

Applies to: Classified civil service staff

Responsible Office

Office of Human Resources

POLICY

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

Purpose of the Policy

To outline the process for requesting and completing a **reduction in force** of a Classified Civil Service staff member in accordance with [Chapter 81 of the Rules of Classified Civil Service](#).

Definitions

Term	Definition
Continuous service	Employee's years of service at the university without a break in service.
Full-time equivalency (FTE)	An employee's assigned hours per work week divided by 40, and then multiplied by 100. For example, an employee assigned 30 hours per work week has a 75% FTE (30 divided by 40 equals .75, multiplied by 100 equals 75%).
Jurisdiction	The limited location in which procedures for layoff, displacement, and reinstatement may be exercised. Jurisdictions are: Columbus campus—each college and unit as defined by the Layoff Jurisdictions list; Columbus campus—medical center as defined by the Layoff Jurisdictions list; Lima campus; Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center and Agricultural Technical Institute; Marion campus; Mansfield campus; Newark campus; units located outside of Columbus in a county where a regional campus is located are part of that jurisdiction, otherwise, the jurisdiction is limited to that county only; and units located outside of Ohio are each their own jurisdictions. (See Classified Civil Service Rule 3335-81-07 .)
Official notification	The date the affected employee receives notification in writing from their supervisor, their HR representative, or if the notification is mailed, the date the affected employee signs for the letter.
Reduction in force	A decrease in the number of positions at the university's initiative due to a lack of funds, lack of work, reasons of economy, or reorganization for efficiency.
Unit	College or administrative unit.

Policy Details

- I. Reduction in Force
 - A. **Units** must balance organizational needs with human resources considerations, comply with university policies, and consult with Employee and Labor Relations prior to planning a reduction in force.
 - B. All of the following are reductions in force and a request for approval must be submitted to Employee and Labor Relations:
 1. A staff position is being reduced below 75% **full-time equivalency (FTE)**.
 2. An original staff position is below 75% FTE and is reduced below 50% FTE.
 3. Any staff position that is abolished, regardless of original FTE.
 - C. All reductions in force must be approved by Employee and Labor Relations.
 - D. Reductions of a staff position to 75% FTE or greater will not be considered a reduction in force. The unit should contact Employee and Labor Relations 30 days prior to implementing such a change to an FTE to

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notify and discuss the proposed action with Employee and Labor Relations. For multiple such reductions, prior approval by Employee and Labor Relations is necessary.

- E. Reductions of staff represented by labor unions must be in accordance with terms of applicable collective bargaining agreements.
- F. Units must manage unsatisfactory performance issues separately from the reduction in force process, and address performance issues through performance management and the corrective action process.
- G. In the event of a disaster that results in a lack of work or lack of funds due to the disaster, the university may institute alternative pay and work schedules for affected staff in lieu of reduction in force.

II. Placement Into a Vacant Position, Displacement of Another Employee, or Layoff

- A. Classified civil service employees may have displacement rights, commonly referred to as “bumping,” under specific circumstances. [Classified Civil Service Rule 3335-81-08 Notice of layoff and displacement](#) set displacement procedures.
- B. If an employee elects severance, displacement and reinstatement rights cease.
- C. Employees with two consecutive “below meets” overall performance review ratings will not have displacement rights.
- D. If an employee does not elect severance, and the employee is eligible, the affected employee will be assigned to a vacancy, exercise displacement, or be laid off in accordance with the [University Rules for the Classified Civil Service](#).
 - 1. If a vacancy in the same classification in the **jurisdiction** exists, then placement will occur within 30 days of the date of **official notification** of the abolishment. The affected employee must be able to perform the required duties of the job into which they would be placed. If they cannot perform the required functions of the position into which they would have been placed, as determined by Employee and Labor Relations, they will not be reassigned to the vacancy.
 - 2. If no vacancy exists within the jurisdiction, then displacement will occur no later than 30 days of the date of official notification of the abolishment. The affected employee must be able to perform the required duties of the job into which they would be placed. If they cannot perform the required functions of the position into which they would have been placed, as determined by Employee and Labor Relations, they will not have displacement rights.
 - 3. If no vacancy or position exists within the jurisdiction for which the employee has displacement rights, the employee will be laid off.
- E. Displaced employees will be paid according to the target hiring range assigned to the job into which they will move; exceptions must be in accordance with [Staff Compensation 3.10 policy](#).

