

Supplemental HR FAQs for Limited Business Operations collected by  
the School of Medicine Dean's Office  
Updated: May 29, 2020  
(NOTE: New/revised FAQs are highlighted in RED)

**1. Should departments continue to submit title changes associated with the Research Career Ladder?**

- Yes, departments should continue with respective title changes unless otherwise stated. Please refer to the process document listed with your spreadsheet.

**2. What is the status of the implementation of the Clinical Trials Career Ladder?**

- Departments will be able to proceed with submitting ACT docs as planned beginning **Monday, March 23**, for employees that are moving to the Clinical Research Career Ladder. Please be advised: if any employees are not showing up correctly in Oracle, the spreadsheet included in the original email communication must be completed and returned to Daron Drew, copying Brenda Adams, so that we can review and get Budget to add/correct the employee's information, as needed. Please understand the March 23<sup>rd</sup> date does NOT include employees that have not received a Clinical Research Ladder letter or were a part of Phase VIII. Compensation will advise as soon as Phase VIII and any other additional employees have been reclassified in Oracle.

HR Compensation has not yet begun the process of costing these positions. At this time, employees should be brought up to the minimum of their new job grade unless other arrangements have been made.

**3. Are the new Clinical Research Career Ladder titles available for use?**

- Yes. New titles on the Clinical Research Career Ladder are available through the Red Cap process for refills and classify new. Please ensure to follow the Redcap process (as indicated in the process document previously distributed) prior to the submission of CRFs. An exception request must be approved after the Red Cap review and prior to submitting a CRF to create a new position. Reclassifications are currently on hold.

**4. How will non-exempt employees be paid effective May 10, 2020?**

Please see the [chart below provided by HR on Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020](#) (Note: a link to full document is provided)

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- **Please note** that superscripts 1 and 2 at the bottom of the table above are intended to reflect that these two points apply specifically to employees working rotating schedules for reasons related to Covid-19.

- Yes, please follow the standard process in PeopleAdmin. It is imperative that the faculty member is placed in the SOM I-9 workflow to schedule the visit PRIOR to their start date.

**6. How do international employees complete the I-9 process during limited business operations?**

- International employees can make appointments with Aston and Sarah here <https://www.uab.edu/global/employees-scholars/international-faculty-staff/book-an-appointment> for an I-9 meeting, and one of the ISSS staff can help on an as-needed basis.

**7. Does the electronic telecommute agreement follow the normal DocuSign workflow?**

*Staff*

- No, the agreements do not follow the standard DocuSign workflow, like financial documents. Once the document is signed by the employee, it routes automatically to employee's supervisor, then to Central HR. Please see workflow document attached.
- Departments are asked to keep a copy on file.

*Faculty*

- No, the agreements do not follow the standard DocuSign workflow, like financial documents. Once the document is signed by the faculty member, it routes automatically to the Chair, then to Central HR. Please see workflow document attached.
- Departments are asked to keep a copy on file.

**8. If a faculty did not get the telecommuting agreement and it's not in their junk or quarantined lists, who should they contact?**

- If a faculty member did not receive the agreement, please ask them to email [humanresources@uab.edu](mailto:humanresources@uab.edu) and HR will send them a link directly.

**9. Should faculty only sign the telecommuting agreement if they are teaching remotely full time (or as the majority of their job function)?**

- All faculty members (full-time, part-time, some of the time) working remotely during limited business operations should complete the temporary telecommuting agreement. This includes any faculty members slated to teach the remainder of the semester since courses will remain on-line through commencement.

**10. What if my original limited operational staffing plan has changed due to operational needs?**

- A3s and some A2s have received furlough notices. Departments should complete the "Return from Furlough" form to request institutional approval for a furloughed employee to return to work.

**11. Will International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) continue to process H-1B petitions during limited operations?**

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- ISSS will continue to process H-1B petitions during limited operations and prioritizing those with unique circumstances. There are arrangements in place with Central HR and HSF to obtain signatures once per week. Financial Affairs will issue paper checks for the most urgent cases if needed.

