2018 Employee Resource Guide: Information for those affected by a reduction in force
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Preface

This guide, titled 2018 Employee Resource Guide: Information for those affected by a reduction in force, presents a summary of information drawn from University policies and procedures and the Transition Assistance Program document, as approved by the Board of Curators of the University of Missouri. The guide gives an overview of the resources available to employees affected by a reduction in force. The University reserves the right to add, amend or rescind any aspect of this guide at any time and for any reason. This guide is a reference resource only and the Transition Assistance Program document, applicable Human Resources (HR) policies and Collected Rules and Regulations (CRR) and benefit plan documents are the source of authority and control. If there is a conflict between the language in this guide and the language in any of the source policies, rules, programs or plans, the language in the source policies, rules, programs or plans apply. This guide does not create any contractual rights or alter at-will employment status.
What Happens If You Experience a Layoff: An Overview

When experiencing a layoff, it can be challenging to understand what your transition means. The graphic below contains a chronological list of frequently asked questions about the layoff process, transition assistance and leave of absence benefits. After this brief overview, read this guide for more complete information on the topics featured here.
Introduction

This guide details information on the support available to you upon notice of a layoff from your position with the University. It also answers many questions you may have about pay, benefits, retirement, career services and other offerings through the Transition Assistance Program (TAP).

Read this guide carefully. If you have a printed version, as opposed to electronic, please refer to the footnotes at the bottom of each page, which list the full URL for each hyperlink in the text. If you have questions, reach out to your campus human resources office or to the HR Service Center.

Layoff Notice and Final Regular Paycheck

If you’re an eligible employee affected by a workforce-reduction layoff, the University is required to either:

- Give written notice at least two weeks in advance of the layoff, or
- Give written notice that you will receive two weeks’ pay in lieu of notice, per HR 117: Layoff, found in the University’s Human Resources Policy Manual. In this situation, your two weeks of pay will come before TAP pay begins, if TAP pay is applicable.

You’ll receive your final regular paycheck based on your normal pay schedule. This check includes:

- Pay for all hours worked through your last day with your department;
- Pay for any available compensatory time (non-exempt);
- Accrued vacation pay; and
- Two weeks’ pay, if you are receiving two week’s pay in lieu of notice.

Layoff Leave of Absence

Eligible employees will be placed on a layoff leave of absence, which begins the day after the last day in the office, unless two weeks’ pay in lieu of notice is supplied, in which case, the layoff leave of absence begins the day after the two week period after you receive your notification. The length of the layoff leave of absence is based on the years of continuous regular employment immediately before the layoff:

- At least five years of continuous regular employment immediately before layoff: One year of layoff leave from the effective date of layoff.
- Less than five years: Three months of layoff leave from the effective date of layoff.

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1 https://umurl.us/hrsc
2 https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/hrm/hr100/hr117
The length of the layoff leave of absence determines how long insurance benefits with a University contribution are available. Hiring preference is also active during the layoff leave of absence.

**Transition Assistance Program (TAP)**

This section of the guide summarizes the TAP document as approved by the Board of Curators of the University of Missouri. TAP applies to all layoffs beginning on or after the date of the program’s approval by the Board of Curators of the University of Missouri through June 30, 2018. The full text of the TAP document is shown in Appendix C. For additional information or assistance, access the Transition Assistance and Layoff Support webpage.