III. Employee Declines Placement into Vacant Position or Displacement

- A. If an employee declines placement into a vacancy or declines to displace into a position to which they are entitled, both their displacement and reinstatement rights cease immediately, and the employee will be terminated in accordance with the procedures within the policy.

IV. Reinstatement

- A. Reinstatement rights and the reinstatement process are outlined in [Classified Civil Service Rule 3335-81-09 Reinstatement](#).

V. Performance Considerations

- A. Given the demands of the workplace and the university’s commitment to have a high performing workforce, performance will be considered as a factor at all stages of the reduction in force process, including:
 - 1. When more than one employee is in the same classification to determine which individual(s) will be impacted by a position abolishment;

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2. When determining placement priority if multiple positions have been abolished and the employees need to be placed into the same classification with fewer vacancies; and
 3. When determining reinstatement priority if multiple employees request reinstatement into the same vacancy.
- B. Employees will not have displacement rights if they have had two consecutive “below meets” overall performance review ratings.
- VI. Impact of Reduction in 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 in accordance with the [Paid Time Off 6.27 policy](#).
 - B. Sick time off – there is no payment for sick time off at time of termination.
 - C. Group insurance plans – medical, dental, and vision coverage may be continued in accordance with COBRA.
 - D. Retirement – contributions to retirement plans are discontinued at the time of termination. 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 force may be eligible for unemployment compensation. Guidelines are governed and administered by the [Ohio Department of Job and Family Services](#).
 - F. Rehire or reinstatement – eligible regular staff whose positions are abolished and who are subsequently rehired or reinstated within one year of the effective date of termination maintain their benefits service date for purposes 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 staff member’s continuous service date is restarted upon rehire or reinstatement if severance was taken.

PROCEDURE

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- I. Planning and Implementing a Reduction in Force
 - A. Units must:
 1. Consult with Employee and Labor Relations prior to planning a reduction in force.
 2. Review and follow the process within the [Reduction in Force Manager Guide](#).
 3. Complete a [Request for Reduction in Force](#) with supporting information and justification, and submit it to Employee and Labor Relations for approval no later than 30 days in advance of the requested reduction to allow adequate time to approve the request and provide official notification to the affected employee(s).
 - a. When multiple reductions will occur, units should contact Employee and Labor Relations at least 60 days in advance of the implementation.
 - b. In situations involving mass layoffs, a longer notice period may be required by law.
 4. Verify the funding source for the position and submit supporting documentation to Employee and Labor Relations regarding the funding source.
 5. Consult with Employee and Labor Relations for positions that do not fall under the purview of this policy (i.e., term, temporary positions).
 6. Deliver the letter of notification/layoff to the employee as soon as possible.
 - a. The letter must be hand-delivered by the supervisor, HR representative, or HR representative’s designee. If the employee is on leave, or working in a remote location, it must be hand-delivered or sent by certified mail to the employee’s last known address. See the [Classified Civil Service Rule 3335-81-08 Notice of layoff and displacement](#).
 - b. The letter must include the employee’s termination date, which will become effective no earlier than 30 calendar days from official notification to the employee.

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7. If the employee is eligible for severance, deliver the Severance Agreement and Release of Claims simultaneously with delivery of the letter of notification/layoff.
8. Review the letter of notification/layoff with the employee and explain that the employee has 10 days from receipt of letter of notification/layoff to notify Employee and Labor Relations of whether they want to exercise their displacement rights, if any.
- B. Employee and Labor Relations or designee must:
 1. Consult with units on the process for reduction in force, and when applicable, consult with units on the [Staff Severance Program 2.40 policy](#).
 2. Ensure that the reduction in force is not used to circumvent good performance management practices.
 3. Review [Request for Reduction in Force](#) with supporting information and justification, including funding documentation, if any.
 4. If the [Request for Reduction in Force](#), supporting information and justification, and any funding documentation supports the request for the reduction in force, approve the reduction in force request.
 5. Make the final determination in which classification(s) abolishments and layoffs will occur and which staff member(s) will be placed, displaced, and laid off.
 6. Notify the unit of the decision.
 7. Identify vacancies for placement of affected staff within the jurisdiction.
 8. Prepare the letter of notification/layoff and send it to the unit after approval of the request.
 9. Be available to discuss with the employee any potential impact to their benefits.
 10. If the employee elects severance, review and comply with the [Staff Severance Program 2.40 policy](#).
 11. If the employee is not eligible for severance:
 - a. Verify the employee's leave balances and request pay out of vacation from the Office of Business and Finance, Division of Payroll Services upon termination from the university.
 - b. Process the appropriate employment action via Workday.
 12. When applicable, enter the appropriate effective termination date via Workday.
 13. If the employee requests reinstatement, review the employee's ability to perform the required functions of the position and previously documented performance, and assist unit with reinstatement efforts.

