

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
TRANSITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
FOR ADMINISTRATIVE, SERVICE & SUPPORT EMPLOYEES
Approved by the Curators of the University of Missouri, April 27, 2017

Introduction

The University of Missouri provides transition assistance, short term, temporary income (transition assistance pay) and benefits, to employees subject to an involuntary layoff. Transition assistance applies to administrative, service and support employees. Employees not explicitly covered in *HR 117: Layoff* (HR117) are not eligible for seniority and preferential hiring rights with all other layoff provisions remaining in effect.

The transition assistance program, as described in this document, applies to all layoffs, beginning on or after the date of the program's approval by the Curators of the University of Missouri through June 30, 2018, and supersedes all previous transition assistance programs, documents, and approved processes.

Eligibility

All regular administrative, service and support employees (see *HR 101: Employee Status* (HR101)) who have successfully completed their probationary period may be eligible for transition assistance. Employees whose positions are discontinued due to a reduction in the workforce may be eligible for transition assistance, regardless of funding source. Non-regular (HR101) and probationary employees are ineligible to participate in the program.

In order for an employee to be eligible to receive transition assistance payment, the employee is required to sign the *University of Missouri Transition Assistance Payment Agreement and Release*.

Disqualifying Circumstances

To qualify for transition assistance, an employee must remain in good standing. The following circumstances will disqualify an employee for the purposes of transition assistance eligibility and payments.

- Failure to perform duties in a satisfactory manner after layoff notification through the effective date of the layoff
- Refusal to accept a transfer or assignment to a comparable regular position.
- Any of the following events that occur prior to or during the transition assistance payment period, to the employee, without exception:
 - Death
 - Retirement
 - Termination
 - Receipt of Long Term Disability (LTD) benefits
 - Acceptance of another regular University position

Notice Period

Affected employee will be given a written notice of layoff at least two weeks before the effective date. The university may choose to pay affected employees two weeks of regular pay in lieu of notice. Layoff notification must be coordinated through campus human resources.

Transition Pay

Eligible employees will receive one week of pay, with a minimum payment of 4 weeks and a maximum payment of 26 weeks, for each year of continuous regular employment immediately prior to layoff. For regular employees with a specified contract end date, transition pay will not exceed the earnings an employee would have been paid through the contract end date. Transition payments are typically paid in accordance with an employee's current pay schedule, but may be paid as a lump sum payment at the discretion of the university. Transition payment and the employee's repayment obligations shall be in accordance with the *University of Missouri Transition Assistance Payment Agreement and Release* and shall not begin until the effective date of the agreement.

Transition Benefits

Eligible employees with at least five years of continuous regular university employment immediately prior to layoff, including those excepted by *HR117*, may be placed on a layoff leave of absence for one year from the effective date of layoff. Eligible employees with less than five years of continuous regular University employment prior to the layoff, including those excepted by *HR117*, may be placed on a layoff leave of absence for three months from the effective date of layoff. In all cases, this is provided that the layoff leave of absence not exceed any applicable contract end date.

During the layoff leave of absence, the employee will be eligible to participate in university benefit programs (medical, dental, life, accidental death and long-term disability). The university will continue to pay the employer portion of the benefit premiums during the layoff leave of absence. Employees who elect to retire following layoff notice are responsible for the full cost of their retiree medical benefits, offset as applicable, by any university subsidy that an employee may be eligible for as determined by the University of Missouri System Benefits department.

Employees placed on a layoff leave of absence are required to notify campus human resources if they obtain employment outside the university and/or if they become eligible for other benefit coverage as a result of employment. Participation in the university's benefit programs will be discontinued if an employee becomes eligible for benefit coverage as a result of employment outside the University.

The qualifying event date for COBRA eligibility is the first of the month following the effective date of the layoff leave of absence. The COBRA benefit period will run concurrently with the layoff leave of absence. Once the layoff leave of absence has expired, COBRA benefits can continue, with full costs paid by the individual, for the remainder of the COBRA eligibility period allowed (not to exceed 18 months in total). The University of Missouri Benefits department will coordinate the mailing of information regarding COBRA benefits, including the timeframe for COBRA election.

Employees notified of layoff will receive any unused accrued vacation leave as a lump sum payment in the pay period following the commencement of the layoff action (*i.e.*, last day of active employment). This rule applies without exception.

Transition Services

Transition services may be available through the campus human resources office, including, but not necessarily limited to:

- Resume preparation
- Development of job search strategies
- Contact information for the appropriate Division of Employment Security

Effective: March 1, 2009

Last Revised: June 15, 2017