



Lehigh University Human Resources Policy

Policy Number:	205
Effective Date:	7/1/1990
Revisions:	12/30/2008
Applicability:	All Classified Exempt Staff Members

EMPLOYMENT OF EXEMPT STAFF POLICY

Purpose:

Policy on hiring exempt staff members

Policy:

Goal

The purpose of this policy is to ensure timely recruiting and selection of classified exempt staff in compliance with legal, environmental, safety, and labor requirements.

Definition of Exempt

Positions are classified as either “exempt” or “nonexempt” based on whether the position qualifies under the *Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)* rules for such exemptions. Positions classified as exempt are generally considered managerial/professional and include administrative positions such as accountants, consultants, development and liaison officers, directors, executive directors, student affairs personnel, residence hall personnel, admissions counselors, medical doctors, nurses, and technology team leaders.

The Process

Supervisors who need to recruit an exempt staff member should first consider the following:

- The opportunity for job enrichment of other employees within the department and the University
- The opportunity to restructure or redefine the job
- The necessity of hiring a full-time, part-time, or temporary employee
- The economics of hiring.

Upon determining that hiring a full-time or part-time staff member is appropriate, the supervisor should proceed in a timely manner, keeping in mind the importance of following all of the University's policies on recruiting and selection of employees.

Exempt Staff Hiring Decentralized

Exempt employment at Lehigh is decentralized. While Human Resources is available as a resource, primary responsibility for recruiting, screening, and interviewing candidates rests with the department.

Employment Coordinators have been identified for each major area of the University. The coordinators work with hiring supervisors in each area to provide guidance and assistance through the employment process. The coordinators also work with Human Resources (HR) and are kept up to date on employment policies and procedures. Human Resources is responsible for approvals in the employment process unless there are circumstances in which the Vice President and/or Dean need to be involved. The University is committed to affirmative action/equal opportunity and to full compliance with federal, state, and local regulations regarding employment. (Refer to *Lehigh University Policy on Equal Employment Opportunity, Affirmative Action and Non-Discrimination* and Policy Number HR-207 for information regarding the nonexempt employment process.)

Requisition

The *Staff Employment Request Form* has been developed to provide uniformity, to facilitate record keeping, and to give higher-level managers the opportunity to review and approve all requests as an aid in controlling employment levels and managing University resources.

The *Staff Employment Request Form* will be provided to the hiring supervisor by HR and must be submitted to the next level of supervision, Human Resources, the Budget Office, and the appropriate vice president or Provost for approval.

A hiring manager has two options when a position becomes vacant; to fill the position without making changes to the position accountabilities or to make changes to the accountabilities. The hiring manager should review the *Position Description* to ensure it accurately reflects the job accountabilities.

No change to vacant position

If there are no changes to the position accountabilities, the hiring manager signs the *Staff Employment Request Form* and circulates for approval to the next level of supervision, Human Resources, the Budget Office, and the appropriate vice president or Provost. Upon receipt of above approval, HR will post the position on the Lehigh University web site and in the HR Office and will send it electronically to community based organizations.

Changes to vacant position

If the hiring manager needs to make changes to the *Position Description*, contact the *Manager: Employment and Compensation Services* for access to the *Position Description* in the *online tool* on the Portal. A *Request to Re-evaluate a Position* must be completed, attached to the revised *Position Description*, and approved by the next level of supervision and vice president or Provost before being re-evaluated by Human Resources. When the position has been re-evaluated, the *Manager: Employment and Compensation Services* will contact the hiring manager and send the *Staff Employment Request Form*. The *Staff Employment Request Form* must be circulated for approval from the next level of supervision, Human Resources, the Budget Office, and the appropriate vice president or Provost.

New position

If a new position is being created, complete the *New Position Approval Form* and create a new *Position Description* in the *online tool*. (For assistance, contact the Human Resources Office.) When approved, the *Manager: Employment and Compensation Services* will determine the salary grade for the new position, initiate the *Staff Employment Request Form*, and send it to the hiring supervisor. The *Staff Employment Request Form* must be approved by the department head, Human Resources, the Budget Office, and the appropriate vice president or Provost. Upon receipt of above approval, HR will post the position on the Lehigh University web site and in the HR Office and will send it electronically to community based organizations.

Recruitment

The University is committed to fair, nondiscriminatory employment and promotion practices. In addition, Lehigh is committed to positive efforts to recruit, employ, train, and advance men and women of all backgrounds. Each hiring supervisor is charged with the responsibility for developing appropriate recruitment strategies when the position has been approved. Every manager has the responsibility for conducting selection practices in accordance with this commitment.

Postings will be prepared daily on work days, with the exception of some holiday weeks. To have a position posted the same day, the approved *Staff Employment Request Form* must be in the Human Resources Office by 2:00 p.m.

Hiring supervisors are encouraged to interview and consider qualified University staff members who have submitted applications for vacant positions. Vacant positions must be posted internally for five (5) working days before external candidates are considered. This is supported by Lehigh University's *Staff Employment Value Strategy*, which acknowledges the important contributions of staff. Employees who are ready, willing and able to expand the scope of their responsibilities and increase their contribution to their department, college and university will be considered for vacant positions prior to consideration of external candidates. (For exemptions from posting please see HR-208 ***Posting of Job Vacancy*** policy.)

Hiring supervisors are encouraged to work with their managers and HR to develop an appropriate recruiting plan. HR is available to advise and assist with preparation and placement of advertisements for the purpose of recruiting women and minorities. If the position is one in which the University is underrepresented in a protected group of persons, special recruiting efforts may be necessary to identify minority and/or female candidates. Human Resources will make special efforts to recruit women and minorities. Additional funds may be obtained by completing the *Recruitment Plan Request Form*. The *Manager: Employment and Compensation Services* will coordinate the strategy for recruiting applicants with the hiring supervisor when the position is posted. In most circumstances, recruitment planning and advertising is coordinated through services offered by HR.