Responsibilities

Position or Office	Responsibilities
Employee	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review letter of notification/layoff and, if applicable, Severance Agreement and Release of Claims. 2. Notify Employee and Labor Relations within 10 days from receipt of letter of notification/layoff regarding whether they want to exercise displacement rights, if applicable.
Employee and Labor Relations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consult with units on reduction in force process and Staff Severance Program 2.40 policy. 2. Review reduction in force requests and supporting documentation, and approve as appropriate. 3. Determine in which classification(s) abolishments and layoffs will occur, and which staff member(s) will be placed, displaced, and laid off. 4. Notify units of reduction in force decisions. 5. Identify vacancies for placement of affected staff within jurisdiction. 6. Prepare letter of notification/layoff and send to unit. 7. If employee elects severance, comply with Staff Severance Program 2.40 policy. 8. If employee is not eligible for severance, verify leave balances and request vacation pay out upon termination. Process appropriate employment action via Workday. 9. Enter effective termination date via Workday, if applicable. 10. Review employee requests for reinstatement and assist units with reinstatement efforts.
Unit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consult with Employee and Labor Relations as set forth in this policy. 2. Review and comply with Reduction in Force Manager Guide. 3. Submit reduction in force requests and required supporting documentation to Employee and Labor Relations as set forth in this policy. 4. Consult with Employee and Labor Relations regarding positions outside purview of this policy.

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Position or Office	Responsibilities
	5. After approval by Employee and Labor Relations, deliver notification documents and, if applicable, the Severance Agreement and Release of Claims to employee as set forth in this policy. 6. Review letter of notification/layoff with employee and, if applicable, explain the need to notify Employee and Labor Relations regarding whether they want to exercise their displacement rights.

Resources

Forms

Request for Reduction in Force, hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/form-workforce-reduction.pdf

Governance Documents

Ohio Administrative Code, codes.ohio.gov/ohio-administrative-code/chapter-124-7

Paid Time Off 6.27 policy, hr.osu.edu/policy/policy627.pdf

Staff Compensation 3.10 policy, hr.osu.edu/policy/policy310.pdf

Staff Severance Program 2.40 policy, hr.osu.edu/policy/policy240.pdf

University Rules for the Classified Civil Service, hr.osu.edu/policies-forms/rules-for-ccs/

Additional Guidance

Layoff Jurisdictions, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/525jurisdiction.pdf

Leaving University Employment, hr.osu.edu/life-events/leaving-ohio-state/

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, jfs.ohio.gov

Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS), opers.org

Reduction in Force Frequently Asked Questions, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/915920faq.pdf

Reduction in Force Employee Guide, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/915guidelines.pdf

Reduction in Force Manager Guide, hr.osu.edu/public/documents/policy/resources/915managerguide.pdf

State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio (STRS), www.strsoh.org

Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Benefits, including COBRA	HR Connection	614-247-myHR (6947)	HRConnection@osu.edu
Counseling and Employee Assistance	Ohio State Employee Assistance Program, The OSU Health Plan	614-292-4472 800-678-6264	hr.osu.edu/benefits/eap
Payroll	HR Connection	614-247-myHR (6947)	HRConnection@osu.edu
Policy questions	HR Connection	614-247-myHR (6947)	HRConnection@osu.edu

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Renamed Reduction in Force Classified Civil Service Staff. Reflects material revision approved by President's Cabinet and subsequent edit inserting HR Connection in the Contacts section

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