**Introduction**

The University of Missouri System grants short term, temporary income (transition assistance pay), transition benefits and other transition services to eligible employees who experience an involuntary layoff. TAP enhances standard layoff (HR 117) provisions and is distinctly different from a layoff leave of absence. These two terms cover different periods of time and different types of assistance, as explained in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Layoff Leave of Absence</th>
<th>Transition Assistance Program (TAP) (assuming you submit your signed TAP Agreement)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If you have less than five years of continuous regular employment immediately prior to layoff: o Your layoff leave of absence will last three months.</td>
<td>▪ Your TAP period will be one week for each year of continuous regular employment you accumulate immediately prior to layoff, with a minimum of four weeks and a maximum of 26 weeks. o Eligible employees with less than four years of continuous regular employment will receive the minimum four weeks of TAP pay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If you have five or more years of continuous regular employment immediately prior to layoff: o Your layoff leave of absence will last one year.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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3 https://umurl.us/tap
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Assistance</th>
<th>Layoff Leave of Absence</th>
<th>Transition Assistance Program (TAP) (assuming you submit your signed TAP Agreement)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ You will have hiring preference in the department in which you were employed immediately prior to your layoff for the entire time period of your layoff leave of absence.</td>
<td>▪ You will receive TAP pay for the entire TAP time period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ You will receive subsidized insurance benefits for the entire period of your layoff leave of absence (i.e., the University will help pay your insurance premiums).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Eligibility**

If you’re a regular Administrative, Service and Support employee (see HR 101: Employee Status⁴ (HR101)) whose position is discontinued due to a reduction in the workforce, you may be eligible for transition assistance, regardless of funding source. To be eligible, you must have completed your probationary period.

To be eligible to receive transition assistance pay, you must sign the TAP Agreement received with your layoff notice letter, have it notarized and return it to your campus Human Resources office. You have at least 21 days from the day you received your notice to consider and return the signed agreement.

**Disqualifying Circumstances**

To qualify for transition assistance, an employee must remain in good standing. The following circumstances will disqualify an employee for the purposes of transition assistance eligibility and payments:

▪ Failure to perform duties in a satisfactory manner after layoff notification through the effective date of the layoff.
▪ Refusal to accept a transfer or assignment to a comparable regular position.
▪ Any of the following events that occur prior to or during the transition assistance payment period, to the employee, without exception:
  o Death
  o Retirement
  o Termination
  o Receipt of Long Term Disability (LTD) benefits
  o Acceptance of another regular University position

**Transition Pay**

If you’re a staff member classified as a regular Administrative, Service and Support employee, you’ll receive one week of pay for each year of continuous regular employment, with a minimum of 4 weeks of pay and a maximum of 26 weeks of pay. If you are a regular Administrative, Service and Support employee with a specified contract end date, your transition pay will not exceed the earnings you would have been paid through the contract end date. Transition

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⁴ https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/hrm/hr100/hr101
payments will usually be issued in accordance with your current pay schedule, but the University can choose to pay the amount as a lump sum. Transition payment and your repayment obligations must be in accordance with the TAP Agreement. Payments will begin on the earlier of your layoff effective date (or when the signed TAP Agreement is received by your campus Human Resources office).

**Transition Benefits**
While on a layoff leave of absence, you will be eligible to participate in University benefit programs (medical, dental, life, vision, accidental death and dismemberment and long-term disability). The University will continue to pay the employer portion of your benefit premiums throughout the layoff leave of absence. If you elect to retire following your layoff notice, you are responsible for the full cost of your retiree benefits, offset by any University contributions you may be eligible for as determined by the University of Missouri System Office of Human Resources.

If you obtain employment outside the University system and/or if you become eligible for other benefit coverage as a result of employment, you are required to notify your campus human resources office. Participation in the University’s benefit programs will be discontinued if you become eligible for benefit coverage as a result of employment outside the University.

To continue participation in the University benefit programs, you must enroll in COBRA. You will become eligible for COBRA on the first of the month following the effective date of your layoff leave of absence. Your COBRA benefit period will continue throughout your layoff leave of absence. Read the details about enrolling in COBRA in the Health and Welfare Benefits section of this guide.

**Transition Services**
Many transition services are available to you through your campus human resources office. These services may include:
- Resume review.
- Development of job search strategies.
- Contact information for the Missouri Department of Labor, Division of Employment Security.

**Accrued Leave Time**

**Vacation Accruals**
If you have unused vacation hours available before your layoff leave of absence starts, they will be paid as a lump sum payment on your final regular paycheck based on your normal pay schedule. If you’re eligible for retirement, those hours will be used as service credit in your pension calculation.

