

## **UPWARD MOBILITY**

*(Section 46a-68-91)*

May 2024

This section was found to be in compliance in the previous filing and there were no proposals or recommendations.

### **Subsection (a)**

Career mobility at UConn Health is an organizational commitment in compliance with section 4-61t of the Connecticut (CT) General Statutes section 4-61t and the CT State Regulations section 46a-68-91 to provide opportunities to employees for career as well as personal development. This commitment is a natural extension of UConn Health's mission of education, research, and patient care. The ongoing training and educational culture within an institution of higher education fosters the creation, development, implementation, and continuous improvement of employee development programs that support upward mobility opportunities.

UConn Health continues to offer training to staff that provide the necessary skills that impact career mobility. Many of the identified competencies such as communication skills, email etiquette, career exploration, etc., are addressed through the Learning Opportunities that are available at UConn Health and Department of Administrative Services. This information is posted on the Department of Human Resources website.

UConn Health was not able establish any specific upward mobility programs due to current collective bargaining contracts that do not allow targeted movement from one unit to another. Most positions at UConn Health, where true upward mobility could be established, require negotiations between the affected bargaining units to target an employee or a class to move from one position to another.

Other upward mobility activities that UConn Health supports are as follows:

### **Tuition Reimbursement Program**

The Tuition Reimbursement Program is a mechanism used by the Department of Human Resources (HR) to facilitate professional development for employees. The program is available to all classified and unclassified bargaining unit employees as well as managerial/confidential employees.

Classified bargaining unit contracts provide tuition reimbursement. Each contract determines the amount reimbursed per credit and the amount of credits allowed per fiscal year. Some collective bargaining funds may be exhausted during the reporting period. The Fiscal Policy Division of the Office of the State Comptroller maintains the state priority lists for the collective bargaining units utilizing such lists. Each employee receives reimbursement in the order of application and reimbursement is issued in sequence of these lists.

The University Health Professionals contract is administered through UConn Health and provides for the following:

**Article 21.4 - Tuition Reimbursement**

Tuition is reimbursed at the rate of 100% for courses taken at the University of Connecticut, and for courses taken elsewhere 75% of the UConn rate or the rate at the school he/she attends, whichever is less. Reimbursement for part-time employees will be pro-rated based on their full-time equivalent (FTE). Employees are eligible for reimbursement up to six credits per semester, not to exceed twelve credits per fiscal year.

For professionally related courses, which a principal investigator or a supervisor outside the bargaining unit requires an employee to take, all tuition shall be reimbursed provided that the employee successfully completes the course.

An employee shall be eligible for up to \$450.00 per year to attend conferences and workshops.

**Tuition Waiver:**

The Tuition Waiver Program is available to all University Health Professionals (UHP) and Managerial/Confidential employees. The University shall provide a waiver of tuition and a partial waiver of credit fees equivalent to tuition for undergraduate and graduate courses taken at UConn on a space available basis. To qualify for a graduate waiver, the employee must either be a matriculated student, or the class must be work related. The employee must be employed at least 50%; the waiver will be pro-rated to the employee's full-time equivalent.

The tuition waiver program only applies to the Fall and Spring semesters; there is no limit to the number of credits that may be waived. Intersession, Summer semester, or laboratory courses are not covered under this program.

For Managerial/Confidential employees, graduate level courses taken at UConn Health are also excluded. Specifically excluded: General University Fees, or any other fees. Intersession, summer session, or laboratory classes, Graduate Courses taken at UConn Health for Managerial/Confidential Employees

**Educational Leave**

Requests for leave for University Health Professionals staff are based upon union contract.

**Article 12.4 - Educational Leave**

12.4a - Non-degree paid or unpaid educational leave to attend conferences, seminars or workshops may be granted by the Executive Vice President for Health Affairs (Vice President for Health Affairs and Dean, School of Medicine) or his/her designee or the Hospital Director as appropriate, for purposes of professional growth and personal development. Such leave shall be related to the employee's duties and be of perceived value to the employer.

12.4b – Degree. Leave of absence without pay may be granted by the President for reasons considered being in the best interest of the University and in the interest of professional growth and improvement of the staff member concerned. All such cases are treated as special cases. Staff members desiring such leaves should apply through their Department Head and Dean to the Executive Vice President.

