, it allows the College to track patterns of behavior and areas of concern. Training was provided in fall of 2024, and is provided during New Employee Orientation, to provide awareness of prohibited forms of conduct and information about how to use the College's reporting system. Reports from the system are evidence it is being utilized.

E. Annual harassment prevention and Title IX training is administered to all Northeast employees through the Learning Management System, SafeColleges. The Vice President of Human Resources confirmed on 4/1/2025 that during the 2023-2024 academic year there was 100% and 2024-2025 academic year there was 95% employee compliance in completion of this training. In addition, the Vice President of Human Resources confirmed on 4/1/25 that Title IX training for the Title IX Coordinator, Deputy Title IX Coordinators, and other Title IX team members such as investigators, hearing officers, decision makers, and advisors is up to date.

F. The Title IX survey for employees was administered in the spring of 2024. The survey is administered every two years. This survey is a necessary component of the annual State of Nebraska Legislative Report for Title IX subject to §85-608. The last report was submitted in the fall of 2023, and the next report is due September 15, 2025. Per state statute, this report is required for odd-numbered years.

…the President shall not:
1.2 Permit employees to be uninformed of the performance standards by which they will be assessed.

INTERPRETATION

Compliance will be demonstrated through the performance management program where employees create their own annual performance goals that include frequent discussions, ambitious scope, specific milestones, and transparency. Employee performance expectations for the coming year include 1) department goals, 2) professional development goals, and 3) performance goals. This is reasonable because according to the American National Standards Institute, Inc., departmental, behavioral, and performance goals which are specific and measurable "describes the minimum effective standard for performance goal setting".

EVIDENCE

An internal review of goal submissions was at 99.9% for all permanent employees. Employees will be evaluated at the end of the fiscal or academic year for their goal progress and completion, overall work performance, behavior, and individual professional development accomplishments.

Staff performance evaluations are conducted through PeopleAdmin, which is the software tool Human Resources uses for talent and record management. The evaluation process consists of steps taken throughout the year by both the employee and their supervisor. In addition to the performance evaluation, there is a "Mid-Year Coaching Check-in". The evaluations are used as a coaching opportunity, and the College encourages supervisors to have regular communication (One-on-Ones) with their staff and faculty throughout the year. Having a mid-year check-in, and regular communication (One-on-Ones) will allow the supervisor to coach, guide, and direct their employees in a positive manner. Faculty evaluations have a slightly different process. The Vice President of Education Services (VP-ES) in collaboration with the VP-HR and VP-AS has established standardized responsibilities included in the standard 15% essential function portion "general additional duties beyond teaching." Specific additional duties may vary as they are determined in collaboration with the VP-ES, appropriate dean, and individual faculty member. All faculty credentials were reviewed in summer 2024 to ensure faculty are appropriately credentialed for the courses they teach. In addition, faculty performance evaluations now include a credential review by the Academic Dean or Academic Program Director to cross-reference the courses being taught by the instructor to ensure appropriate credentialing.

AP-7315.0 Employee Performance Review procedure provides details regarding the process.

…the President shall not:
2. Allow conditions or practices inconsistent with a trusting, cooperative, and collaborative workplace environment.

INTERPRETATION

Asking employees for their perceptions anonymously is most likely to provide credible data to support this condition. A 75% rating or at an industry benchmark is a reasonable expectation of meeting expectations because if a person disagrees with something, there may be a tendency to criticize the workplace environment in reference to trust, cooperation, and collaboration. In the Engagement survey, questions related to departmental collaboration will provide the best evidence for creating these conditions.

EVIDENCE

On the most recent Engagement Survey Department Collaboration Driver, the overall score is above the benchmark. The score of the last two measurements are above the benchmark, however, there is a continued need to improve the working relationships and communication between departments.

Driver: Department Collaboration
Overall Driver Average Score: 48%
Overall Benchmark Average Score: 44%

Statement	Northeast Response 2024	Previous Survey	Benchmark
Northeast Community College has a collaborative work environment.	60%	62%	56%
Departments work well together to get things done.	46%	5%	45%
Departments communicate effectively with each other.	36%	33%	32%

The 2024 Engagement Survey provided data at the Dean and Executive Director levels. Each Dean and Executive Director has reviewed the results for their area and are taking actions based on their results. The Engagement team also continues to empower and inspire employees through active engagement with their respective divisions and departments throughout the college community.

