

## University Policy 3309: Reduction-in-Force

**Category:** Human Resources

**Subcategory:** Employment

**Covered Individuals:** Benefit-eligible Staff

**Responsible Executive:** Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services

**Policy Custodian:** Office of Human Resources, Associate Vice President of Human Resources

**Last Revised:** 2024/01/05

**Previous USU Policy Number:** 398: Reduction-in-Force

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### 3309.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

While Utah State University (USU) strives to provide a stable and secure environment in which to work, under certain circumstances it may be necessary to eliminate employee positions, reduce hours, or reduce salaries due to budgetary needs, program reductions, reorganization, or other business needs.

### 3309.2 POLICY

A Reduction in Force (RIF) may be necessary or appropriate when there is a lack of funds; a redesign or elimination of work; a redundancy in roles; or excess capacity within a work group or across work groups such that it would be economically feasible and responsible to reduce the number of employees in a department.

Termination of employees or salary reductions of employees due to a RIF must not be based on a protected status such as race, color, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, national origin, age (40 and older), disability, or status as a protected veteran. This policy should not be used in lieu of dismissing an employee for cause such as performance or disciplinary issues (see [USU Policy 3310: Termination of Exempt and Non-exempt Staff](#)).

When a department determines the need for a RIF, the supervisor must contact Human Resources who will guide the department in assessing options and developing a plan for implementing the RIF.

#### 2.1 Employee Notification

When it is necessary for USU to implement a RIF, affected employees will be given written notice of termination by the supervisor after consultation with the Office of Human Resources.

#### 2.2 Bumping Rights

An employee identified for a RIF may bump a less senior employee in an equal or lower grade of the same job family within the same department if the employee identified for a RIF has the necessary qualifications to perform in that position. If this occurs, the bumping employee will be adjusted to the salary schedule for the position of the bumped employee.

A benefit-eligible employee who is identified for a RIF may bump a less senior, non-benefited employee who is performing similar duties and is within the same department.

Employees engaged in any documented disciplinary action or performance plan in the previous 6-month

period are not eligible for bumping rights.

### 2.3 Priority Interview

Hiring managers must give a priority interview to employees if the following criteria are met:

- The employee has applied for the position.
- The employee meets the minimum qualifications of the position.
- The position is at the same or lower grade as the employee's position that was subject to the RIF.

Priority interviews help employees find employment after their positions have been subject to a RIF, but *do not* guarantee job placement. However, USU is not required to create a position to accommodate an affected employee.

Priority interviews will be granted for up to six (6) months from the position's date of termination.

### 2.4 Exclusions

The following positions and/or statuses are not eligible for bumping rights or priority interviews:

- Temporary positions where the duration of the position is defined.
- Grant or contract funded positions where the position is defined as "contingent upon funding."
- Employees who are in the introductory period of employment (see [USU Policy 3307: Introductory Period of Employment](#)).

### 2.5 Position Reestablishment and Employee Recall

Reestablishment of a position which has been eliminated under a RIF requires prior approval from the Office of Human Resources. Typically, a budgeted position will not be reestablished for at least one (1) calendar year from the RIF date. If a position is reestablished within one (1) year from the RIF date, employees will be recalled without advertising. If more than one person has been affected by a RIF from the same job family and department, the employee must be rehired in order of seniority unless important job-related reasons for recall out of order can be demonstrated in writing to HR.

## 3309.3 RESPONSIBILITIES

### 3.1 President/Provost

Review and deny/approve RIF requests.

### 3.2 Department Head/Directors

Contact HR, list reason(s) for RIF, and submit plan to Dean/VP. Notify employees.

### 3.3 Office of Human Resources

Check bumping rights, review plans to ensure that all RIFs are handled in a non-discriminatory fashion. Oversee the priority interview process. Provide consultation to affected employees.

### 3.4 Employees

Initiate application for position(s) for which they are qualified.

## 3309.4 REFERENCES

- N/A

## 3309.5 RELATED USU POLICIES

- [USU Policy 3307: Introductory Period of Employment](#)
- [USU Policy 3310: Termination of Exempt and Non-exempt Staff](#)

## 3309.6 DEFINITIONS

### 6.1 Job Family

A series of jobs which have a basis of common skills, occupational qualifications, technology, licensing, working conditions, work place, career paths, and organizational tradition.

### 6.2 Recall

Reinstating an employee in the same position or a position in the same job family within one (1) calendar year.

### 6.3 Reduction in Force

A separation from employment due to a lack of funds; a redesign or elimination of work; a redundancy in roles; or excess capacity within a work group or across work groups such that it would be economically feasible and responsible to reduce the number of employees in a department.”

### 6.4 Re-establishment

Requesting a new position that was previously eliminated due to a RIF.

### 6.5 Seniority

The total length of service in the affected position.

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**Information below is not included as part of the contents of the official policy.** It is provided only as a convenience for readers/users and may be changed at any time by persons authorized by the president.

## RESOURCES

### Procedures

- N/A

### Guidance

- N/A

### Related

- N/A

## Contacts

- N/A

## POLICY HISTORY

Original issue date: 1997/01/24

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