In accordance with the By-Laws of the University of Connecticut (Section XIV.L.1) the privilege of sabbatical leave is open to all full-time teachers who have at least the rank of assistant professor or a corresponding rank and who have been in continuous full-time service at the institution for at least six years. Following a grant of sabbatical leave, the privilege may be renewed after an additional period of continuous full-time service of at least (6) years.

Information and applications for this reimbursement are on the UConn Health website under Human Resources/Benefits. During this period, there were 206 reimbursements for employees in the following job categories: 1B Univ Director 4, 1C Managers 7, 2D Asst Professor 20, 3A Registered Nurse 52, 3B Nursing Supervisor 6, 3C Specialized Nurses 9, 3D Clinical Supervisors 1, 3E Clinical Group 20, 3F Research 15, 3G Clinical Technologist 1, 3H Finance Group 4, 3I Administrative Group 2, 3J Adm Program Coordinator 5, 3K Social Worker 7, 3L Technical 2, 3M Nurse Practitioner 2, 4B Patient Service Rep 3, 4C Clerk Typist 1, 4D Secr/Clerical 6, 4G Clinical Office Assistant 4, 5A Nurses Aid 3, 5B Technical 9, 5D Medical Assts 15, 5E Paraprofessional/Admin 7, 5F Dental Assistant 1.

Tuition Waivers granted during the reporting period was a total of 81: 1B Univ Director 7, 1C Managers, 3, 3A Registered Nurse 48, 3B Nursing Supervisor 5, 3C Specialized Nurses 6, 3E Clinical Group 7, 3F Research 11, 3G Clinical Technologist 3, 3I Admin Group 4, 3J Adm Program Coordinator 8, 3L Technical 10, 3M Nurse Practitioner 8. 4D Secr/Clerical 3, 4F Adm Program Asst 2 2, 5A Clinical/Paraprofessional 2, 5B Technical 6, 5D Medical Asts 4, 5E Paraprofessional/Admin 2,

### **Examinations/Promotions**

UConn Health has utilized the “promotion by reclassification” process, which allows promotions to competitive positions without requiring the candidate to take the state examination as long as all requirements under this provision are met.

### **Career Counseling and Professional Development**

Career Counseling is available through HR. The counseling is designed to assist employees in determining work interests, aptitudes, and aspirations in planning for promotional opportunities within UConn Health and within the larger state system. Talent Acquisition Specialists are a direct service provider to both external and internal customers. The Talent Acquisition Specialist provides counseling to employees requesting guidance and information on promotional requirements and opportunities. Employees are made aware of the statewide open competitive system and promotion opportunities. The State career ladder and job titles with required training

and experience are outlined. Emphasis is on the employee's job position/title, performance, education, and experience as a springboard to upward mobility.

Talent Acquisition Specialists are not only responsible for the recruitment function but are active in UConn Health's training and development program. HR has developed and taught various training modules such as resume writing and interviewing techniques. On average, Talent Acquisition Specialists devote 10% to 15% of their time to career counseling which includes employees experiencing layoffs due to the non-renewal of grants.

UConn Health also offers Professional Development via online web training and in-person classroom training. All Professional Development offerings are highlighted on the Human Resources webpage and are updated as additional courses are added. Education and Staff Development Specialists from the Organizational Staff Development Team coordinate and administer the training. Career Counseling and Professional Development Trainings include "Harnessing Your Stress for Good," Career Exploration at UConn Health," and "Capitalizing on Your Workstyle, and MBTI-Meyers Briggs Type Indicator-Individual Assessment."

## **Training and Development**

HR department delivered and administered professional development and compliance education programs such as new employee orientation, [State of CT In Service program](#), unit needs assessments, customer service, resilience, stress management, leadership, civility, and effective communication training to a variety of departments. Sessions are being conducted Teams or in-person for both clinical and non-clinical staff.

The Organization and Staff Development (OSD) unit of Human Resources serves and supports UConn Health staff and managers by developing and conducting in-house professional development programs throughout the year. A range of classroom courses and workshops are offered, allowing employees to choose specific topics that meet their professional and personal development needs. General topics include communication skills, interpersonal skills, leadership skills, workplace effectiveness, and wellness programs. If needs within a specific work unit or department extend beyond these courses, OSD also offers customized workshops, consultation, facilitation, and coaching.