Professional Development training programs for all employees were scoped and implemented during the 2024 – 2025 school year. The *SuperHawk Leadership Program* was developed to enhance supervisor skills, relationships, and our culture. To date, the following workshops have been delivered: Northeast Supervisor Overview; Building Trust; Resolving Conflict; Mastering Difficult Conversations; and Fostering Effective Feedback in the Workplace. In addition, the Activate Networks to Enable Collaboration workshop was provided at In-Service and to the Student Services Division. Workshops will continue to be developed to enhance our skills and culture. The workshop, Leading Through Change, will be delivered this summer.

…the President shall not:
3. Retaliate against any employee for non-disruptive expression of dissent.

INTERPRETATION
If no complaints have been submitted indicating retaliation for non-disruptive expression of dissent, the President is in good standing with this expectation.

Engagement Survey results from the Inclusion Driver, as noted above, provide an anonymous perception of their emotional safety.

It is also important to articulate employees' freedom of speech and provide opportunities for engagement in policy development and approval. Moreover, the President needs to demonstrate openness to feedback and criticism.

EVIDENCE
- As verified by the VP of HR, there have been no complaints or evidence of the President retaliating against an employee for non-disruptive expression or dissent.
- As noted previously, the Engagement Survey driver related to Inclusion was above the benchmark by 5 percentage points.
- There is a procedure governing and protecting Freedom of Speech - AP-1030.0 Freedom of Speech.
- The Shared Governance structure organizes committees by function and aligns all under the strategic priorities. Northeast Community College is organized into two distinct yet interrelated structures. One is the line structure of full, direct authority and administrative

responsibility. The other is the channel of communications, under which the students and staff participate through committees in the decision-making process. Both structures are utilized to ensure the continuation of active and productive input into college planning and decision making. The structure is governed by the Guidelines for Shared Governance. A SharePoint site centrally houses all shared governance agendas, notes, and supporting documentation that all employees can access. A committee membership dashboard provides further transparency into committee membership.

- PolicyStat software provides easy access to procedures and protocols for all employees.

Although the College provides anonymous opportunities for gathering valuable employee feedback opportunities, the VP-HR and Cabinet members welcome opportunities for open expressions of dissent to align with the organizational values of continuous quality improvement. Trust is the desired condition, and we are dedicated to improving this as articulated throughout this document. Throughout the year several "coffee and convos" were hosted by the VP for Educational Services; open houses were hosted by the president; and individual meetings with the employee group leaders and the President and Vice Presidents occurred. These are opportunities where employee leadership can share concerns and celebrations in an effort to promote open communication and trust.

…the President shall not:
4. Allow employees to be unprepared to deal with emergency situations.

INTERPRETATION
I interpret employees to be not unprepared to mean:

A. There are written emergency management procedures and protocols available to all employees, which include detailed instructions for handling threats such as fire, weather-related emergencies, security-related emergencies such as bomb threats, physical violence by a hostile person, or cyberattacks. Access to written instructions is a reasonable first step in being prepared.

B. Annual safety and emergency-related training is administered for all employees to provide the basic background knowledge and information of necessary actions when there is an emergency, or disruption of college operations.

C. There are fire and emergency response drills conducted on an annual schedule to conform to standards required by law. Having actual safety trainings and drills provides "practice" and adds to preparedness should a real situation occur.

D. A 75% positive response rate on an employment survey to the question: "I believe this school is trying hard to make sure that all students and employees are safe." Asking employees for their perceptions anonymously is most likely to provide a valid response. 75% is reasonable, because if a person disagrees with something, there may be a tendency to criticize the work environment and health and safety practices.

EVIDENCE
A. [Written emergency management procedures and protocols](#) are available to all employees on the Northeast website. As protocols are revised, they are also being added to PolicyStat.
B. Virtual safety and cybersecurity emergency training is administered twice a year to ensure employees understand and agree to campus safety and security protocols. These training programs are administered through SafeColleges. Users who complete their training, report a phish campaign properly, or report a security incident earn a "security badge" sticker. All safety (SafeColleges), information security (SANS) and Title IX training is launched in October of each calendar year. Employees have one month to complete all required, virtual compliance training on an annual schedule. There is an information security sub-committee that meets monthly to oversee compliance practices of this work. A number of training programs and exercises have been conducted to build awareness and make our campus safe, such as:
   a. Cyber Ready Community Game
   b. FEMA Compliance and Preparedness
   c. Active Shooter
   d. Building inspections were completed for multiple buildings across the Northeast campuses
C. The College conducts an annual, internal fire and emergency response drill schedule per the emergency response protocols.
D. On the most recent employee survey conducted in the Spring of 2024, 93% of respondents agreed with the statement "I believe this school is trying hard to make sure that all students and employees are safe."