

April 20, 2020

Hiring Moratorium for Staff Employee Positions

Effective April 20, 2020, and until further notice, the University of Idaho will institute a university-wide moratorium on hiring (“hiring freeze”) for all faculty and staff positions. This moratorium applies to all positions (vacancies, new positions, reinstatements, reappointments, and supervisor requested market rate reviews) other than those fully funded by external funds (grants, contracts and gifts).

The moratorium is an immediate cost-saving measure to assist in balancing the budget. Managers will be allowed to reorganize, restructure, and implement salary-neutral transfers of employees as necessary to respond to the unfilled positions. All actions that are not salary-neutral will require approval by the President. Actions that are not salary-neutral include, but are not limited to, temporary responsibility increases, “career ladder” promotions, retention offers, increases on the basis of a new market/target rate, or other related out-of-cycle salary requests.

New Hires

The moratorium does not affect recently hired employees. Classified employees may continue and complete their probationary employment period.

Contingent appointments may continue according to the terms contained in the appointment letter or contract.

Current Recruitment Actions in Progress

Based upon an approved hiring proposal, any offers of employment extended or accepted, or actions already communicated to prospective employees prior to April 20, 2020, will be processed as planned.

All positions posted/advertised on or before April 20, 2020, will be reviewed by the Provost (for staff and faculty within Academic Affairs) and the VP, Finance & Administration (for all other employees not in Academic Affairs) to determine whether or not they may proceed.

In addition to the Provost/VPFA review, vice presidents and deans for all areas may discontinue any search actions already in progress. Actions started in PeopleAdmin that have not been posted/advertised on or before April 20, 2020, must follow the exception process described below.

Exception Criteria and Review Process

All hiring requests on or after April 17, 2020, must begin with the hiring exception form. The approval of this exemption must be received before action is taken in People Admin. A request for an exception to the moratorium must verify one or more of the following:

- Mission failure (This means that the unfilled position would result in the complete inability of the particular unit to provide the essential services for which it exists.)
- Inability to comply with legal, policy, accreditation, health, or safety standards
- Vacancy created by an involuntary termination resulting from a disciplinary action.

Unless related to the criteria above, managers may not request an exception:

- by an FTE reduction of the vacant position
- by creating a new position
- on the basis of impaired ability to deliver non-essential services

Actions will continue to be submitted through PeopleAdmin but must first be approved directly by the executive approver by use of the exception form. The exception form will also be required prior to posting/advertising a position. No employment action or position posting will occur before all approvals are in place.

A link to the exception form will be provided to managers with hiring authority.

Salary Increases

All salary increase requests including both permanent and temporary will also require the exception form and process for approval.

Overtime

The policy statement in FSH 3460 regarding overtime in section C-1 remains in place, “Overtime work should be permitted only in emergency or extremely unusual circumstances ...” While a hiring moratorium is an “unusual circumstance,” managers are encouraged to continue to limit overtime as they would during normal circumstances. While overtime may help to provide some immediate relief, the added expense works against the cost-saving intent of the moratorium and eventually creates morale problems which could even increase the number of vacant positions for your unit.

Current Disciplinary Actions

Any current disciplinary actions in process will continue as intended. Management of performance and disciplinary concerns should continue and not be delayed or affected by the moratorium. This includes notices of contemplated action for dismissals. (A vacancy caused by an involuntary dismissal provides an exception to the moratorium.)

Temporary Hires

Authorizations to hire temporary hourly employees are included in the moratorium. The streamlined hiring process is suspended to include the approval process described above during the moratorium. All temporary hires must proceed through PeopleAdmin. All postings to hire a temporary employee require the same exception approval. A “stop” has been added to the temporary posting workflow in PeopleAdmin to accommodate this approval and it will require the exception form as with postings for permanent positions. (Once approval is granted, the streamlined hiring process may continue normally.)

Student/Graduate Assistant Positions

Student positions, including graduate assistants, are exempt from the moratorium.