Topics include career/employee development, communication skills, business communication, business process redesign, change management, customer service, customized training, and team building. Additionally, a Management Program called MeEssentials is offered throughout the year, sharing tools, knowledge and skills needed to succeed as a UConn Health leader. Experts in the areas of human resources, fiscal management and compliance regulations guide managers and supervisors through a variety of managerial topics.

OSD created a career development training for employees, *Career Exploration at UConn Health*. The workshop's curriculum includes planning for education and training, navigating UConn Health hiring system, planning career goals, and assessment of experiences, interests, skills, and resume. This is being offered to employees currently upon request and via WebEx. **Exhibit #1**

## **Subsection (b)**

### **Process for Accommodations**

UConn Health has an established and effective program of accommodation for employees. HR is currently responsible for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and related federal and state statutes, as they may be applicable. HR is charged with processing and facilitating employees' requests for accommodation. Letissa Reid, Associate Vice President Office of Institutional Equity is the ADA Coordinator. Stephanie Hackett was hired into the Deputy ADA Coordinator role in February 2023.

UConn Health employees seeking to explore an accommodation are directed to contact HR and complete a Reasonable Accommodation Request Form for Employees, **Exhibit #2** and the Authorization for Disclosure and Release of Medical Information Form **Exhibit #3**. To evaluate the accommodation request, HR may need medical information from the employee's health care provider. The Authorization for Disclosure and Release of Medical Information Form allows HR to contact the employee's health care provider or qualified practitioner for this purpose. All employee requests for an accommodation and accompanying medical information are evaluated and kept confidential consistent with state and federal laws. To respond to an employee's request for accommodation, an Accommodations Case Manager or designee will review the accommodation forms, medical documents, the essential job functions of his/her position, and the specific facts of each request. The Accommodations Case Manager or designee will follow up with the employee if there are any questions regarding this information.

HR utilizes this information to determine whether the employee has an underlying disability, as that term is defined in the pertinent laws and regulations, and the accommodation the employee is seeking to explore. Any requested accommodations are also analyzed as to whether they would impose an undue hardship on the employer, in which case the employer is not required to provide said accommodation. This is a framework of the steps taken in most cases, but individual cases may vary.

HR will facilitate a discussion with the employee's manager to determine what accommodations may be reasonable. To explore the request, the department is only informed of the employee's functional limitations/restrictions and the accommodation he or she requested. Following this interactive dialogue between the employee and manager, HR assists the parties in determining whether an effective accommodation can be reached. As a result of the interactive process, HR communicates to both the employee and the manager the steps that were taken and the process for providing any reasonable accommodation(s). The employee is responsible for contacting the ADA Accommodations Case Manager or designee if the reasonable accommodation is not implemented in an effective and timely manner, or if the accommodation requires additional modifications. HR works with the employee and the manager to resolve disagreements regarding the accommodation.

The Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) monitors UConn Health's compliance with the pertinent laws and regulatory requirements for workplace accommodations. UConn Health forbids all

forms of disability discrimination, including the failure to provide reasonable accommodations and discrimination or harassment based on physical or mental disabilities. To that end, incidents of discrimination or discriminatory harassment (including disability discrimination, and failure to provide a reasonable accommodation) by UConn Health employees are investigated by OIE. Complaints regarding such incidents are processed in accordance with OIE's complaint procedures. Complaints can be made either verbally or in writing. Please see **Discrimination Complaint Process, Exhibit # 2**.

## **Disability Initiatives**

The ADA Coordinator and Deputy ADA Coordinator for the Office of Institutional Equity meets with various departments, deans, chairs, and directors to ensure UConn Health's compliance with all relevant laws and regulations related to the ADA and provided consultation, information, and referral to appropriate resources for disability related issues. The ADA Coordinator's responsibilities include:

1. Attending Campus Planning, Design and Construction capital projects meetings on a regular basis to provide guidance for conformance with the Standards for Accessible Design under the Americans with Disabilities Act.
2. Participating in ongoing discussions of ADA compliance issues, strategies, and education initiatives with the UConn Health Access and Accommodations Committee.
3. Collaborating with the Coordinator of Interpreting Services to identify staff members to train and assist in providing auxiliary aids and services for patients who are deaf or hard of hearing.
4. Participating as a member of the UConn Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities (UCEDD) Consumer Advisory Council to assist in the development of the UCEDD five-year strategic plan.

