



## Policy Directory

Responsible Division: Finance and Administrative Services  
Responsible Office: Human Resources  
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## **Reduction in Force (RIF)**

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### Policy:

A reduction in force may be required in the event of reorganization of academic or administrative structures, programs or functions; reorganization of a department or unit; changes in departmental organization or services; reallocation of resources; or elimination or reduction in funding. When a reduction in force is necessary, the following policy will be used. However, this policy is not applicable to employees who are members of the faculty or employees on grants and contracts when termination is a result of loss of external funding. A reduction in force of members of the faculty, if necessary, will be in accordance with the policies contained in Policies and Bylaws, Board of Trustees of Institutions of Higher Learning, and any applicable policy in the Alcorn State University Faculty Handbook.

### **Procedures for Department/Unit Reorganization**

When an area or unit in the University has undergone considerable changes and the budget authority has determined that reorganization is necessary, the following procedures are recommended:

1. The budget authority will examine organizational charts, look at the current chart and create a new one that would show needed changes in the reorganization. These charts should show current titles and current reporting relationships. The chart for the reorganization should show any changes that will be needed in those areas, including the elimination of existing positions and the creation of new positions.
2. Review both organizational charts with the Office of Human Resources. Consultation with Human Resources at this point will save time, effort, and misunderstandings as the reorganization progresses.
3. Incorporate suggestions agreed upon into the new organizational chart and prepare it for presentation to the appropriate Vice President.
4. Submit the reorganization to the Vice President for review and approval. The Vice President will secure additional approvals, as appropriate. Please note that approval means that the “concept” has been approved, it does not constitute blanket approval for all changes.

5. The University President/IEO must approve the reorganization under this policy before it is implemented.
6. The department/unit head should partner with the Office of Human Resources in enacting the organizational changes (notification to employees, posting of new positions, transferring employees, termination of employment, etc.)
7. If a personnel reduction results from reorganization, written notification of layoff, typically a minimum of 30 days, including the reason for such layoff, shall be given to the employee by the Office of Human Resources. Notification shall include a copy of this policy.

### **Procedures for Budget Reductions**

When the budget authority has determined that budget reductions are necessary, which results in a decision to eliminate position(s) from the organization, the following procedures will be followed:

1. The President/IEO shall determine those units of the University whose budgets must be reduced. This determination shall be based upon a systematic allocation of budget reductions and shall be rationally related to the missions of the University.
2. If a reduction in personnel is necessary to meet the budget reductions for the unit, each budgetary authority will analyze and evaluate the necessity of each position within the unit in consideration of the mission of the unit, the mandated budget reduction of the unit, and the other positions within the unit. Each budgetary authority will determine which positions will be recommended for elimination.
3. The budgetary authority will consider the employees holding those positions within the unit and shall determine which employees will be recommended for layoff. The following criteria will be considered by the budgetary authority when making recommendations for layoff:
  - a. The overall personnel need of the unit;
  - b. Possible combination of job responsibilities;
  - c. Employees' skills;
  - d. Previous performance;
  - e. Protected employment status due to active military service by National Guard and armed service reservists; and
  - f. University affirmative action policies.

If, after considering the above-listed criteria, two (2) or more employees are rated the same or nearly so, the unit director will consider retaining the employee with the longest continuing period of service at the University.

Each budget director shall make recommendations for layoff accompanied by a written justification through the appropriate supervisory levels to the responsible Vice President who shall review the recommendations.

4. The Vice Presidents shall forward their recommendations to the Director of Human Resources for review as to compliance with University affirmative action and employment policies.
5. Written notification of layoff, typically a minimum of 30 days, including the reason for such layoff, shall be given to the employee. Such notification shall include a copy of this policy and shall be delivered by the Director of Human Resources.

### **Appeal Process**

This appeal process is available to those employees who are laid off under this policy which includes those whose position is eliminated through a reorganization. Any employee laid off under this reduction in force policy may, within five (5) working days of receipt of notification of layoff, appeal the decision. Notice of appeal must be in writing and directed to the Director of Human Resources. An Appeal Committee, consisting of the Director of Human Resources, a Vice President to be chosen by the employee, and a third designee assigned by the Director of Human Resources. If the laid-off employee was employed in a unit of which any of the above names Appeal Committee members are employed, the President of the University shall designate a substitute Appeal Committee member.

The Appeal will be either verbal or in writing, or both, at the selection of the laid-off employee, and shall be conducted as quickly as is reasonable. The Appeal shall be limited to a review for compliance with the procedures set forth in this policy and a determination of whether the layoff decision is arbitrary or capricious.

The Appeals Committee shall make its recommendation to the President/IEO, who shall make the final decision and notify the appropriate parties.

### **Rights of Laid-Off Employees**

1. If the departmental situation changes and open positions become available, the department may rehire separated employees within 12 months of the effective date of separation without following standard procedures for filling vacancies. Separated employees who are interested in being rehired will be selected for rehire based upon meeting or exceeding minimum qualifications for the position(s) to be filled, their overall rating in the most recent performance appraisal, and the length of prior service.
2. If the separated employee is interested in employment in another department/unit of the University, standard procedures for filling vacancies will apply and the separated employee must complete an application to express interest.