

UT Health Science Center: HR0143b-H Staff Hiring Freeze	
Version 1	Publication Date: 05/25/2022

No./Title: 143b – STAFF HIRING FREEZE	Resp. Office: HUMAN RESOURCES	Effective Date: 03/12/2021
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Related Policies:		

STAFF HIRING FREEZE PROCEDURE

These adjusted approval guidelines for state-funded staff hires take effect March 12, 2021 and will remain in effect until further notice.

INTRODUCTION

Effective March 12, 2021, UT Health Science Center implemented a hiring freeze that limits staff hiring deemed mission critical (i.e., those that must be filled to ensure university safety, compliance, and core mission). Only mission-critical positions will be considered for approval during this time, and all requests require justification and additional approval beyond the standard approval flow. **Positions on grant or contract funding are not subject to this approval process.**

Until further notice, UTHSC asks that hiring managers refrain from submitting requests to fill new or replacement positions on state funds unless the position is mission critical. Any current open positions should also be evaluated for criticality.

For the purposes of the hiring freeze, “mission critical” positions include the following:

- Positions deemed critical to the university’s mission.
- Positions that safeguard the health and well-being of the UTHSC community and its people.
- Positions related to compliance risks.

These guidelines establish the scope of the adjusted approval process, as well as temporary hiring rules and procedures.

SCOPE

These guidelines apply to hiring of all new and vacant UTHSC staff positions, including all part-time and full-time.

These guidelines do not apply to faculty, adjunct/instructional staff, or student workers.

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Promotions, transfers, reclassifications, and additional assignments are not covered by these guidelines, but they are subject to restriction during the hiring freeze. Please consult your Dean's or Vice Chancellor's office for guidance before initiating any post-hire employment action that has or may have a budgetary or operational impact on the university.

EVALUATING FOR CRITICALITY BEFORE SUBMITTING A REQUEST

Prior to initiating a hiring request/fixed-term extension transaction, hiring managers/supervisors are expected to evaluate the position for criticality. As part of the evaluation, the hiring manager or supervisor should do the following **before** submitting the transaction:

1. Exhaust all internal employee resources within their college/division for completing the work.
2. Consult their supervisor, department head, dean and/or vice president to confirm criticality.
3. Obtain written pre-approval from leadership to ensure overall departmental support.

PROVIDING JUSTIFICATION FOR STAFF POSITIONS

For the duration of the hiring freeze, all staff hiring requests require an objective and detailed justification using the [Staff Hiring Justification Form \[pdf\]](#).

The justification must thoroughly explain the following:

- Funding source and duration of funding source.
- How the position is critical to UTHSC's safety, compliance, core values or mission.
- Why filling the position should not be postponed.
- Using detailed examples, why you were unable to secure internal employee resources within the division/college to assist with work during this time and/or why internal employee resources do not have the unique skill set to perform the duties and functions of the position.

THE HIRING REQUEST PROCESS – NEW OR REPLACEMENT STAFF POSITIONS

Before submitting a request, the hiring manager with the vacancy establishes criticality through the following:

1. Explore all options to use internal employee resources to complete the work.
2. Consult their supervisor, division head, dean and/or vice president to confirm criticality.
3. Obtain written approval from leadership to ensure overall departmental support:

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- a. Before initiating a hiring request, **academic units** require approval, which is obtained by submitting the completed Staff Position Hiring Justification Form [pdf] to their dean (or delegate).
 - b. Before initiating a hiring request, **administrative units** require approval, which is obtained by submitting the completed Staff Position Hiring Justification Form [pdf] to the division head, who will obtain Dean or VC pre-approval.
4. If criticality is established in step one above (including approval): the hiring manager sends the Staff Position Hiring Justification Form to the appropriate business manager (BM) or HR coordinator. The BM or HR generalist submits the Position Hiring Request form in IRIS with the justification form attached. **Note:** If the justification form is not attached to the request, HR will return the request to the transaction initiator.
 5. HR reviews and approves the position and routes it for Finance approval.
 6. If a position is approved, the HR recruiter reaches out to the hiring manager to begin the recruitment process which is the same as prior to the hiring freeze.