## **Innovative Disability Program**

Project Search is a unique, business led, one (1) year, school-to-work program that takes place entirely at the workplace. The program's goal is to build a workforce that includes people with disabilities. UConn Health partners with Favarh, a local chapter of ARC. The following UConn Health departments taught employment skills to prepare the interns for future employment: Food and Nutrition/Sodexo and Morrison, University Dentists Financial Services, Housekeeping, Linen, Human Resources, Mail Room, Central Sterile Supply and Pharmacy.

As in previous years, the interns attended life and job seeking skills workshops in preparation for an independent life. These interns gained valuable work experience under the guidance of dedicated UConn Health staff mentors. UConn Health's annual internship program has a 96% placement rate of interns into competitive employment. **Exhibit # 4**.

## Human Resources

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**Curriculum**

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[Management Development Program](#)

[State of Connecticut In-Service Training Program](#)

[Unpaid Experiences](#)

[Work Life](#)

## Curriculum



### Drive Your Career

Organization Development is committed to helping you strengthen your workplace effectiveness and professional profile. Continuous learning is key to thriving in today's challenging and ever changing work environments. Currently, we are suspending all in-person professional development programs. During this time, we will aim to provide online professional development opportunities for all UConn employees.

We appreciate your patience during this stressful time as we do our best to serve our UConn community.

### Enrolling Is Easy

1. Obtain manager/supervisor approval prior to enrollment.
2. Click on the Register button to login to Saba.
3. In Saba, search for the course and register.

### UConn Health Instructor-Led Virtual Courses

#### **Bridging the Generation Gap**

Generational differences are often responsible for miscommunication, interpersonal conflict, and productivity issues in the workplace. This workshop will provide techniques to overcome these

differences to improve communication, respect, and productivity. The goal is for participants to collaborate effectively across generational differences while recognizing and utilizing the strengths of the different generations within the team.

**Date:** Wednesday, October 21, 2020

**Instructor:** Marisol Cruz St. Juste

Register

### Compassion Fatigue

The workshop is designed to educate individuals on compassion fatigue due to the ongoing impact of being involved in others' lives in a helping capacity. The course's goal is to facilitate an exploration of common symptoms of compassion fatigue to increase personal awareness. Through informal activities, participants will begin to develop a personal action plan to improve self-care.

"Symptoms of compassion fatigue affect both individuals and the organizations in which they work.

Despite the type of work involved, the personal and professional symptoms we are vulnerable to often sneak up on us. *We are busy helping others and too often neglect our own needs. Healing and increasing resilience for ongoing work with others require both ongoing awareness and purposeful action on our own behalf.*" - Marya M. Barey, Ph.D

**Date:** Thursday, November 12, 2020

**Instructor:** Marisol Cruz St. Juste

Register

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## Coronavirus: Maintaining a Safe and Productive Workforce Courses

As we navigate COVID-19 together, we are pleased to offer UConn employees a curated list of online professional development modules in the areas business continuity, remote management, stress management and ergonomic best practices.

### Working Remotely

- **Working Remotely** | 7 min  
Working remotely offers plenty of benefits, not just to the employee doing the remote work, but to the organization allowing them to do it in the first place. In order to take advantage of those benefits, you need to be a successful remote employee.
- **Working From Home: Strategies for Remote Employees** | 20 min  
When imagining telecommuting, many people envision a relaxed day of working at home in their pajamas. However, this probably isn't the best approach. Telecommuting definitely offers a lot of freedom, but that doesn't mean you can ignore your work responsibilities. This course provides strategies for being effective as a remote employee.
- **The Happy Secret to Better Work, Shawn Achor** | 13 min  
We believe we should work hard in order to be happy, but could we be thinking about things backwards? In this fast-moving and very funny talk, psychologist Shawn Achor argues that actually, happiness inspires us to be more productive.
- **Working From Home: Top Tips** | 5 min  
In this module, we'll look at some tips for effective remote working from your home. We'll cover how to create a productive routine and create an inspirational workplace.
- **Remote Working 101** | 1 hr  
The world is changing fast. Many of us are working from home for the first time and discovering the challenges this can bring. Whether you're a total newbie or remote working veteran, you will benefit



from these 10 essential lessons. Learn skills that will keep you productive and help to support your wellbeing.