If you return to active status before the end of your layoff leave of absence, you will begin accruing vacation time in accordance with University rules and years of service.

**Personal Days**
Unused personal days are not paid to you. While you retain your personal days during a layoff leave of absence, you may not use them during that time period. However, if you regain

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5 https://umurl.us/cobra
employment with the University before your layoff leave of absence ends, your personal days will be reinstated and available for use.

Any unused personal days will be forfeited if you aren’t re-employed before your layoff leave of absence ends. Also, you will forfeit any unused personal days at your anniversary date if you are not re-employed by then.

**Sick Accruals**

Unused sick leave is not paid to you. If you regain employment with the University before the end of your layoff leave of absence, you will not lose your current balance and will resume accruing sick leave. If your layoff leave of absence ends and you have not been re-employed with the University, your sick leave hours are forfeited, unless you are eligible for retirement. If you’re eligible for retirement, your unused sick leave will be used as service credit in your pension calculation.

**Health and Welfare Benefits**

**Continuation During Layoff**

You may continue your current health and welfare benefits during a layoff leave of absence through [COBRA](https://umurl.us/cobra). Health, dental and vision benefits coverage may also extend up to 18 months after the layoff begins—meaning coverage may extend beyond your layoff leave of absence as explained in the following section.

**Health, Dental and Vision**

Your coverage will end on the last day of the month in which your layoff occurs, unless the effective date of your layoff is the first day of the month. In that case, coverage ends the day prior to the effective date of your layoff. To continue these benefits, you will need to enroll in COBRA coverage. During a layoff leave of absence, you will continue to pay the same premium rates as active employees. Coverage will continue for the remainder of the 18-month maximum time period as long as you pay the full COBRA premiums.

ASI COBRA, the University’s COBRA administrator, will send you a COBRA enrollment packet. The enrollment forms must be returned by the deadline specified in the packet.

**Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) and Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs)**

**Health Savings Account**

Payroll deductions will stop at the end of the month in which your layoff leave of absence begins, unless the effective date of your layoff is the first day of the month. In that case, coverage ends the day prior to the effective date of your layoff. Your HSA will be changed to an individual HSA rather than the University group HSA, and you will be responsible for any fees associated with your individual account. You may continue to make contributions directly to your HSA. The funds in an HSA are available for tax-free use on any eligible expenses, indefinitely.

**Flexible Spending Accounts**

Payroll deductions will stop at the end of the month in which the layoff leave of absence begins, unless the effective date of your layoff is the first day of the month. In that case, coverage ends

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6 [https://umurl.us/cobra](https://umurl.us/cobra)
the day prior to the effective date of your layoff. Any funds in your FSA at the time of your layoff are available for reimbursement as long as the expenses were incurred prior to the end of the month in which your layoff occurs, or the day prior to the layoff leave of absence if the effective date is the first day of the month. You may continue to submit eligible reimbursements to the University’s FSA administrator up to April 15 of the following year. You can elect to continue your Health Care Flexible Spending Account coverage through COBRA as long as the COBRA enrollment forms are returned to ASI COBRA by the deadline specified in the COBRA packet.

Life Insurance

Basic life, supplemental life, dependent life and/or accidental death and dismemberment insurance plans can continue for the length of the layoff period. If you are receiving TAP pay, premiums will be automatically deducted. If you are not receiving TAP pay or it has ended, submit premiums for those benefits directly to the University. Contact the HR Service Center for instructions on submitting your premiums.

At the end of the layoff leave of absence, you may elect to convert your basic and/or supplemental life policies to individual life insurance policies without providing proof of insurability. To convert to an individual policy, you will need to complete and submit a life insurance conversion form within 31 calendar days of the end of your layoff leave of absence. Obtain a form from the HR Service Center.

