



Hiring and Compensation Freeze Guidance

April 9, 2020

Background:

- A temporary hiring and compensation freeze was put in place by Chief of Staff Memorandum effective 4/2/2020.
- The purpose of the temporary hiring and compensation freeze is to slow down the hiring process and hold steady personnel costs as the Commonwealth assesses the financial impact of the COVID-19 response.
- Financial impact of the COVID-19 response is not currently known.
- The hiring and compensation freeze is expected to be temporary.
- An Exception Process is in place to allow each Cabinet Secretary to approve hiring and compensation actions that increase personnel costs.

Hiring Freeze

Overview:

- All job offers made on or before April 2nd should be honored regardless of state date.
- Positions currently under recruitment (advertised, interviews in process, etc.) are subject to review and approval.

Covered positions:

- Classified
- Wage
- Temporary staffing positions (*discretionary spending*)

Excluded positions:

- Tier III University Employees
- Adjunct Faculty
- Faculty
- Volunteers
- Positions fully funded by federal grants or funds that are continuously available
- Boards, Commissions and Authorities and agencies not covered by the Virginia Personnel Act
- §4-7.01(e) - Manpower Control Program*

Considerations for approval:

- Position provides direct service in public safety, patient care or public health.
- Essential to the function and mission of the applicable agency.
- Constitutional or statutory requirements for the position to be filled.
- Redundancy of position duties being performed (as compared to unique or one of a kind positions.)
- Vacancy rate or turnover issues in job / role.
- Alternatives considered (automation, job redesign, temporary reassignment of duties, temporary filling as developmental opportunity.)
- Impact if position is not filled – services that will not be provided to the public or other critical stakeholders.
- Funding required, source and availability of funding (short and long term impact.)
 - General fund
 - Internal service fund – no cost shifting to other agencies
 - Grant or federal funds that are ready and continuously available
- Immediate start date vs. future date.
- Cost of overtime vs. cost of hiring additional staff.

**Manpower Control Program – consideration must be given to the needs of the Commonwealth in regards to the safe and efficient operation of state facilities and performance of essential services to include the exemption of certain positions assigned to agencies and institutions that provide services pertaining to public safety and public health.*

Recommended Process for Hiring:

- Agencies submit individual requests to their Cabinet Secretary. (Optional form available [Agency Hiring Request](#))
- Secretary reviews, documents approval/denial.
- Agency Heads may submit requests to their Cabinet Secretary for one-time “blanket approvals” for the purpose of streamlining the administrative process when hiring groups of essential employees.

Compensation Freeze**Overview:**

- Includes all compensation actions that have an increase in personnel cost/financial liability.
 - Promotions, in-band adjustments, voluntary transfers, recognition bonuses, and other pay actions.
 - Exceptional Incentive Options (sign on/retention bonuses, leave awards for new hires or existing staff, etc.) These exceptional options can be submitted in a group, along with corresponding guidelines, to the Secretary if an option(s) is applicable to a program or a group of positions.
 - Recognition leave.

- The freeze is not intended to cover temporary additional personnel cost such as overtime which will vary by week.

Considerations for approval:

- Follow the guidance provided for submitting critical hiring request.
- Consider need to retain key skills and performance of individual employee.

Recommended Process for Compensation Actions:

- Agencies make individual requests to Secretary via email.
- Secretary reviews and responds with approval / denial.