Register

## Managing Remote Teams

- **Managing Remote Teams** | 10 min  
Encouraging personal interactions can be tricky when you are managing a team remotely. This course will explain how you can build relationships between team members even from a distance. By the end of this course you'll have a better understanding of how you can nurture appropriate work relationships using a variety of exercises.
- **Leading Teams - Leading and Managing Effective Virtual Teams** | 12 min  
Traditional methods of managing on-site groups don't work with remote workers, because virtual teams are most often composed of workers who are spread over a varied geographic and cultural expanse and communicate, for the most part, electronically. In this lesson, you will learn to effectively guide teams that they rarely see face-to-face.
- **Remote Management: Effective Ways to Communicate with Team Members** | 10 min  
In this module you'll learn how to manage a team member's activity by visiting a team member, using the right tools to inform and conduct effective remote meetings. In addition, learn techniques to boost each team member by avoiding team member's frustration, choosing the right moment to interact and adopting a circular view on reporting.
- **Leading Virtual Teams - Beginner** | 56 min  
The overall goal of this program is to enable managers to learn and apply a practical approach to leading virtual teams. Blending best practice and research, our emphasis is on helping managers understand how to lead dispersed, virtual teams.

Register

## Anxiety and Mental Health

- **Mindfulness: The Importance of Breathing** | 5 min  
We breathe all day long without thinking about it. When we are mindful of our breath we can reduce stress and feel more relaxed. This module looks at this in more detail.
- **Mental Health - Anxiety** | 15 min  
Anxiety can be a huge barrier in both your personal life and career. This module provides you with tools to remove that barrier.
- **Handling Stress** | 15 min  
Learn effective techniques to help you manage stress, allowing you to be more productive and improve your overall sense of well-being. This course is designed to help you recognize the signs of stress, understand how stress operates, and manage your stress through simple techniques and exercises.
- **Mental Health Awareness** | 30 min  
Designed for employees in health and social care, this training course covers valuable guidelines for providing support to individuals with mental illness.

Register

## Ergonomics

- **Ergonomics: 01. The Basics** | 5 min

This course provides an overview of the basic concepts of ergonomics.

- **Computer Workstations (DSE) | 15 min**

Computers are brilliant for many aspects of work, but if used incorrectly employees can gain insufferable injuries at a high cost. This course covers exactly what you need to ensure you set up your workstations correctly and support employees' needs. It will also give you the facts so you can threaten your children with confidence when they are on the iPad for too long.

- **Workplace Safety for Office Professionals: Designing and Ergonomic Workstation | 10 min**

This video course addresses some of the major causes of injury due to poor workstation design and illustrates several simple ways to prevent any problems. You'll also see some killer dance moves and learn about electrifying new ways to motivate your employees. Who would have thought a training video about ergonomics could be so entertaining?

[Register](#)

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## Job and Accommodation Information

Please explain how your medical condition(s) listed in Section B affect(s) your ability to perform the essential functions of your position. If you are a new employee, state the anticipated difficulties you foresee in completing your job duties. Be as specific regarding the job duties you are having difficulty performing or believe you will have difficulty performing.

Please provide your recommendations for a reasonable accommodation(s) and any information you may have about any associated costs (attach supporting documentation).

Please describe any accommodations or assistive technologies you currently use.

Please identify any University employee with whom you have discussed this request for a reasonable accommodation (i.e., co-worker, supervisor, HR, etc.) Please include dates

Please add any comments you feel may be helpful in consideration of your request.

## Acknowledgement

I understand that it will be my responsibility to complete a Medical Release Form and provide it to the ADA Accommodations Case Manager for my request to be evaluated. I further understand that the ADA Accommodations Case Manager will evaluate and respond to me based upon the information that I provide.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Please check here if additional information is attached to this request.