**12. Are VISA applications being processed during limited operations?**

- Please submit payment requests as critical/emergency payments to avoid delays in onboarding faculty. Please submit the entire application and any other documents with the back-up documentation so that all necessary information can be sent out with the check. Since checks cannot be picked up during limited business operations, Financial Affairs is requesting departments to use call extension as they will then be printed in a separate group and easier to find.

**13. Are departments permitted to submit salary reclasses and funding source changes during limited operations?**

- During limited business operations, salary reclasses are still possible. Be sure to notify those in the workflow to approve and the changes should upload nightly as usual.
- As for funding source changes, all containing all GL sources do not require approval by Central Administration. We perceive the only delay to be workflow approvals due to remote working. All containing GA sources do require approval by Central Administration. If there is GA Accounting staff approving items remotely, we perceive approvals may be slow or non-existent until normal operations resume.

**14. What guidelines have we received for Workgroup C?**

- Please see guidelines for Workgroup C similar to those sent out for Workgroup A in the following link: <https://www.uab.edu/news/coronavirus> and scroll to Sunday March 15 Limited Business Operations. See *Click Here to Access Instructions for Workgroup C*. Temporary salary reductions for UAB and HSF Workgroup C employees are effective May 10, 2020 through December 31, 2020. Central Human Resources will process salary reductions for UAB and HSF Workgroup C employees. Central Human Resources will also send letters to Workgroup C employees with details about the salary reductions.
- Refer to FAQs distributed in LaKisha Mack's Friday, May 8, 2020 communication.

**15. Are UAB staff employment offers currently on hold?**

- Exceptions have been approved for candidates with background checks "in process" and those with a completed background check and no letter of offer. Recruiters will contact departments regarding these situations.

**16. Employees who have been issued a transfer letter and have submitted a notice. Should the transfer continue?**

- If any employee is in the process of transferring to another position within UAB (has a transfer letter and has submitted a resignation), the transfer will continue unless we learn otherwise from Central Admin.

**17. A background check was fully completed for a permanent, full-time staff hire last week; however, Recruitment Services has not issued a hire letter. Will this staff hire be allowed to proceed?**

- Exceptions have been approved for candidates with background checks "in process" and those with a completed background check and no letter of offer. Recruiters will contact departments regarding these situations.

**18. A background check was initiated during limited business operations and is "in process". Will this staff hire be allowed to proceed?**

- If a hire letter has not been issued, an exception is not required if the background was in process or in 'complete' status. HR Recruitment Services will reach out to the hiring manager to coordinate the details of the offer.

**19. What should be done if an employee tests positive for coronavirus?**

- If an employee is working on campus and tests positive for COVID-19, supervisor should (1) contact your Executive Administrator, (2) instruct the employee to go/stay home, and (3) advise the employee to complete an Employee COVID exposure form. You do not need to try to determine who may have been exposed. There is a process in place to make appropriate assessments and notifications to those who may have been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19.
- The Executive Administrator should contact Earlisha Williams to develop a plan of communication for those impacted, when necessary.

**20. Can the department rescind a letter of intent (LOI) or offer (LOO) for a faculty recruit?**

- If the letter was not designed to be an offer binding on UAB, but just an indication of a desire to keep talking, then it is not a documented offer and therefore can be rescinded. A letter of intent should fall into this category. Legal suggests that if a department wants to go this route that the actual wording of the LOI will have to be reviewed. Also, if the LOI is drafted as an actual offer, the letter will be required for further review.

**21. Is the hiring suspension exception request form only required for full-time faculty and staff?**

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- Exemption requests are required for full-time (01), part-time (03), irregular (04), and temporary (02) faculty and staff positions.

**22. Are staff job reclassifications still permitted?**

Job reclassifications of filled and vacant positions are on hold under the temporary hiring restrictions. Job reclassifications are strongly discouraged during limited business operations. However, the school will review all requests on a case-by-case basis. Department leadership must display a substantial business need during limited business operations.