Long Term Disability

Your long term disability (LTD) coverage will continue during your layoff leave of absence. If you are receiving pay through TAP and are enrolled in the LTD Buy-up Plan (LTD Option B), your monthly premiums will be deducted from your TAP pay as it was deducted from your paycheck. Once TAP pay ends, if you wish to continue your enrollment in LTD Option B, you will need to submit payments directly to the University for the remainder of your layoff leave of absence. Contact the HR Service Center for instructions on submitting your premiums.

Retirement Savings

Voluntary Retirement Plans (VRPs)

VRPs include the 403(b) pretax, 403(b) irrevocable, 403(b) Roth after-tax, 457(b) pretax and 401(a) Supplemental Retirement Plan. During your layoff leave of absence, your VRPs will remain in place unless you choose otherwise, but the University is not allowed to deduct contributions from severance-type pay such as TAP pay. Therefore, no new deductions will be made during your layoff leave of absence.

Once your layoff leave of absence ends, you have three options for managing your voluntary retirement plans:

1. Leave your money in the account.
2. Take a cash distribution.
   o For the 403(b), 401(a) and 457(b) accounts, you will pay taxes and possible...
3. Roll the account into a different Individual Retirement Account (IRA).

For a cash distribution or rollover, contact the VRP administrator\(^{10}\) to obtain the appropriate forms.

**Employee Retirement Investment Plan (ERIP)**

Employee contributions through ERIP work much the same way as contributions to VRPs. Any deductions you specified from your paycheck will not be deducted from TAP pay because the University is not allowed to take retirement plan deductions out of severance-type pay. However, your ERIP accounts will remain in place.

**Vesting**

You will be able to keep the University’s contributions to the 401(a) if you are vested in ERIP. You must have three years of service credit to be vested in ERIP (as opposed to the five years of service credit required for the pension portion of your plan). The same three options for managing your VRPs, as specified in the previous section, apply to your ERIP accounts.

**Retirement, Disability, and Death (RDD) Plan – Also Known As Your Pension**

Your contributions to your pension are not deducted during a layoff leave of absence. Also, you may not receive monthly pension payouts while on a layoff leave of absence, though you may retire in lieu of layoff, as described in a separate section of this guide.

As you enter a layoff leave of absence, no immediate action is required to manage your pension. HR retirement specialists will review your file once your layoff leave of absence ends to determine your eligible options. Interest, compounded annually, will accrue on your employee contributions to the RDD plan and on vested benefits, so the value of the benefit or employee contributions refund is not lost while on a layoff leave of absence.

If vested, the University will mail a packet of information to your home address approximately four months after the end of your layoff leave of absence. It will specify your options for your pension payout. You will continue to have the option to defer a choice until age 65.

You cannot request monthly pension payouts or refunds of your employee contributions until your layoff leave of absence has ended and the information packet has been delivered. You have the option to end your layoff leave of absence early. If you wish to terminate your layoff leave of absence before the planned end date, please notify the HR Service Center\(^{11}\) or your campus human resources office in writing.

**Vesting**

You are vested in your RDD plan if you have earned five years of pension-creditable service. Periods of leave of absence or unpaid service may not count toward vesting service credit.

If you are vested (but not retirement eligible), you have three options after your layoff leave of absence ends:

\(^{10}\) [https://umurl.us/benadmin](https://umurl.us/benadmin)

\(^{11}\) [https://umurl.us/hrsc](https://umurl.us/hrsc)
1. Leave money in the plan and begin receiving a monthly payout as early as age 55 (but no later than 65).
2. Withdraw your pension benefit and pay taxes and possible penalties.
3. Roll over the benefit to an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) or other qualified plan.

If you are not vested, you are entitled to a refund of your contributions with two options:
1. Elect a lump sum distribution. The lump sum can be distributed as either:
   a. A direct payment subject to taxes and applicable penalties or
   b. As a rollover money to an individual IRA account or another qualified plan.
2. Defer the decision to a later date between the end of your layoff leave of absence and your 65th birthday. Interest accrues at 4 percent on an annual basis.

Please note: Once a lump sum distribution is taken, service credit relating to this distribution will be forfeited. This means that if you regain employment with the University at a future date, your prior service credit will not be counted when you begin earning future pension benefits.

