

June 2021

## NEW AND UPDATED INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

All USM institutional policies are posted on [usm.policystat.com](http://usm.policystat.com) (PolicyStat). Employees are responsible for familiarizing and abiding by institutional policies. Click the link below to view recently created/updated policies:

[Compliance and Ethics | The University of Southern Mississippi \(usm.edu\)](#)

## UPCOMING VIRTUAL HR TRAINING

### Cornerstone Q&A

Thursday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> @ 10a (1 hour)

*Audience: Anyone who accesses Cornerstone as part of the hiring process*

Please review the resources and training on the [HR website](#) prior.

### Hiring Best Practices

Wednesday, June 9<sup>th</sup> @ 10a (1 hour)

A review of the Staff Hiring Toolkit with a focus on screening, interviewing and selection best practices.

*Audience: Anyone involved in the hiring process*

### Job Description Writing Guide

Wednesday, June 16<sup>th</sup> @ 1:30p (1 hour)

A review of the new job description writing guide.

*Audience: Anyone with responsibility for creating/revising job descriptions*

Please RSVP for any of the above to [karen.figueroa@usm.edu](mailto:karen.figueroa@usm.edu) for a link to the training.

In addition to the above, HR has posted our [full training library](#) on our website with a complete listing of all of our available training that can be requested through your [HR Partner](#) on-demand.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

All faculty and staff are now enrolled with a membership to Academic Impressions giving us access to trainings, webcasts, resources, and conference discounts! To access this resource, [here](#). You will login using your **w#@usm.edu** credentials. Each month we will highlight one or two great learning opportunities for staff and leaders.

Conflict Management – Learn practical tools to gain confidence in resolving conflicts in the earliest stages. <https://www.academicimpressions.com/product/0621-wil-conflict-mgmt/>

Strengthen Support of Your Underrepresented Faculty to Improve Retention - This conference seeks to present a balanced perspective—across the themes of policies, programs, and people—on what effective support for underrepresented faculty can look like. <https://www.academicimpressions.com/strengthen-support-of-your-underrepresented-faculty-to-improve-retention/>

## Reminder: 26 Week Break in Service

Benefit eligible employees cannot transfer to a non-benefit eligible position without a 26-week break in service from the university. Please note policy 2.2.3 and 3.3.2 from the employee handbook.

### 2.2.3 Re-Employment

Former employees of USM are eligible for rehire at the discretion of the University. To comply with the employer mandate in the Affordable Care Act, an employee who was previously employed in a benefit-eligible position is prohibited from returning to the University in a non-benefit eligible position unless they have had at least a 26-week break in service.

A former employee who is rehired receives:

- no vested seniority
- no vested benefits status
- no credit for previous time served towards years of service for service awards.

To comply with the employer mandate in the Affordable Care Act, an employee who was previously in a benefit eligible position is prohibited from being rehired or transferring into a non-benefit eligible position, unless they have had a 26-week break in service.

<u>Previous Status</u>	<u>New Status</u>	<u>26-week Service Break Required?</u>
Non-Benefit Eligible	Non-Benefit Eligible	No
Non-Benefit Eligible	Benefit Eligible	No
Benefit Eligible	Benefit Eligible	No
<b>Benefit Eligible</b>	<b>Non-Benefit Eligible</b>	<b>Yes</b>

\*\*\* Non-benefit eligible includes adjunct faculty, student worker, GA, RA and temporary positions

### 3.3.2 Transfers

A staff employee is eligible for consideration for a transfer or reassignment to another University position after serving in a staff position for a period of six (6) months. However, it is possible to be reassigned earlier than six (6) months if the transfer is within the same department or made for the business necessity of the University. Early transfers, if in a different department, must have approval from the AVP for University Human Resources. Transfers within departments or between departments must proceed according to the usual hiring guidelines, unless approved as an Administrative transfer. Administrative transfers are considered in the best interest of the University and should be approved in advance by the AVP for Human Resources. Dates of transfer shall be arranged for a time mutually agreeable to both the receiving and releasing department, no less than two (2) weeks nor more than four (4) weeks from the date of acceptance by the staff member recommended unless otherwise agreed on by all parties.

To comply with the employer mandate in the Affordable Care Act, an employee who is currently employed in a benefit-eligible position is prohibited from transferring to a non-benefit eligible position without at least a 26-week break in service.

Transferring to a new position may not warrant a pay change. Whenever a person transfers from a non-exempt to exempt position and/or to a new department, any accrued comp time must be paid out at the time of the transfer at the hourly rate in the job it was accrued.

# Disability and Veteran Self-Identification

## DISABILITY STATUS

Voluntarily self-identifying is a good thing — it's how things change. The video below explains why companies doing business with the federal government ask job applicants and employees to voluntarily self-identify if they have a disability, and the important role that self-identifying plays in ensuring equal employment opportunity for people with disabilities.

Click here to watch the video: <https://www.usm.edu/affirmative-action-equal-employment/index.php> or <https://www.dol.gov/ofccp/SelfIdVideo.html>

In order to track our efforts to attract and hire individuals with disabilities, the University of Southern Mississippi is required to ask all of its employees to update their disability status every five years. This information is required by the Office of Federal Contracts Compliance Program (OFCCP).

If you wish to self-identify a disability, please complete for the [Voluntary Self-Identification for Disability Status](#) form (PDF).

## VETERAN STATUS

In addition, each year, our office submits a report (VETS 4212) to the United States Department of Labor identifying the number of employees belonging to each specified “protected veteran” category.

This information will allow us to accurately measure our efforts and allow us to remain compliant with federal regulations. Completing these forms is completely voluntary. Your answer will not be used against you in any way.

If you are a covered veteran and wish to self-identify, please complete the [Voluntary Self-Identification for Veteran Status](#) (PDF).

Please return all completed forms to the [Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Employment](#), Box #5111. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

***If you have questions about any of the information contained in this HR Update,  
please contact our main line at 6-4050 or your HR Partner for more information.  
To the Top- Together***