**23. Is an exception request required to hire a Postdoctoral Employee (status 21) or Postdoctoral Trainee (Status 20)?**

- The Office of Postdoctoral Education is following HR's guidance as described in the link below.

<https://www.uab.edu/humanresources/home/temp-hiring-suspension>

A new hire with an offer letter dated March 16<sup>th</sup> or later requires confirmation of funding and requires department and school-level approval. This applies to Postdoctoral Employee (status 21) or a Postdoctoral Trainee (status 20).

- Going forward (i.e. beyond the current hiring-freeze), the [Postdoc Hire Approval Form](#) will be used for all newly hired and reappointed postdocs. The new form requires documented confirmation of funding support for the new hire. This approval will then be uploaded to the Postdoc office as part of the LOO request.
- **While we are operating under limited operations, the School of Medicine will continue to require a hiring exception for newly appointed postdocs.** Please see the process described below:

**Step 1)** Department must complete a [Postdoc Hire Approval Form](#) and get appropriate department-level signatures.

**Step 2)** Department completes and submits the [DocuSign Form](#), which routes a request for a hiring exception to the School of Medicine. The department requestor must attach the completed Postdoc Hire Approval Form to the [DocuSign Form](#). Note: Janice Ward's name is listed by default however, we will route the form appropriately.

**Step 3)** Once the DocuSign form is approved by the School of Medicine, the approved exception form will be returned to the department requestor.

**Step 4)** The department requestor may proceed with following the OPE process outlined via this URL <https://www.uab.edu/postdocs/appointmentprocess>

**Step 5)** In step #2 of the **OPE process** (see link directly above), the department requestor must upload both the confirmation of the hiring exception from the school and the Postdoc Hire Approval Form to OPE. At this point, the department requestor may wish to review additional information provided in the OPE Appointment Process.

**24. Is an exception request required for a Postdoctoral re-appointment letter?**

- No. A hiring exception is not required for Postdoctoral reappointments; however, OPE will require the new Postdoc Hire Approval Form mentioned in 25. The OPE process is outlined via this URL <https://www.uab.edu/postdocs/appointmentprocess>.

**25. Are new/rehires required to complete section 2 of the I-9 in process while under limited business operations?**

- Yes, UAB is still required to verify the employee's original documents in person in order to complete section 2 of the I-9 within 3 business days after the employee's first day.
- UAB does allow remote I-9 completion for section 2, however the employee would need to go to a UAB approved person and/or location such as a notary, law or attorney's office or university HR specialist in their respective location if they are unable to report to UAB premises.
- Please contact Emily Finlen (efinlen@uab.edu) with the HR I-9 team for additional guidance.

**26. Under limited operations if a department needs to change a current faculty member's tenure status is the process the same as under normal operations process?**

- Yes, the process is the same as listed under current policies on the Provost Office website.
- The Provost Office will accept an electronic signature from the Chair while the university is under limited business operations.
- After the Chair signs the letter, please route the signed letter via email to Carlon Harris (carh1203@uab.edu) and we will route the letter for additional review.

**27. Is an exception request required to hire a new 04 irregular staff position?**

- Departments **do not** have to submit an exception request for **existing** 04 Irregular staff; however, departments **will need to submit a request for any new 04** Irregular staff that they wish to hire. Guidance on 04 Faculty/Instructor positions should come from the Provost Office.

**28. Has SOM's prior review process for appointing 01 and 03 faculty changed?**

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- The prior review process is the same; however, documentation of an approved hiring exception should be submitted along with the prior review packet

**29. Are there changes in business operations of the Graduate Medical Education Office (GME) during the limited business operations period?**

- GME is conducting "business as usual". Appointments and promotions in the GME are proceeding as usual.