If you would like to estimate the amount of your pension benefits, you can do so using the University’s pension calculator. For help, visit the tutorial on using the calculator.\textsuperscript{12}

**Earning Service Credit**

Many employees wonder how service credit is or is not earned during a layoff leave of absence. The short answer is that service credit is not earned during the layoff leave of absence.

If you return as an active employee before the end of your layoff leave of absence, you will once again accrue service credit toward your pension. This service credit would be added to previous time earned, but the time during your layoff status would not be counted. This applies to both the RDD and ERIP plans.

If you do not return before the end of your layoff leave of absence but regain employment with the University at a date after your layoff leave of absence ends, any prior creditable service would be reviewed to determine vesting status for you. Your vesting status will depend on whether you chose to take a distribution from your RDD or ERIP plans, as described in the sections above, and the length of your break in service compared to the prior period of service.

**Retirement in Lieu of or During Layoff**

You must meet the following criteria to retire:

- **Early retirement** (meaning a reduced pension and a reduced insurance subsidy) – Employees must reach:
  - Age 55 with at least 10 years of service.
  - Age 60 with at least 5 years of service.

- **Full retirement** (meaning no reductions in pension or subsidy) – Employees must reach:
  - Age 62 with at least 25 years of service.
  - Age 65 with at least 5 years of service.
  - At least one year of benefit eligible employment must be attained after age 54.

If you are eligible to retire at the time your layoff leave of absence starts, you have three options regarding when to commence your retirement benefits:

\textsuperscript{12} https://umurl.us/retcalc
1. Take your layoff leave of absence first and retire at the end of the layoff leave of absence.
2. End your layoff leave of absence early and commence retirement.
3. Move directly into retirement instead of entering a layoff leave of absence.

Contact the [HR Service Center](https://umurl.us/hrsc)\(^\text{13}\) to discuss the advantages of the three options. Monthly insurance premiums will be different under each choice, based on your circumstances. In addition to the service center, you may estimate your retiree insurance premiums with the [Retiree Insurance Premium Estimator](https://umurl.us/retpremium)\(^\text{14}\). Compare these costs to the premiums you are paying as an active employee, noted on your paycheck as well as listed on the [benefits](https://umurl.us/benefits) homepage\(^\text{15}\).

For additional assistance in understanding your options, estimate your retirement benefits through the [UM Retirement Calculator](https://umurl.us/retcalc)\(^\text{16}\). A number of [online seminars](https://umurl.us/retsem)\(^\text{17}\) are also available to support you and help you understand the University’s retirement benefits.

If you are eligible to retire, follow these steps to begin the retirement process:

- Complete a “Notice of Intent to Retire” form at least 60 days before you wish to retire, available on the [Retirement Planning Checklist](https://umurl.us/retcheck) webpage\(^\text{18}\).
- If applicable, attach the required proof of marriage documents, as requested on the Notice of Intent to Retire form.
- Submit the forms and any documentation to your campus human resources office.

If you are eligible for insurance from the University in retirement, it is very important to maintain insurance coverage through COBRA in the plans you wish to continue as a retiree during your layoff leave of absence.

Individuals under the age of 62 who receive retirement benefits are subject to the University’s rehire requirements. Visit the [Rehire Requirements](https://umurl.us/rehire) webpage\(^\text{19}\) to learn more.

**Tuition Assistance**

**Educational Assistance for Employees**

If you are receiving educational assistance from the University, you are eligible to continue receiving this assistance during the semester in which you begin your layoff leave of absence, as long as you are in a paid leave of absence when the course begins and remain an employee (whether paid or unpaid) through the end of the course in which you enrolled. You are not eligible for educational assistance in future semesters.