16 Munson Road, 5th Floor  
 Farmington, CT 06032  
 Telephone 860-679-2831  
 Facsimile 860-679-1051

## Authorization for Disclosure and Release of Medical Information Form

As required by Connecticut law, the Department of Human Resources may not use or disclose your individually identifiable information without your authorization.

Your completion of this form means that you are giving permission for the use(s) and disclosure described below.

Please review and complete this form carefully. It may be invalid if not fully completed.

Please forward this form, along with the Request for Reasonable Accommodation Form to the Department of Human Resources upon completion.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ [employee's name] whose home address is \_\_\_\_\_

and whose date of birth is \_\_\_\_\_ HEREBY AUTHORIZE \_\_\_\_\_

[provider's name, address, phone and fax]

to release medical information pertinent to the reasonable accommodation I requested to:

**FOR UCONN HEALTH:**

ADA Accommodations Case Manager  
 UConn Health  
 P.O. Box 4035  
 Farmington, CT 06034-4035  
 Telephone - (860) 679-2831  
 Facsimile - (860) 679-1051

**To any licensed physician, other licensed practitioner, hospital, clinic, or other medically related facility, or United States Veteran Administration:**

### HR USE ONLY

I authorize you to release to the Department of Human Resources information to be used solely for the purpose of evaluating my request for reasonable accommodation. The information being requested relates only to any condition that affects my ability to perform my essential job functions. The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits employers and other entities covered by GINA Title II from requesting or requiring genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically allowed by this law. To comply with this law, do not provide any genetic information when responding to this request for medical information.

Initial \_\_\_\_\_

This Authorization shall be valid for a period of 180 days after the date of my signature or earlier if revoked by me in writing to the Department of Human Resources.

Initial \_\_\_\_\_

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I understand that the Department of Human Resources may not use or disclose my medical information except for the expressed purposes identified above, unless another authorization is obtained from me or unless such use or disclosure is specifically required or permitted by law.

I understand that once this information is disclosed pursuant to this Authorization, it is no longer protected by the Department of Human Resources privacy policies, and may possibly be re-disclosed by the recipient.

I hereby acknowledge that I have been informed of my right to receive a copy of this authorization request.

I acknowledge that I have the right to refuse to sign this Authorization.

I acknowledge that I may revoke this Authorization in writing at any time. I understand that if I revoke this Authorization, the information described above may no longer be used or disclosed for the purpose described in this written Authorization. To revoke this Authorization, please send a written statement to:

ADA Accommodations Case Manager  
 UConn Health, Human Resources  
 P.O. Box 4035  
 Farmington, CT 06034-4035

My signature below indicates that I have read and understand this Authorization and its terms.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Project SEARCH Favarrh at UConn Health

Project SEARCH Favarrh at UConn Health is a unique, business-led, one-year, school-to-work program that takes place entirely at the workplace. Since 2014, UConn Health has partnered with Favarrh to host Project SEARCH interns. Total workplace immersion facilitates a seamless combination of classroom instruction, career exploration, and relevant job-skills training through strategically designed internships. Based on an international model developed at Cincinnati Children's Hospital in 1996, Project SEARCH is dedicated to building a workforce that includes people with disabilities.



Project | SEARCH  
Favarrh at UConn Health

## Agency Partners

UConn Health has partnered with Favarrh/The Arc of Farmington Valley, based in Canton, a local chapter of the ARC, a worldwide organization that supports people with intellectual, physical and developmental disabilities. Other agency partners include the Connecticut Department of Developmental Services, Department of Rehabilitation Services, and Region 10 Public Schools.

## Get Involved

1. Become a host department
2. Become an email mentor
3. Conduct a life/employability skills course

Any UConn Health department interested in becoming involved should contact Rosie Wright, [roswright@uchc.edu](mailto:roswright@uchc.edu).

Any student or young adult interested in applying for the program, should contact Tammy Annis at [tannis@favarrh.org](mailto:tannis@favarrh.org), or call 860-693-6662 x126.

## Contact Us

Sandy Finnimore, Program Manager  
[sfinnimore@favarrh.org](mailto:sfinnimore@favarrh.org)

Rosie Wright, UConn Health Business Liaison  
[roswright@uchc.edu](mailto:roswright@uchc.edu)

