COVID-19 INTERIM REDUCTION IN FORCE/HOURS POLICY

This interim policy addresses reductions in force and reductions in hours for eligible employees to mitigate the severe fiscal challenges faced by the University as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. While in effect, this interim policy shall supersede any conflicting or inconsistent provisions of existing University policies, and shall supersede the following policies in their entirety:

- Non-Exempt Staff Reduction in Force
- Non-Exempt Employee Termination/Notification
- Exempt Employee Termination of Employment/Notification

This interim policy is applicable to all full-time, benefitted employees except those covered by the following collective bargaining agreements: AAUP, University of Delaware Chapter; AFSCME, Local 439; AFSCME Local 3472.

Employment at the University is employment-at-will, and nothing in this interim policy changes the at-will status of University employees. Nor does this interim policy change the University’s right to terminate an employee immediately under appropriate circumstances. Employees whose salaries are dependent on external sources of funds, such as grants, contracts or overhead from grants or contracts, may be terminated without the notice period set forth in this interim policy if such funding expires or becomes inadequate, although the University will strive to give as much notice as possible. Departments must consult with Employee Relations before implementing any termination action.

Definitions:

Reduction in Force
A reduction-in-force is a reduction in any number of eligible employees for a period that exceeds six months. Employees who are selected for a reduction-in-force may be eligible for recall to their positions within 12 months of their separation date at the sole discretion of the University.

Reduction in Hours
A reduction in hours occurs when an employee’s regular weekly hours and corresponding pay are reduced by 100% for a period not to exceed six months or up to 50% for a period not to exceed one year.

Procedure:

1. Determination
   a. Reduction in Force

      The College/Division leadership, in consultation with their HR Manager or Department of Human Resources as appropriate, shall determine which employees will be subject to a reduction-in-force by considering the needs of the department, the need for the position and employee performance.

      Length of continuous University service may be considered in selecting employees for a reduction-in-force if all other factors are equal.

      Individuals making these selections should be familiar with the University’s Non-Discrimination Policy and ensure that their decisions are not in violation of such policy.
b. **Reduction in Hours**

The department or unit head, in consultation with their HR Manager or Department of Human Resources as appropriate, shall determine which employees will be subject to a reduction-in-hours by considering the needs of the department and the current workload of the position.

Length of continuous University service may be considered in selecting employees for a reduction-in-hours if all other factors are equal.

Individuals making these selections should be familiar with the University's [Non-Discrimination Policy](#) and ensure that their decisions are not in violation of such policy.

The department or unit head must obtain guidance from their HR Manager or the Office of Human Resources concerning specific limitations related to reductions in hours.

2. **Notification**

   a. **Reduction in Force**

   Employees who are selected for a reduction-in-force shall be notified by their department or unit head at least 3 months in advance of the effective date but may be relieved of their work obligations immediately. Employees will be expected to return any University-owned property to the University within 5 business days of the last day they are expected to report for work. Employees will be eligible to receive a payment for any earned but unused vacation time up to the maximum amount allowed under University policy after the notice period.

   b. **Reduction in Hours**

   Employees whose hours are reduced shall be notified by their department or unit head at least 7 calendar days prior to the effective date for reductions between 50% and 100% and 14 calendar days for reductions of 100%.

3. **Continuation of Benefits**

   a. **Reduction in Force**

   Employees selected for a reduction-in-force will maintain all benefits during the 3-month notice period and will have the opportunity to continue health benefits after the notice period through COBRA at their own expense.

   b. **Reduction in Hours**

   Employees selected for a reduction in hours who work at least 75% of their regular weekly hours (minimum of 28.5 hours per week) shall maintain all benefits, subject to their normal employee contributions. Employees selected for a reduction in hours who work less than 75% of their regular weekly hours will receive a reduced University contribution towards these benefits. Employees will retain their University identification cards and email accounts but may not conduct University business or operate any University-owned vehicle outside of their reduced hours.