**30. If we do not have an existing recruitment request in the People Admin system, will one exception request satisfy requirements for (1) recruiting for the position and (2) extending an offer to a candidate?**

- Yes, one exception is required for recruitment and extending an offer.

**31. Can we still recruit for multiple positions within one People Admin recruitment requisition? Will one exception form suffice in this scenario?**

- Yes, multiple positions can be recruited on one recruitment requisition. Details of multiple recruits should be outlined on the exception form.

**32. Per the announcement on Monday, April 6, 2020, faculty exceptions will be processed using the UAB People Admin requisitions process. Will a new exception request be required if one has already been submitted through the DocuSign process?**

- Submitting the exception form in DocuSign will remain the first step in the new process for faculty hire exceptions. Once the form is signed / approved, departments will upload the signed/approved form in People Admin and follow the remaining steps.

**33. Are students allowed to work during limited or modified business operations?**

- All summer K- 12 laboratory experiences are cancelled for summer 2020.
- During ongoing limited operations, student employees, excluding those working through Federal Work Study (FWS), will be paid for only the time they work. Students unable to work remotely will not be paid. FWS students will be paid based on data input by the supervisor in KRONOS regardless of their hours worked. This is in accordance with Federal Guidelines. The pay period ending April 25, 2020 was the last pay period for students to earn work study funds for the Spring 2020 semester. Students received their final pay checks for Spring 2020 work study on Friday, May 1. With the continuation of online/alternative instruction for the Summer 2020 semester, students will not be able to earn summer work-study funds, outside of approved special circumstances.



**34. Can employee who contribute to a Dependent Flexible Spending Account modify their contributions if their facilities is closed?**

- Yes, employees can modify their Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts by providing proof that the facility is closed. The change must be submit within 31 days of the documented closure.
- Changes should be submitted through UAB For Me Portal at [www.uab.edu/hrintouch](http://www.uab.edu/hrintouch)
- Please contact Aimee Miller (amiller1@uab.edu ) for additional questions and/or concerns.

**35. Is a business plan required for a staff position exception?**

- A business plan is only required for faculty exception requests. It is fine to include a business plan for staff, but it is not required.

**36. Is an exception approval required for a faculty hire if a candidate was in the "Offer Accepted" phase in People Admin prior to the temporary hiring suspension?**

- No, an exception is not required if a faculty candidate was in the "Offer Accepted" phase prior to the hiring suspension. The temporary hiring suspension began on March 23, 2020.

**37. What is the hiring exception process for a 07 Resident appointed in a departmental org (a 31-org range)?**

- 07 Residents appointed in a 31-org range require a hiring exception. Department must use the Docusign Hiring Exception form. The Dean's Office must approve; however, these requests do not require approval from the Provost/President.

**38. What is the hiring exception process for Instructor/Fellows?**

- If appointed on the UAB-side in a Temporary Full-time (02) assignment category, newly appointed Instructor/Fellows require a faculty hiring exception. The Docusign Hiring Exception form must be completed and approved.
- If extending/renewing a current Instructor/Fellow in a Temporary Full-time (02) assignment category, a hiring exception is not required. Please follow the usual process for extending a Temporary Full-time (02) assignment.
- If appointed only on the HSF-side, a faculty hiring exception is still required using the Docusign Hiring Exception form. However, these requests only require approval by the School-level Clinical Review Committee. Approval from the Provost and President are not required.

**39. Are departments permitted to proceed with equity reviews for employees in the Clinical Trial Ladder on June 1, 2020 as originally communicated?**

- Departments are asked not to submit batch equity requests until additional guidance is provided by the School. Single equity requests, however, are permitted as needed. These requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

**40. Is it appropriate for a furloughed employee to come to an office or lab space prior to May 10 for work purposes?**

- Yes, the employee can come to the office / lab PRIOR to May 10 to finalize work or arrange items in a lab environment in an effort to prepare for the furlough period. The employee should work with a supervisor to ensure social distancing measures are being followed.

