Layoff for Reasons of Budget or Program Policy (XXXX)
University Staff
University of Wisconsin-River Falls

Policy:

This policy establishes procedures for layoff of permanent university staff when such action is deemed necessary due to budget or program decisions. These procedures follow the framework provided in UW System Operational Policy: GEN 13. Employees in temporary or project appointments in the operation area shall be reduced or discontinued before invoking the layoff procedures.

Procedure:

Considerations will be made to reduce costs or re-deploy staff when able. When layoff is necessary, the Chancellor or designee will develop a layoff plan documenting:

1) the justification for the layoff;
2) effective date of the layoff;
3) eliminated functions;
4) position(s) to be eliminated;
5) operational area(s) affected;
6) position title(s); and
7) number of employees expected to be laid off.

Employees subject to layoff will be determined and evaluated by using the following criteria, including but not limited to:

- Needs of institution to deliver services;
- Relative skills, knowledge, or expertise of employees; and
- Length of service of employees

All layoff plans will be reviewed by the Director of Human Resources prior to any announcement or implementation of a layoff.

Once the layoff group has been determined, any employee from within the affected layoff group may elect to retire or voluntarily be laid off to avoid involuntary layoffs.

Employees serving a probationary period may be dismissed prior to laying off non-probationary employees, providing that those remaining employees have the necessary skills, knowledge, and ability to perform the work.

An employee who has the least length of service will be selected for layoff.
Alternatives to Layoff

If layoff is deemed necessary, an employee may be moved to another position regardless of being designated in layoff status. The employee shall receive written notice as to why he or she is being moved. Involuntary employee movements are not meant to circumvent the recruitment process and should only be used to avoid a reduction in force.

The employee may choose not to accept the involuntary reassignment and as a result be laid off. If the employee accepts the involuntary reassignment, the employee’s rate of pay and applicable benefits will not decrease if the reassignment is lateral; however, the rate of pay may be adjusted with a downward reassignment.

Notification

A full or part-time staff member who is designated for layoff must be given written notice from the Office of Human Resources as soon as practicable, but not less than 30 calendar days prior to the effective date of the layoff. At any time during the notification of layoff period and with mutual agreement of the employee and appointing authority, a lateral movement or demotion to a different position within the UW institution may be made outside of a recruitment process.

Upon an employer’s layoff notification to an employee, the employee may appeal the layoff decision through the appropriate grievance procedure (see UWRF Grievance Policy: XXX).

The employer reserves the right to rescind a layoff notice and/or postpone the layoff date. However, once the employee has been officially notified of the intended layoff date, the employer may not make the layoff date any earlier.

Vacant Positions within UW System

An employee who is or will be affected by a layoff may request, in accordance with the hiring authority’s requirements, to be considered for other vacancies within the UW System. Employment opportunities at other campuses can be viewed at https://www.wisconsin.edu/ohrwd/careers/. Such consideration does not guarantee an interview or mandatory job offer.

A laid off employee may apply for vacant positions in the same manner as a current employee for a period of three (3) years from the date of layoff. Positions available at UW-River Falls will be announced in the campus Falcon Daily E-newsletter. It is the employee’s responsibility to view the Falcon Daily or the campus recruitment system to learn about vacant positions.

Refill of Positions

For three years from the anniversary of the layoff, no person may be hired with an expectation of continued employment in that operational area to perform duties reasonably comparable to the duties of the laid off employee without first making an offer of return to the laid off employee. The employee will have five working days to accept the offer. If the employee does not accept the offer, the employee’s rights under this section will be terminated.

Employee Benefits Upon Layoff
Employees enrolled in State Group Health Insurance at the time of layoff are eligible to continue coverage under the group plan following the layoff date. The employee’s coverage will continue through the month in which premiums are paid and the employer contribution towards the health insurance premium is paid for an additional three months. The employee must pay his/her share of the health insurance premium during these months to maintain coverage. The employee may pay the premium through payroll deduction, personal check, or converted sick leave credits.

UW System employees who terminate due to layoff are eligible for the conversion of their sick leave credits to pay for State Group Health Insurance provided eligibility requirements are met under the Accumulated Sick Leave Conversion Credit (ASLCC) and Supplemental Health Insurance Conversion Credit (SHICC) programs as outlined in Wis. Stat. §§ 40.05(4)(b) and 40.95.

Health insurance premiums are paid from sick leave credits until the earliest of the following events:

1. The credits are exhausted;
2. The first of the month following the begin date of other employment offering comparable health insurance coverage;
3. Five (5) years have elapsed from the date of layoff (no time restriction if the employee has over 20 years of WRS creditable service at time of layoff); or
4. The employee dies. If the employee dies, the employee’s surviving spouse/domestic partner and dependents can continue to use remaining sick leave credits to pay for health insurance.

Coverage under all other benefit plans ends according to the normal termination rules of the plan.

**University Responsibilities:**

The Office of Human Resources will maintain this policy.

**Background:**

This policy document was approved on XXXXX and defines the UW-River Falls layoff procedures as of July 1, 2015.

**Related Documents/References:**

UW System Operational Policy GEN 13 – Layoff for Reasons of Budget or Program

UW System Operational Policy GEN 14 – Grievance

UWRF Grievance Local Policy

UW System Operational Policy BN 3 – Sick Leave

**Contact:**

Questions about this policy should be directed to the UW-River Falls Office of Human Resources.

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