Interviewing

Hiring supervisors are responsible for interviewing, checking references, and verifying application information of candidates for vacant positions. The hiring supervisor should also ensure that the candidate is informed about the proof of employment eligibility required by *U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service*. All candidates invited to Lehigh for interviews will complete an *Application for Employment*. Individuals submitting a resume and cover letter for a vacant position will be considered applicants, however they may only be considered candidates when they complete an employment application. Hiring supervisors are urged to seek assistance from HR when establishing the selection criteria for an opening. Upon request, HR will assist with screening and interviewing applicants.

The hiring supervisor is responsible for preparing the *Interview and Selection Report* with the information regarding interview date and a specific job-related reason for the candidate selection or rejection.

Search committees require special planning and coordination. In any case where a search committee is required or established as part of the selection process, the supervisor is encouraged to request search committee guidelines from HR. [The CUPA-HR guide *Search Committees: A Tool Kit for Human Resource Professionals, Administrators, and Committee Members* is available from HR.]

Selection

Prior to selecting a candidate, the hiring supervisor is responsible for conducting employment reference checks to confirm qualifications and work experience. References are checked prior to making an employment offer (see HR-210 *Reference Check Policy*).

After a search has been completed, but before an offer is made, the hiring supervisor must consult with HR to select the best candidate for the position. The hiring supervisor and HR will identify an appropriate starting salary within the guidelines of the *Salary Administration Policy*. If an internal candidate has been selected, HR will recommend an appropriate salary range for the transfer or promotion for an internal candidate.

The hiring supervisor will prepare the *Affirmative Action Compliance Form*. HR may approve the hire if the following conditions are met:

- The candidate meets the qualifications for the position
- A representative applicant pool was obtained through effective recruiting
- The salary is within the hiring range for external candidates, within the recommended salary range for internal candidates, and monies are available in the department budget.

The *Manager: Employment and Compensation Services* can approve the hire. However, if the *Manager: Employment and Compensation Services* has concerns regarding any of the above items, the *Manager: Employment and Compensation Services* will forward the *Affirmative Action Compliance Form*, along with a draft of the offer letter, the resumes of all interviewed applicants, and HR's recommendations to the appropriate vice president or provost for review. The vice president or provost and the *Director for Human Resources Services* determine the final approval.

Background Checks

Lehigh University will conduct pre-employment screening for all new exempt and nonexempt employees. Prior to extending an offer of employment or following a conditional offer of employment, the final candidate for the position will receive the following pre-employment background checks: social security verification, education verification, and national, county, and state criminal background checks (see HR-201 *Background Checks Policy*). Certain areas and positions will require additional background checks. Areas deemed “security and safety sensitive” as identified in position descriptions, job postings, and advertisements for the position may require a credit history report, motor vehicle report, child abuse check, and professional license or certificate verification. HR will retain all background check documents in confidential files.

Employment Offer

The hiring supervisor must contact HR prior to making an offer of employment. HR will consult the dean, vice president, or Provost if any concerns arise regarding the applicant pool, candidate choice or hiring salary. Any individual who makes an unauthorized offer of employment or significant change in conditions of employment to a prospective employee, assumes responsibility for any penalties, liabilities, and expenses which may arise from that action. Offers of employment must be conditional (HR will provide template of appropriate conditional offer letter) unless background checks have been successfully completed.

Neither the hiring supervisor nor the *Manager: Employment and Compensation Services* may make commitments or guarantees as to the likelihood of future employment or career growth other than in describing the opportunities generally available to all employees.

The hiring supervisor is responsible for arranging employment or transfer details. When arranging

employment transfer details, the average time for transition from one department to another is two to three weeks. Exceptions may apply and should be discussed by the current and future supervisors. The hiring supervisor is also responsible for notifying unsuccessful candidates after the position is filled.

The hiring supervisor is responsible for forwarding a copy of the signed offer letter and approved *Assignment/Appointment Form* to both the Payroll Office and to HR. The hiring supervisor is responsible for completing the appropriate paperwork for the newly hired exempt staff members and forwarding the following to the Payroll Office: a *W-4* Form and an *I-9* Form.

All new employees must successfully complete a provisional period of employment, which is generally ninety days. At the end of the ninety-day period, the hiring supervisor will complete a *Provisional Period Progress Report* for the new employee and discuss the report with the employee. The report requires supervisor and employee signatures and is returned to Human Resources to be filed in the employee's personnel file.

Closing the Search

All search files are maintained in HR for records retention. This includes the *Affirmative Action Compliance Form*, the *Recruitment Plan Request*, a copy of the signed offer letter, all resumes, and any other documentation of the search effort. All records are kept for three years from the date of employment.

The *Manager: Employment and Compensation Services* will provide the hiring supervisor with a template for the offer letter and the *Affirmative Action Compliance Form*. It is the hiring supervisor's responsibility to prepare the *Assignment Appointment Form* and obtain the required signature(s) in order for the new employee to be paid. The hiring supervisor needs to assist the new employee in acquiring a Lehigh faculty/staff ID card, parking hangtag, Email access, Banner access (if applicable), office keys, etc.

The hiring supervisor is responsible for conducting a department orientation as well as arranging for employee training as necessary. Please refer to the *Guide to Orienting New Staff* available from HR.

The hiring supervisor also is responsible for coordinating notification to the candidates who were interviewed but not selected for the position. If the department wishes to contact applicants who were not interviewed, HR can provide a sample letter.

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