**41. Will it be permissible for a furloughed employee to come to his/her work station for any reason during the furlough period: May 10 – July 31, 2020?**

- No. The employee is on unpaid leave of absence and should not be in the work area. If an employee is coming to collect a personal item, perhaps that can be considered, but the furloughed employee should not come to the work area for any work related reason.

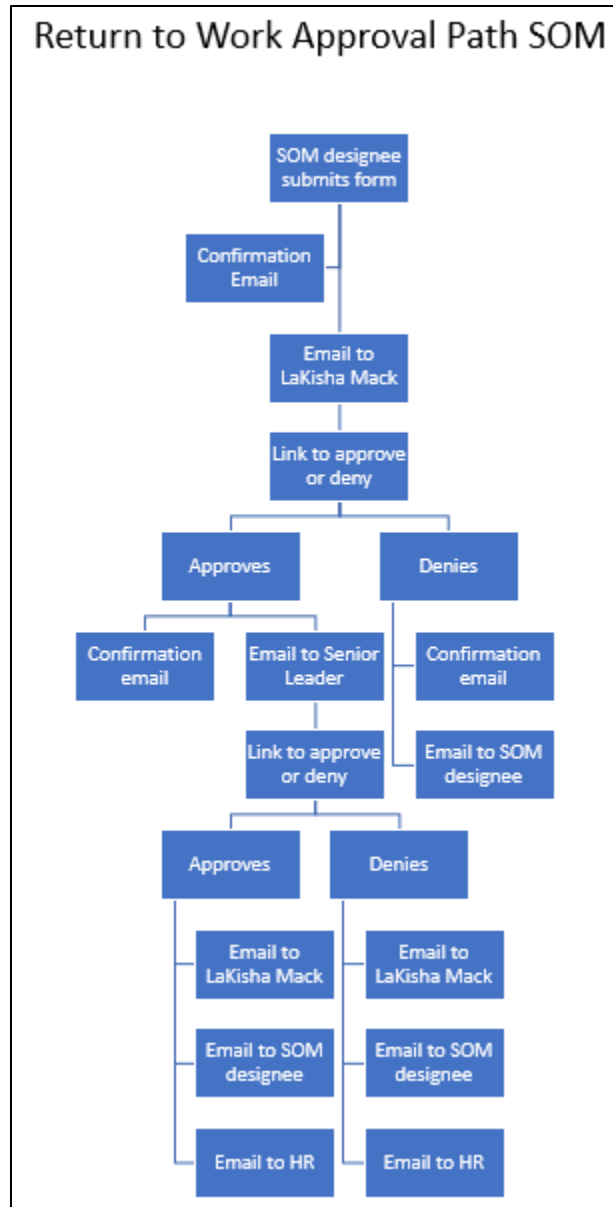
**42. Will it be permissible for supervisors / managers to communicate with furloughed employees to determine answers to work-related questions during the furlough period: May 10 – July 31, 2020?**

- The call should remain de minimis at best. These employees will be on an unpaid leave of absence during the furlough period. Departments should not engage them in work related issues. Extensive engagement could result in compensable time and may impact the employees' unemployment compensation benefits.

**43. Is it permissible for a furloughed employee to return to work prior to July 31, 2020?**

- If a department would like for a furloughed employee to return to work prior to the end of the furlough period, the department must submit an appeals form (Return from Furlough Form) for SOM and Institutional review and approval.
- Please see the table below showing the approval path of the Return from Furlough Form:

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**44. Are both UAB and HSF Workgroup C employees receiving salary reductions?**

- Yes. Temporary salary reductions for UAB and HSF employees are effective May 10 – December 31, 2020.

