



Reduction in Work Force – Unclassified Staff

9.15

Office of Human Resources

Applies to: Regular unclassified staff¹

¹ Reductions in Workforce for Health System employees will be managed internally by the Health System. Health System employees should contact their human resource department for further information.

POLICY

Issued: 10/01/1973
Revised: 06/01/2011

Conditions may arise that necessitate the reduction of the university work force. Abolishment of unclassified positions may occur due to lack of funds, lack of work, reasons of economy or reorganization for efficiency.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Health System	Includes the James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute, OSU Harding Hospital, OSU Primary Care Network, OSU Rehabilitation Services at Dodd Hall, Ross Heart Hospital, Shared Services, Specialty Care Network, University Hospital, and University Hospital East. Does not include Office of Health Sciences and College of Medicine.
Official notification	The date the affected employee receives notification in writing from their supervisor, the HR representative, or if the notification is mailed, the date the affected employee signs for the letter.

Policy Details

I. Reduction in Work Force

- A. All reductions in work force are subject to approval by the Office of Human Resources.
- B. Reductions of staff represented by labor unions must be in accordance with terms of applicable collective bargaining agreements.
- C. Reduction in work force situations should be approached with sensitivity. Organizational needs must be balanced with human resource considerations, including impact on affirmative action objectives, compliance with university policies, and applicable collective bargaining agreements. Appropriate administrative officers must consult with the Office of Human Resources, Employee Relations prior to planning a reduction in work force.
- D. Units should review use of temporary staff prior to reducing regular staff.
- E. Units must manage unsatisfactory performance issues separately from the reduction in work force process. Staff performance problems should be addressed through performance management.
- F. Reductions of an appointment to .75 FTE or greater will not be considered a reduction in force. The unit must contact OHR Employee Relations 30 days prior to implementing such a change to an FTE to notify and discuss the proposed action with OHR Employee Relations. For multiple such reductions, prior approval by OHR Employee Relations is necessary.
- G. All of the following are reductions in force and a RIF request must be submitted to OHR Employee Relations:
 - 1. If an appointment is being reduced below .75 FTE.
 - 2. If the original appointment is below .75 FTE and is reduced below .50 FTE.
 - 3. Any position that is eliminated, regardless of original FTE.
- H. When reducing the FTE below .75 for the purpose of maintaining positions until anticipated grant funding is available, a reduction in force request is not necessary. Decreasing an FTE for this purpose is not considered a reduction in force and is therefore ineligible for severance. When reducing the FTE below .50 it is considered a RIF regardless of the reason and a RIF request must be submitted.



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- II. Impact of Reduction in Work Force on Benefit Programs for Employees Who Are Laid Off or Terminated**
- A. Vacation and compensatory time – payment for vacation and compensatory time for eligible positions is made at the time of termination. If a specific date of return to a vacation earning position has been established, the staff member may make a written request that payment for accrued vacation not be made. The vacation balance will be credited upon reemployment.
 - B. Sick leave – there is no payment for sick leave at time of termination.
 - C. Group insurance plans – medical, dental, and vision insurance plans may be continued in accordance with COBRA, which generally allows for coverage continuation for 18 months beyond the termination date at the staff member’s expense.
 - D. Retirement contributions – contributions to retirement plans are discontinued at time of termination. Contributions may be left on account or withdrawn after separation, based on the guidelines of the specific retirement plan. Employees are advised to consult their retirement plans for details about the impact of termination.
 - E. Unemployment compensation – staff members who are terminated as a result of reduction in work force may be eligible for unemployment compensation. Guidelines are governed and administered by the [Ohio Department of Job and Family Services](#).
 - F. Rehire – eligible regular staff whose positions are abolished and who are subsequently rehired within one year of the effective date of termination maintain their benefits service date for the purpose of vacation accrual determination. A staff member who is terminated from the university due to reduction in force may only receive severance pay once for a specific period of continuous service; therefore the severance continuous service date is restarted upon rehire or reinstatement if severance was taken.

PROCEDURE

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Responsibilities

Position or Office	Responsibilities
Employing Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Ensure that the reduction in force process is not used to circumvent good performance management practices. B. Submit requests to OHR, Employee Relations as early as possible. Four weeks is preferred, to allow adequate time to approve the request and provide official notification to the affected employee(s). C. Units must contact OHR Employee Relations at least 60 days in advance of the reduction in force implementation when multiple reductions will occur. In situations involving mass layoffs, a longer notice period may be required by law. D. Complete a Request for Reduction in Work Force form with supporting information and justification and submit it to OHR Employee Relations. The documentation must explicitly state the reasons for the reduction in force. E. After approval of the reduction request has been issued by OHR Employee Relations (see Policy 2.40), provide the employee with written notification of the action not less than 14 calendar days prior to the effective date of the severance pay period. For staff not eligible to receive severance, written notification is given not less than 30 calendar days prior to the effective termination date. Written notification is to be hand delivered by the supervisor and HR representative. If the employee is on leave, it must be hand delivered or sent by certified mail to the employee’s last known address.



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	<p>F. Review and follow all information in the Reduction in Work Force Manager Guide.</p> <p>G. If the employee is eligible for the Staff Severance Program, review and follow all information in the Staff Severance Program policy 2.40.</p> <p>H. If the employee is not eligible for severance, verify the employee's leave balances and request pay out of vacation from Office of the Controller, Division of Payroll Services upon termination from the university.</p>
Office of Human Resources	<p>A. Approve or deny reduction in work force requests based on criteria in the Reduction in Work Force Manager Guide.</p> <p>B. Consult with the unit on philosophy and process for reduction in work force and the staff severance program (see Policy 2.40).</p> <p>C. Ensure that the reduction in force is not used to circumvent good performance management practices.</p> <p>D. Notify the unit of the reduction in force decision.</p>

Resources

- Leaving University Employment hr.osu.edu/events/leavinguniversityemployment
- Ohio Department of Job and Family Services jfs.ohio.gov
- Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS) opers.org
- Ohio Revised Code codes.ohio.gov/oac/124
- Reduction in Work Force Employee Guide hr.osu.edu/hrpubs/guidelinespolicy915.pdf
- Reduction in Work Force Manager Guide hr.osu.edu/hrpubs/rifmgrguide.pdf
- Request for Reduction in Work Force hr.osu.edu/forms/positionabolish.pdf
- Staff Severance Program, Policy 2.40 hr.osu.edu/policy/policy240.pdf
- State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio (STRS), www.strsoh.org

Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Policy questions	Employee and Labor Relations, Office of Human Resources	614-292-2800	hr.osu.edu/elr
Benefits, including COBRA	Benefits Services, Offices of Human Resources	614-292-1050 800-678-6010	service@hr.osu.edu hr.osu.edu/benefits
Career Counseling (for a fee)	Career Exploration Office, Office of Continuing Education	614-292-8860	ced.osu.edu/careers
Counseling and Employee Assistance	Ohio State Employee Assistance Program, The OSU Health Plan	614-292-4472 800-678-6265	osuhealthplan.com/OhioStateEAP



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