

# HOWARD UNIVERSITY POLICY

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**Policy Number:** 500-013: Human Resources  
**Policy Title:** STAFF SEPARATION POLICY  
**Responsible Officer:** Chief Human Resources Officer  
**Responsible Offices:** Office of Human Resources (OHR)  
**Effective Date:** November 6, 2014

## I. POLICY STATEMENT

Howard University (“the University”) is committed to separation procedures that are fair, consistent, and in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. Accordingly, all University entities including, but not limited to, Sponsored Research (grants) and Howard University Hospital, are required to follow this policy regarding the separation process.

To ensure that all employees are aware of the requirements in this policy, this policy will be disseminated to the University community through its standard employee email communication protocol, social media, and through the University policy and OHR websites. Cabinet officers, deans, directors, department chairs, principal investigators, and budget officers shall attest by way of signature acknowledgement to having read the policy and accompanying procedures and their consent to adhere thereto. A record of their attestations shall be maintained by OHR and updated periodically.

## II. RATIONALE

It is critical that procedures governing the separation process be followed consistently across the University. Timely separation actions provide accurate and real-time employment data necessary to manage employee benefits and reporting requirements, ensure timely processing of final pay in accordance with District of Columbia laws, and prevent overpayments to separated employees.

## III. ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

This policy applies to all entities within the University including, but not limited to, Sponsored Research and Howard University Hospital.

## IV. DEFINITIONS

A. **At Will Employees** – Employees hired after July 1, 1999, and/or those employees who have changed jobs, transferred or been reassigned and/or have had their jobs reclassified. These employees have the right to terminate their employment with the

University at any time, for any reason, or for no reason. Similarly, the University has the right to terminate their employment at any time, for any reason, or for no reason.

- B. **Grant Employees** – Either full- or part-time employees hired into positions that are funded by grants. Otherwise, grant employees are the same as At Will Employees.
- C. **Handbook Employees** – Employees hired before July 1, 1999, who have never changed jobs, transferred or been reassigned and/or have not had their job reclassified.
- D. **Involuntary Separations** – An employment action through which the University ends an employee’s service based upon the end of an appointment, a disciplinary reason or for any administrative purpose including, but not limited to, achieving the business needs of the University.
- E. **Resignation** – A voluntary separation action by the employee to end employment with the University.
- F. **Retirement** – A voluntary separation action by a retirement-eligible employee to end employment with the University through initiating the retirement process.
- G. **Separation** – A voluntary or an involuntary action resulting in the end of an employee’s employment with the University.
- H. **Temporary Employees** – Those employees who are hired for a fixed period of time and therefore, are provided, at the time of hire, with the ending date of employment. If it becomes necessary to involuntarily separate temporary employees for either disciplinary reasons or the business needs of the University, the involuntary separation process must be followed.
- I. **Union Employees** – Those University employees who are members of a collective bargaining unit as defined by a current collective bargaining agreement between the University and their duly authorized collective bargaining representative. Union employees may only be separated in accordance with their respective bargaining agreements as overseen by the Office of the General Counsel.
- J. **Voluntary Separation** – An action through which an employee decides on his or her own accord to end employment with Howard University. The two forms of voluntary separation are resignation and retirement.
- K. **Wage Employees** – Those employees hired on an hourly basis for no longer than 180 days, and who are not entitled to benefits. If it becomes necessary to involuntarily separate wage employees, the involuntary separation process must be followed.

## V. **POLICY PROCEDURES**

Separations may occur based upon resignation, retirement, for disciplinary reasons, end of appointments, reductions in force/reorganizations, and/or outsourcing. Employees who may be affected by separations include both those in At Will and Handbook full and part time positions, as well as those in union positions provided their separations have been appropriately vetted through the Office of the General Counsel. Those in grant, temporary, and wage positions may also be affected.

To ensure that the University is compliant with its responsibilities governing voluntary and involuntary separations, the following is required:

**A. Voluntary Separations** (For At Will, Handbook, Grant, Temporary, Wage, and Union Employees)

1. **Resignation** – upon receipt of a resignation letter from an employee and in order to avoid any overpayments, the separating manager must immediately enter a Separation ePAR (Resignation) with an effective date of the first full business day after the day of resignation indicated by the employee.
2. **Retirement** – upon receipt of the retirement notification letter from the employee and in order to avoid any overpayments, the separating manager must immediately enter a Separation ePAR (Retirement) with an effective date of the first full business day after the date of retirement indicated by the employee. The Department of Benefits and Pension Administration must verify that the manager has separated the employee in PeopleSoft before the first retirement check can be disbursed.
3. Final salary and annual leave in accordance with the *500-0008 Annual Leave Policy* shall be made within seven (7) days or the next payday, whichever is sooner.
4. All University property must be returned to the separating manager no later than the day of separation via the Exit Property Clearance Checklist. The Checklist itself must be submitted by the separating manager to the Department of Employee Relations. The separating manager must also verify that the separating employee has satisfied all of his or her outstanding financial obligations owed to the University.

**B. Involuntary Separations** (For At Will, Handbook, Grant, Temporary, Wage and Union employees for end of appointments, disciplinary reasons and/or business needs)

1. Managers and supervisors must contact the Department of Employee Relations via email or phone to initiate the separation process. The Department of Employee Relations shall provide the separating department with both instructive guidance as well as the document templates required to effect an involuntary separation. Upon receipt of all required documentation from the separating department, the Department of Employee Relations will approve and seek legal sufficiency review and approval from the Office of the General Counsel before an involuntary separation can be executed. The Department of Employee Relations will enter the Disciplinary ePAR or Separation ePAR into the PeopleSoft system and provide the separating department with all separation documents to be issued to the employee. For some organizational efforts, and after receiving direction from the Department of Employee Relations, the Department of Compensation and Performance Management may enter the Separation ePARs.

2. Managers and supervisors must enter a Separation ePAR for all end of appointments regarding grants, wage and temporary employees at least two (2) weeks in advance of the appointment ending date.
3. No involuntary separations either for disciplinary reasons or business needs shall take place without initial consultation, review and approval by the Department of Employee Relations.
4. Final salary and annual leave in accordance with the Annual Leave Policy will be paid no later than the next business day after the date of separation.
5. All University property must be returned to the separating manager no later than the day of separation via the Exit Property Clearance Checklist. The checked and signed Checklist itself must be submitted by the separating manager to the Department of Employee Relations. The separating manager must also verify that the separating employee has satisfied all of his or her outstanding financial obligations owed to the University.
6. Death of an Employee – Departments must immediately enter a Separation ePAR into PeopleSoft upon notification of the death of an employee and provide written (email) notification to the Department of Benefits and Pension Administration.

## **VI. INTERIM POLICIES**

This policy supersedes all previous University policies.

## **VII. SANCTIONS**

Managers and supervisors violating this policy by failing to follow either the involuntary separation process or the voluntary separation process as stated above shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including separation from employment.

## **VIII. HYPERLINKS**

University Policy website: [www.howard.edu/policy](http://www.howard.edu/policy)

Involuntary Separation Procedures in detail: <http://www.hr.howard.edu/ER>

Exit Property Clearance Checklist:

[http://www.hr.howard.edu/Documents/Exit\\_Property\\_Clearance.pdf](http://www.hr.howard.edu/Documents/Exit_Property_Clearance.pdf)

Related Policies:

[\*500-008 Annual Leave Policy\*](#)

[\*500-012 University Hiring Policy\*](#)