**45. Is the department responsible for processing staff salary reduction documents for Workgroup C?**

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- Central Human Resources will process salary reductions for UAB and HSF Workgroup C employees. Central Human Resources will also send letters to Workgroup C employees with details about the salary reductions

**46. Is an exception request required for faculty equity and retention request?**

- Yes, both faculty equity and retention request require an approved exception before being reviewed by the Provost. Please attach the letter to the DocuSign exception request. The letter should be signed by the Chair and have a signature line for both the Dean and the Provost.
- Upon notification of approval, please route your letter to the SOM Deans Office for signature and routing. Under limited business operations, letters may be routed electronically to Carlon Harris ([carh1203@uab.edu](mailto:carh1203@uab.edu)).

**47. Is it permissible to suspend an "04" monthly employee salary in lieu of terminating the employee under limited business operation?**

- Yes, in the interim, departments may place the employee on "Leave without Pay" in Oracle. Please add the proposed expected date of return to the ACT document upon submission.
- Employees may return prior to the proposed expected date of return at the manager's discretion. An appeal form is not necessary to return the employee. However, an Oracle document is required to restore the employee from the leave status.
- [Instructions for submitting ACT documents.](#)

**48. Is an exception approval required to hire a volunteer?**

- UAB does not currently require an exception approval to hire a staff volunteer. SOM, however, will provide guidelines in the coming days regarding exception requirements for STAFF volunteers in the School of Medicine.
- Please refer to exceptions required for FACULTY appointments, some requiring a volunteer UAB appointment. No additional exceptions will be required.
- **There is a hold on international volunteers/scholars until the end of the calendar year with the exception of visitors needed for exigent circumstances.**

**49. Is an exception request required for a staff probationary increase?**

- Yes, a Salary Consultation CRF is required for all probationary increases for staff, no matter the percentage.
- The rationale in the CRF should clearly outline the immediate need for the salary increase during limited business operations.
- All hiring exception attachments are required for submission.

**50. Can departments modify an employee's workgroup assignment?**

- Departments may modify an employee's workgroup assignment by submitting a Reclassification CRF.
- The CRF must clearly outline the need for the workgroup change and the employee's duties must support either the academic or clinical mission depending on the desired workgroup selection.
- All hiring exception attachments are required for submission.

**51. How is fringe charged for furloughed staff?**

- Furloughed staff are not paid during the furlough period, so no CFB will be charged.

**52. Will salary increases be allowed for faculty being reviewed for promotion and/or award of tenure?**

- Faculty currently being reviewed through the annual promotion and tenure process will be eligible for promotional increases. More detailed information will be provided in the coming days; however, the School expects the review process to be similar to last year. Also, forthcoming promotional increases will be submitted for many faculty impacted by a recent salary reduction. That being said, it is imperative for departments to keep detailed records regarding salary reductions, especially for faculty receiving promotional increases. This is necessary to ensure salaries are restored to the intended level when salary reductions are lifted.

**53. Are hiring exceptions still required under Modified Business Operations (color code yellow)?**

- The current hiring exception processes will continue to be reviewed as is under Modified Business Operations.

**54. Is it permissible for an employee to request an accommodation related to COVID-19?**

- Departments should proceed with the following approach:
  - a. Has the employee's physician recommended that the employee be absent from work or take a leave of absence?
    - i. If yes, the employee may request FMLA leave or EPSLA, if applicable.
    - ii. If no, the employee may not be eligible for medical leave. If the employee is not eligible for medical leave, proceed to the next step.

Is there a work accommodation that allows the employee to continue working?

- b. Considerations for reasonable work accommodations include:
  - i. Telework

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- ii. Change in work hours
- iii. Staggered scheduling
- iv. Alternating shifts
- v. Change in the way job duties are performed

*If leaders need additional guidance or help identifying appropriate accommodations contact the AWARE Program. The AWARE program at UAB provides disability-management services when an employee's job is affected by a physical, mental, or emotional impairment. In addition, the AWARE Program coordinates requests for reasonable accommodations.*

**55. Should the PPE form be completed at the department level rather than the division level?**

- The form can be completed by all units inclusive of Divisions.

