General Questions

What is the Position Management Process?
Northwestern has adopted a university-wide Position Management Process to review all staff position postings for currently vacant, future vacant, new and/or reclassified positions and temporary or contractor staffing.

Why is the Position Management Process being implemented?
Northwestern's excellence is built on the people who advance the critical work of our University. Our staff are one of our most important assets. As a University, we continue to ensure that staff are optimally positioned to support Northwestern's mission. The implementation of a new Position Management Process will serve as a vehicle to increase efficiency in staffing while maintaining appropriate investment in resources to continue to drive our University Priorities. The Position Management Process is an objective process that enables us to prioritize and invest in only the highest priority staffing needs. In tandem with this process, schools and units have the opportunity to realign roles and duties to ensure staff have fulfilling and meaningful work by redesigning how work gets done. While additional review will be required for position postings, promotions, reclassifications and/or additional pay for staff, it remains an important institutional goal to ensure staff are engaged with the work they do and are recognized for their extraordinary contributions.

Which Schools/Units are required to follow the Position Management Process?
All schools and units will use the Position Management Process.

When does the Position Management Process become effective?
The Position Management Process is effective immediately. All hiring needs will flow through this process. On February 5, 2018, a central Position Approval Committee began reviewing staff position requests and temporary/contractor hiring requests. This includes positions posted as of February 5, 2018. Only requests submitted to, and approved by, the Position Approval Committee will be actioned.

How long will the Position Management Process be in effect?
The Position Management Process will be in effect until further notice.

Who is on the Central Position Approval Committee?
The Committee includes the following roles:
- Associate Provost for Budget, Facilities, and Analysis
- Associate Vice President of Human Resources
- Vice President of Budget and Planning
- Executive Director of Administrative Initiatives and Chief of Staff to the Executive Vice President

How long will it take the Position Approval Committee to review requests?
The Position Approval Committee reviews requests on a weekly basis with an expected turnaround time of 10 business days.

What staff positions are included in the Position Management Process?
The Position Management Process will review all staff position postings for currently vacant, future vacant, new and/or reclassified positions. It will also review all temporary hiring needs, which will include temporary employees hired by Northwestern, contractors hired through third-party staffing agencies and/or independent contractor staffing. Concurrently, we will be implementing a process to review requests for additional pay for staff.

Are student temporary employees, work study students, graduate students, interns (paid or unpaid) and volunteers included in this process?
No, the Position Management Process is not required for student workers or volunteers. However, it is encouraged that each School or Unit do an internal review of all staffing decisions that may drive personnel costs.

Are Research Staff positions (Postdoctoral Fellows and Research Associates) and Librarians included in this process?
No, the Position Management Process is not required for librarians or research staff appointments. However, it is encouraged that each School or Unit do an internal review of all staffing decisions that may drive personnel costs.

Will positions funded through sponsored research grants need to go through the Position Management Process?
Only staff positions funded less than 70% on research grants will need to go through the Position Management Process. The Position Approval Committee will prioritize review of positions funded through sponsored research grants.

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Will term appointments, including appointment extensions, need to flow through the Position Management Process?
Yes, a term appointment is considered a staff position and will need to flow through the Position Management Process.

How will I know if my position has been approved, deferred, or requires additional information?
School/Unit leaders will receive a communication from the Position Approval Committee outlining the decision following review. The estimated turnaround time is 10 business days.

I have an urgent need that requires immediate approval. Is there a way to expedite my request?
All requests should be sent directly to the Position Approval Committee mailbox – PositionApprovalCommittee@northwestern.edu. Generally, the Position Approval Committee will review requests by the date they are received. However, requests that are time-sensitive (e.g. pending offers) will receive priority.

Can I request a waiver or exemption from this new process?
The Position Management Process applies to most staff, temporary and contractor staffing needs. Staff positions that are 70 to 100 percent funded through sponsored research grants and temporary staff and independent contractors whose services cost less than $2,000 are exempt from the process.

Can I fill vacant positions or backfills with temporary employees?
All staff and temporary positions will need to be reviewed and approved by the Position Approval Committee. This includes temporary employees hired by Northwestern, contractors hired through third-party staffing agencies, and/or independent contractor staffing.

