COVID-19 HR Action Guidelines

As previously communicated on March 24, Interim UNCG System President Dr. William Roper called for a suspension of all non-essential human resources actions to provide for necessary focus on the University’s COVID-19 response.

The following actions are already considered essential and, upon review, may be granted an exception:

- Actions necessary to support COVID-19 response, including any healthcare or critical operations.
- Actions necessary to support or augment other clearly essential university operations, as defined by the Chancellor, which may be modified.
- Actions mandated by law or policy, including those to meet critical compliance obligations, without ability to delay.
- Actions required by existing employment contracts, without ability to delay.
- Actions authorized by the President or his designee.

We have received additional information and further clarified our processes for responding to this mandate. The following provides updated guidance regarding these transactions.

As communicated previously, this is a temporary pause. We have seen many changes and adaptations to current policies and procedures in this unprecedented situation. Our goal is to do what is in the best interest of the University while we adapt policies and procedures as this unprecedented situation has unfolded.

If you have questions that our FAQs do not address, you may email your request to the email address below.

Questions should be referred to the following:

- Graduate Students:  Kelly Burke, Human Resources Business Partner, kjburke@uncg.edu
- EHRA/SHRA Staff and Temporary Employees:   Andrea Whitley, Human Resources Business Partner, andwhitley@uncg.edu
- Faculty:   Andrea Whitley, Human Resources Business Partner, andwhitley@uncg.edu
- All personnel actions must be within currently available or approved funding.
- Funding Availability

Review of Actions

- Actions related to graduate students and faculty will be reviewed within Academic Affairs.
- Actions for EHRA and SHRA staff will be considered utilizing the following process:
  - A Vice Chancellor will be the final authority for actions within his/her area and will give the opportunity to provide a justification for moving forward during this period. They may delegate the review process to the criteria for qualifying as an essential action as defined above, thus justifying or denying action. Any action not submitted will need to contain a justification for the action that includes the operational need, what is being performed and why it is considered essential.
- Actions for reviewed or necessary resources in consultation with the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration.

Hiring Actions:

- Each hire will be evaluated to ensure that the position is an active role related to COVID-19 or other business necessity for the continued effective functioning of the University. It is understood that certain administrative, operational, and faculty positions will fall within this category and may still be considered essential.

  - The following actions can, upon review, continue to be processed:
    - Graduate student and teaching assistant hires or extensions for upcoming terms, when determined necessary, for the continued contact of instructional activities, including online classes, will be processed.
    - Requirements of existing fixed term faculty members, so long as appropriate funding contingencies are provided for, can be processed.
    - New hires (including graduate students and temporary employees) in positions that are fully grant funded, as long as appropriate funding contingencies are provided for, will be processed. The department must notify, however, that non-essential salary or position actions should be proposed on grant funded positions.

- Non-essential positions that have already been presented for non-compliance reviewed and approved with the caveat that a start date may be subject to modifications based on COVID-19 and related public health restrictions (this does not include situations where an offer has been discussed or contemplated, but not formally complete and communicated).

- Positions currently under recruitment will be re-evaluated by case basis to determine if the recruitment should continue at this time.

Salary Adjustments

- Faculty promotions and related promotional increases per the University’s tenure code and related procedures can be processed.
- Ad-hoc or special appointments and related pay actions may be considered when such an arrangement is necessary for the conduct of the University’s essential operations.
- Standard protocol and procedures for actions involving University salary increase and promotion approval should be followed.

Promotion actions, including creating new positions or modifications to existing positions

- Pending promotion actions will be reviewed as a case by case basis to determine if the action meets one of the above exceptions.
- Modifications that are intended to maintain or update accurate documentation of existing positions, such as better clarifying the duties and responsibilities of a position, will need to contain a justification on the reason for the exception that includes the operational need, what is being performed and why it is considered essential.
- Actions otherwise directed by the President or his designee.

- Each new hire will be evaluated to ensure that the position is related to COVID-19 or otherwise necessary for the continued effective functioning of the University. It is understood that certain administrative, operational, and faculty positions will fall within this category, and may still be considered essential.

- The following actions can, upon review, continue to be processed:
  - Actions for EHRA and SHRA staff will be considered using the following process:
    - Actions related to graduate students and faculty will be reviewed within Academic Affairs.
    - Actions for EHRA and SHRA staff will be reviewed in Human Resources in consultation with the Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration.

- Engaging in the review process has continued to be processed.

Actions otherwise directed by the President or his designee.

- Actions mandated by law or policy, including those to meet critical compliance obligations, which cannot be delayed.
- Actions necessary to support COVID-19 response, including any healthcare or critical operations.
- Actions necessary to support or augment other clearly essential university operations, as defined by the Chancellor, which may be modified.
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- Actions required by existing employment contracts, without ability to delay.
- Actions authorized by the President or his designee.

- All personnel actions must be within currently available or approved funding.
- New hires (including graduate students and temporary employees) in positions that are fully grant funded, as long as appropriate funding contingencies are provided for, will be processed. The department must notify, however, that non-essential salary or position actions should be proposed on grant funded positions.

- Non-essential positions that have already been presented for non-compliance reviewed and approved with the caveat that a start date may be subject to modifications based on COVID-19 and related public health restrictions (this does not include situations where an offer has been discussed or contemplated, but not formally complete and communicated).

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