

Surviving a Layoff (University Support Staff) - FAQ

1. What are some reasons for doing a layoff?

Shortage of either work or funds is the most common reason for doing a layoff. A reduction in workforce, caused by either program changes or as the result of reorganization, can be other reasons that could create a layoff situation.

2. If there is a reduction in the budget or programs are cut, will that always be handled as a layoff situation?

Not necessarily. A reduction in the University Support Staff (USS) workforce can be managed in different ways by the University (i.e., furlough, transfer of the affected employee to an available vacancy) in order to save funds.

3. Are there USS positions for which layoff procedures do not apply?

Any position in which an individual was hired on a limited term basis, or a position designated as contingent on funding, will not be subject to layoff provisions. To determine if your position has either of these designations, check your offer letter or annual salary notice.

4. Are layoff procedures different for union covered positions?

Positions covered by labor unions are subject to any layoff provisions as specified under the applicable Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) included on the HR/EO website at www.hreo.ku.edu/policies_procedures/category_details/44.

5. What is a layoff score and when is it calculated?

Layoff scores are used to determine the order in which employees are laid off in the event that a designated area's layoff request includes multiple positions within the same job title.

6. How is a layoff score calculated?

Layoff scores shall be computed according to the formula: $A \times 2 \times L$, where A and L have the following values: (1) A = the average of the 4 most recent performance review ratings (if available) of the employee and L = the length of service, expressed in months for non-union covered positions and by years for 1290PE members. Length of service for a retired employee who has returned to work will be calculated on the same basis as a new hire.

The average for the performance review (A) shall be based on the following point scale: 9 = exceptional; 6 = exceeds expectations; 3 = meets expectations; and 0 = unsatisfactory. Evaluations submitted after the layoff notice has been received by HR/EO will not be included in determining this average.

7. If my position is eliminated as the result of budget reduction, and I have a layoff score that is higher than other workers in my job title at the University, won't the individual with the lowest score be laid off?

Layoffs are applied only to a designated area or unit as determined by the Director of HR/EO. If there are several workers in the designated area who have been designated for layoff with the same job title, layoff scores are calculated for all, and the individual with the lowest score is the one that will be identified for layoff if there are no staff serving on initial probation.

8. What happens if it is determined that I have the lowest layoff score or my position is the only one within the unit being laid-off?

Representatives from HR/EO will work with you to identify vacant positions and they will coordinate interviews for any job for which you meet the minimum qualifications. Alternatives to layoff may be available such as a transfer or demotion into a vacant USS position elsewhere within the University. If placement in a vacant position isn't possible, then closer to the layoff effective date, HR/EO will look at possibly terminating an employee who is serving on initial probation in a job title for which you qualify.

9. How will Human Resources/Equal Opportunity decide which employee on initial probation to displace?

HR/EO will first determine whether or not there are probationers in your same job title. In this case, it's usually the last hired probationer that will be the first terminated. In some cases, if a position requires certain job skills, and you do not possess those skills, we will look at the next most recent hired probationary employee.

10. If I am placed within a different unit/area, will I be subject to probationary procedures?

All individuals placed within a different unit/area will be placed on initial probationary status, regardless of previous years of service within the University.

11. If I am placed on initial probationary status due to a layoff placement, at what time will I be evaluated?

HR/EO will be in contact with the departmental supervisor no later than three months after placement to determine if the job is a good fit. At that time the supervisor or HR/EO could request the probationary period to be lifted, continued to the end of the six months probationary period, or even extended beyond the initial six months depending upon the circumstances. In the event that a performance issue has been identified, an employee may be terminated at anytime while on initial probationary status.

12. If I have the lowest layoff score or there is no option for placement into a probationary or vacant position that I qualify for, what will happen?

In this case you will be laid off.

13. What if there aren't any vacancies and I don't want to displace a probationary worker?

You may request to be laid off voluntarily.

14. If I elect to be laid off, will I be eligible for unemployment benefits?

If you are laid off because there is no position available or if the alternative position offered represents a significant decrease in pay, you generally should be eligible for unemployment benefits. However, if a comparable position is offered (your same shift or even a different shift) and refused, you may be ruled ineligible for unemployment compensation by the agency (Kansas Department of Labor) that makes those determinations.

Also, before being laid off, you should contact HR/EO Benefits (864-4946) for information about how your benefits will be affected. Benefits can also provide information regarding COBRA coverage for continuation of health insurance benefits as necessary.

15. What if I'm offered a position, but I don't like the hours or the work assignment?

You have the option of declining the position and the layoff will proceed, but remember to do so may affect your eligibility for unemployment.

16. If there are several openings, do I get to choose the position I want to accept?

HR/EO tries to consider your preference about job placement. However, job qualifications will be evaluated and feedback will be collected from the hiring department before making a placement assignment. The final placement decision will be made by the Director of HR/EO.

17. If I decide to accept placement to an available position in a different salary band rather than be laid off, what happens to my pay?

Contingent upon the availability of funds, the University will attempt to match your current rate, provided that it is within the salary band for the new job title. However, a lower salary may be offered.

18. If I'm laid off, will I get priority consideration on rehire for future openings?

Anyone laid off, either voluntarily or involuntarily, will be given strong consideration for rehire for USS positions for 6 months after the effective date of the layoff. This consideration applies only to jobs with the same title and for which all minimum qualifications have been met. It is important that you contact the [HR/EO Employment Office](#) at 785-864-3686 to let them know when you have made application for a position.

19. What support can Human Resources/Equal Opportunity provide to employees facing layoff?

HR/EO staff, [Kathleen Ames-Oliver](#) (864-7413) and [Terry Proctor](#) (864-7412), can provide support to staff wanting help with change and stress management.

For those preferring to seek support from outside the University, [LIFELINE](#) is available to you and your family through the last day of the month in which you work. LIFELINE counselors are available for contact on a 24-hour basis by calling 1-800-284-7575.

A listing of KU job openings is available at [jobs.ku.edu](#). For assistance with the job search process, including resume writing and interview coaching, contact [Lynn George](#) (864-3686), [Cindy Nitcher](#) (864-2256), or [Sarah Campbell](#) (864-7418).

[HR/EO Benefits](#) (864-4946) can provide information regarding how your benefits will be impacted in the event you are laid off.

20. What additional information is available regarding layoff policies and procedures?

[Layoff Policy/Procedures for University Support Staff \(USS\)](#)

[Surviving a Layoff \(USS\)](#)

[University Support Staff \(USS\) Handbook \(PDF\)](#)