Are we still able to reclassify, promote, or transfer current employees to fill needs during this time?
All reclassification, transfer, pay changes, and promotion requests must flow through the Position Management Process.

Can I bring on an unpaid intern/volunteer in lieu of regular staff?
In most cases no. Please refer to Northwestern’s Intern and Volunteer guidelines for more information on Northwestern’s criteria for Interns and Volunteers.

How will requests be prioritized by the Position Approval Committee?
Generally, the Position Approval Committee will review requests by the date they are received. However, requests that are time-sensitive (e.g. pending offers) will receive priority.

The Position Request Form and Temporary/Contractor Request Form both ask for documentation to demonstrate that sufficient funding is available to support the position or assignment. Some reports may show a deficit at the time of submission. How will this be clarified?
The Position Request Form and Temporary/Contractor Request Form include a field to provide an explanation if the budget documentation does not sufficiently demonstrate that funding is available.
Staff Positions

I already have a position posted. Can I continue recruiting?
The Position Management Process is effective immediately. Your job posting will remain active online until a final
determination is made on its status. However, all offers should be held until the position has completed the Position
Management Process. On February 5, 2018, a central Position Approval Committee began reviewing staff position
requests and temporary/contractor hiring requests. Only requests submitted to, and approved by, the Position Approval
Committee will be processed for next steps.

I already have a position posted, however I have not yet extended an offer of employment. Will the position be
cancelled?
Your Job Posting will remain active online until a final determination is made on its status.

I am already at offer stage with the Candidate of Choice. Can I move forward with the offer?
All offers should be held until the position has completed the Position Management Process. If approved, the position will
need to go through the Approval to Hire Process which includes school/unit review and approval by the Associate
Dean/Head of Administration, followed by review and approval by HR Talent Acquisition. Once all approvals are granted,
an offer can be verbally extended to the candidate.

An offer of employment has already been extended to my Candidate of Choice. Will the position and offer now
need to be reviewed?
Employment offers that have already been extended and accepted will be honored. Candidates that were offered
employment at Northwestern prior to February 5, 2018 should continue through the new hire process.

I would like to change the hours of a current staff member from 20 hours per week (50% FTE) to 40 hours per
week (100% FTE). Does the change need to be reviewed by the Position Approval Committee?
Yes, if the change in hours leads to an increase in salary expense, it will need to flow through the Position Management
Process. However, if the change in hours results in a decrease in salary expense, it does not need to flow through the
process.

Are staff appointments of faculty in scope?
Non-executive staff positions that require a faculty appointment need to flow through the Position Management Process.

How will offers negotiations be reviewed and approved quickly to avoid losing candidates?
Prior to extending a verbal offer, the Approval to Hire form should be completed and approved at the School/Unit level.
Following School/Unit approval the Approval to Hire form should be submitted to HR Talent Acquisition for review. Offers
will be reviewed by HR Talent Acquisition within one business day. Offers that align to the target annualized salary on the
approved Position Request Form will not need additional review from the Position Approval Committee.

If a reclassification is resulting in a salary decrease (overall cost savings), does that need to go through the
Position Management Process?
If the position is being reclassified as a result of a vacancy, and the intention is to fill the reclassified position, it will need
to flow through the Position Management Process.

Temporary/Contractor Hiring

Can I have my temporary worker or contractor begin work while Position Management Process approval is
pending?
No, approval must be granted through Position Approval Committee before work can begin.

If I am using the Temporary Staffing Center to source and recruit my temporary worker, do I still need to
complete the Temporary Requisition Form?
No, the Temporary/Contractor Request Form will replace the temporary requisition form. If the Temporary/Contractor
Request Form is approved by the Position Approval Committee, it can then be submitted to the Temporary Staffing Center
at tccadmin@northwestern.edu

If I need to make changes to the pay rate, assignment length or funding source, can I do so via the Temp Panel?
If changes need to be made to pay rate, assignment length and/or funding source for any temporary assignment, the Temporary/Contractor Request Form should be updated and sent to the Position Approval Committee for review. Upon approval from the committee, the changes can be made in the Temp Panel.