**56. If we complete at the department level for our divisions, can we indicate multiple account numbers on the PPE form, along with percentages to charge to each?**

- Yes, there is a 'notes' section for additional information or even a "CALL ME FOR MORE INFORMATION" request

**57. Once the form is submitted, does it go to SOM for approval?**

- No, the form is being routed directly to University Purchasing. University Purchasing is triaging the requests to ensure requested items are available when needed.

**58. Do you have an idea of how long approval takes?**

- This will help with the "date needed by" field on the PPE form. Purchasing is shooting for no more than 24 hour turnaround time in responding to the requests.

**59. Once the form is approved, I'm assuming at that point, the requisition can be submitted with the approval included as supporting documentation.**

- No, effective with the adjustment to the PPE Sourcing Process made on Friday, May 29, requisitions should not be submitted by anyone other than University Purchasing. University Purchasing is working with each individual requestor / request and upon confirmation of details (what type masks, what size and type of gloves, etc.), University Purchasing will place the order on behalf of the department.

**60. Are accurate funding sources required when processing a CRF/PAR form?**

- Yes, for an accurate review while under limited business operations the funding source(s) that supports the position should be listed in the CRF.
- GL accounts should not be used in lieu of grant accounts for CRFs.

**61. For volunteer faculty appointments for physicians who do not come on campus but, have an affiliated appointment, is a comment required in the reentry dashboard?**

- If they are not coming to campus, no action is required.

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- Departments are encouraged to mark their current status as "REMOTE" or "NOTWORKING" and leaving the phase blank.
- Compliance requirements are going to be driven by those who are flagged as currently ONSITE or included in the upcoming phases. The expectation is that for the duration of the year, units will continually update the current status and also indicate which phase they are scheduled to return (where applicable).

**62. How do we treat those employees who are working rotating schedules? Examples include:**

- a. **EE works 2 days on-site and 3 days remotely**
- b. **EE works 3 days on-site but cannot work remotely**

- If the employee is coming on site for work on a regular schedule, they would need to be marked "onsite" and will be required to complete the UAB health check survey periodically.

**63. Will the reentry dashboard be updated to include departments HSF only faculty and staff?**

- No, the dashboard is run off the oracle database system and does not include data on HSF staff.

**64. What if my graduate students and post-docs did not receive an email to complete their research training, are they required to take the training and how should they access the training?**

- Yes, all GBS, MSTP, and MD-ARISE students and all postdocs are required to take the research training.
- They will receive an email for the training module in the coming days from Central HR with instructions on how to access and complete the training module.

**65. What is the process for undergraduate students working in research to return to work?**

The PI must:

- a) Include the proposed undergraduate student in their lab plan as with any other personnel.
- b) If approval in code orange has been given it does not need to be done again.
- c) The student like all personnel needs to register for the symptom tracker and pass the training.

Approval not in code orange:

- d) The PI must include permission from the undergraduate program director for the student to enter the PI's laboratory and this must be attached to the plan.
- e) The students must enroll for the symptom tracker and pass the training.
- f) Then the PI must add to their plan and have the modification reapproved by the Department.

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- g) PI applies for approval from VPR office using <https://www.uab.edu/research/home/process-to-request-exception-to-continue-on-campus-research> and adding the departmental plan.
- h) Once this is approved Department is responsible for final approval.

**66. Do furloughed employees receive TRS service credit during their furlough period?**

- No, TRS membership continues while on furlough but, no service credit is earned during the furlough period.

**67. When can furloughed employees expect to receive their first payment?**

- Employees who elected direct deposit will receive their payment on **Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**
- If an employee is missing a payment, the employee must contact the Alabama Department of Labor directly.

**68. Who should furloughed employees contact if they have questions regarding their furlough and/or unemployment payments?**

- Employees should email Employee Relations ([humanresources@uab.edu](mailto:humanresources@uab.edu)) for questions directly related to their furlough period.
- Employees should contact the Alabama Department of Labor for questions directly related to their payments, direct deposit, etc.

*Please note these FAQs are as of **Friday, May 29, 2020**, and subject to change.*