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Hiring Freeze

Frequently Asked Questions

Listed below are frequently asked questions that have arisen in regards to UIC's recently implemented hiring freeze.

Please feel free to contact Angela Yudt, Todd Van Neck or John Loya should you require any additional information.

1. What is the effective date of UIC's hiring freeze?

The effective date for the hiring freeze is December 17, 2008. An offer extended before that date need not now be submitted for approval. Searches that were underway but for which an offer was not extended before December 17 require approval for exception to the hiring freeze. A search process can be started during the hiring freeze without Chancellor or Provost approval; but no offer can be made to complete the search without Chancellor or Provost approval.

2. Does the approval process require one form per job?

Yes.

3. Who is the hiring manager?

The hiring manager is the head of the unit in which the position resides. That may be a Principal Investigator, a department head, or a center director. It could be that the dean, the fiscal officer, or the HR manager are also the hiring manager if those individuals are directly supervising the position in question.

4. What if the form is not legible?

It will not be processed; the unit is responsible for submitting a legible form. We have provided a PDF form that units can type their responses into.

5. Can the dean or vice chancellor designate someone to sign on their behalf?

No; the dean or vice chancellor is expected to personally review all requests for exception to the hiring freeze.

Hiring Freeze FAQs continued

6. Are units tied to the salary level identified on the exception form?

No; the actual salary can be negotiated at the time of offer. However, the campus is asking for units' best estimate of the salary at the point they are ready to seek approval for the hire. This will allow us to estimate the total value of positions excepted from the freeze, which may then get reported to the President or the Board of Trustees.

7. Must a hiring freeze exception be approved before a Pitr will be processed to fill a vacant position?

Yes. If a Pitr is received before an exception request has been approved, it will be returned to the unit. A copy of all approved exception requests is routed from the Chancellor or Provost Office to the appropriate HR office (UIC HR or Faculty HR).

8. What is the definition of a new hire? For example...

8a. Are promotions of Academic Professionals exempted from the hiring freeze?

No, because promotion requires creation of a new position and an associated search.

8b. Are reclassifications of Civil Service employees exempted from the hiring freeze?

Yes, as this is a change to an existing position.

8c. What about faculty promotions?

Both tenure-track and non-tenured faculty will continue to be reviewed by promotion and tenure committees through the normal, existing process.

8d. Is a new administrative appointment accompanied by a stipend exempted from the hiring freeze? [note – this may require calling out on the form]

No. Creation of a new stipend for an appointment to a new role is the equivalent of a new hire and therefore requires approval. A change to an existing stipend is just a change in compensation and does not require approval.

8e. Is conversion of an employee from academic hourly to a full-time academic professional exempt from the hiring freeze?

No; this is the equivalent of a new hire and places the employee into a new position with notice rights.

8f. Is conversion of an employee's status from visiting to regular/permanent exempt from the hiring freeze?

No. Even though the position number remains the same, this change is still the equivalent of a new hire and again creates notice rights for the employee involved.

8g. Is extension of an appointment for Academic Professionals who require extension due to expiration of their visa exempted from the hiring freeze?

Yes.

8h. Is the extension of an appointment for a visiting academic professional funded on a sponsored project that has also been extended exempted from the hiring freeze?

Yes.

8i. What about the rehire of retirees, since we already have a process in place to re-view those?

If the hire conforms to the criteria providing for an exemption (e.g. a one term instructional faculty hire), then an exception request is not required. Otherwise, the hiring exception request form should be completed and approved in advance of a Reemployment of Retiree request.

In general, a new hire is defined as the creation of and appointment to a position. This is of particular concern when it creates notice rights for the employee hired.

9. What about employees who have no or very limited notice rights? For example...

9a. Are post-doctoral *fellows* exempt from the hiring freeze?

Yes, as they are not considered employees for the purposes of the hiring freeze.

9b. Are post-doctoral *research associates* exempt from the hiring freeze?

No, they are treated like any other staff working on a sponsored project.

9c. What about Graduate College fellows?

There is no service requirement for Graduate College fellows, so they are not considered employees for purposes of the hiring freeze. Therefore, they are exempt from the hiring freeze.

9d. Are adjunct or other temporary instructional faculty exempted from the hiring freeze?

Yes, if they are appointed for one term only.

9e. Are student assistants (teaching, research, or graduate assistants) exempted from the hiring freeze?

Yes. These cases were all specifically mentioned as receiving a blanket exemption in the December 17, 2008 memo from the Chancellor and Provost announcing the hiring freeze. Units may hire into such positions without securing approval from the Chancellor or Provost, although units are still expected to secure approval from their dean or vice chancellor.

9f. Are student employees (undergraduate and graduate, paid hourly) exempted from the hiring freeze?

Yes. These cases were all specifically mentioned as receiving a blanket exemption in the December 17, 2008 memo from the Chancellor and Provost announcing the hiring freeze. Units may hire into such positions without securing approval from the Chancellor or Provost, although units are still expected to secure approval from their dean or vice chancellor.

Hiring Freeze FAQs continued

9g. Are research staff or research faculty on soft money with an appointment to August 15 exempted from the hiring freeze?

No. Source of funds does not exempt the positions; if the category of position is not exempted (e.g., Research Assistants have a blanket exemption) then the hiring requires an approval.

In general, the concern of the hiring freeze is to avoid making further commitments to employees whose notice rights constrain a unit's budgetary flexibility.

10. What about changes in compensation? For example...

10a. Are increases in FTE exempted from the hiring freeze?

Yes.

10b. Are student hourly, academic professional hourly, or faculty hourly jobs exempted from the hiring freeze?

Yes. The campus has decided to exempt academic hourly employees from the hiring freeze, even though the original form includes a box for them. Units already have the capability to direct enter these appointments into Banner, so there is no up-front approval process (except for undergraduate hourly, which are entered by Student Employment).

10c. Are Civil Service extra help positions exempted from the hiring freeze?

Yes.

10d. Are overcompensation payments exempted from the hiring freeze?

Yes. These are generally intermittent and short-term in nature and therefore not the equivalent of a new hire.

10e. Is a mid-year salary change exempted from the hiring freeze?

Yes.

The point of the hiring freeze is not to constrain a unit from making any change in its overall payroll. Units are still expected to make local decisions about what they can afford, so they must be mindful of the impact that the changes in compensation described above will have on their available budget authority. To the extent that this will be monitored centrally, it will be monitored after-the-fact through the quarterly review of each unit's financial position. Any deficits identified will require explanation from the dean or vice chancellor.

11. Do units have to use the form for positions that are exempted by the campus but which are reviewed at the dean or vice chancellor level?

No; units are welcome to use this same form, or to adapt it to their own purpose, or to come up with something completely different that they develop independently. Units should probably do something to uniquely identify the form as pertaining to their unit, rather than the campus form. The unit process needs to be auditable and reportable.

Prepared by: Julie Harris, John Loya, Jack McEnery, Susan Ramirez, Todd Van Neck and Angela Yudt on 20-Jan-09.