**Tuition Reduction for Spouses and Dependents**

Spouses and dependents who are receiving tuition reduction will remain eligible for the reduction through the end of your layoff leave of absence, provided they meet the eligibility requirements of the program and you remain on a layoff leave of absence through the beginning of the course in which they are enrolled. If your layoff leave of absence ends during the

\(^{13}\) [https://umurl.us/hrsc](https://umurl.us/hrsc)
\(^{14}\) [https://umurl.us/retpremium](https://umurl.us/retpremium)
\(^{15}\) [https://umurl.us/benefits](https://umurl.us/benefits)
\(^{16}\) [https://umurl.us/retcalc](https://umurl.us/retcalc)
\(^{17}\) [https://umurl.us/retsem](https://umurl.us/retsem)
\(^{18}\) [https://umurl.us/retcheck](https://umurl.us/retcheck)
\(^{19}\) [http://umurl.us/rehire](http://umurl.us/rehire)
semester, your spouse or dependent may complete the semester in which they are enrolled.
Navigating Your Transition: A Checklist

You have many options when experiencing a layoff. The graphic below communicates some of the most important tasks, with deadlines, that you may want to consider in order to maximize the transition support you’ll receive. Use this image as a checklist to make sure you understand when you’ll need to take action to receive TAP benefits, COBRA coverage and more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Confirm your final day at work.</td>
<td>Your final day is included in your notification letter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Know your effective date of layoff.</td>
<td>Your layoff date is included in your notification letter.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 3. Know your layoff leave of absence term. | Based on years of continuous regular employment prior to layoff. If you have:  
• Less than five years, you have a three-month term.  
• Five or more years, you have a one-year term.  
Contact your campus HR office for assistance. |
| 4. Decide if you want to enroll in TAP. | If you want to activate TAP benefits, sign and notorize the TAP Agreement and return it to your campus HR office. Return to campus HR by the date indicated on the document (at least 21 days). |
| 5. Sign up for COBRA. | The University will pay a portion of your premiums. If you choose to enroll in COBRA, you must complete the packet ASI COBRA will send to you. Submit forms by the deadline in your packet from ASI COBRA. |
| 6. Check when tuition assistance ends. | Employee: Through the end of the semester in which the layoff leave of absence begins.  
Dependents: Through the end of the layoff leave of absence. Contact your campus HR office for assistance. |
| 7. Convert life insurance to individual policies. | Submit a conversion form within 31 days of the end of your layoff leave of absence. Contact the HR Service Center to begin the process. |
| 8. Plan for your VRP and pension funds. | If retirement eligible, refer to the “Retirement in Lieu of or During Layoff” section of this document, and contact the HR Service Center to discuss your retirement plans and options. Contact your plan administrator for assistance. |
Appendix A:
HR 117: Layoff
Note: The text in this appendix is a verbatim copy of the policy titled HR 117: Layoff, a part of the Human Resources Policy Manual.20

Summary
Layoff is defined as the cessation of regular employment due to a permanent or temporary reduction in force. Employees laid off due to a reduction in force retain seniority accumulated to the date of layoff, for a period not to exceed one year, but do not continue to accrue seniority during the layoff leave of absence. In the event an employee who is notified of a layoff or who has been laid off transfers to another department, he/she continues to maintain seniority in the department where the layoff occurred for a period of one (1) year from the effective date of the layoff or the transfer, whichever occurs first. All things being equal, job security shall be commensurate with an employee's seniority. If the abilities, skills, training, and other relevant qualifications to fill existing positions are considered equivalent among affected employees, the employee with the longest seniority will be retained and the employee with the shortest seniority will be the first to be laid off.

The University reserves the right in any given instance, to determine if an employee possesses the relevant qualifications such as ability, training, and skill to fill the position.

Definition of Seniority
For regular Administrative, Service and Support employees, other than Service and Maintenance Personnel, seniority consists of continuous service in the same department. If relative service among employees is equal, the employee with the greatest regular University service is the most senior employee. For Service & Maintenance personnel, see Understanding of Policies.

Eligibility
Regular Administrative, Service and Support employees who have satisfactorily completed their probationary periods are covered by this policy with the exception of executive and managerial employees.

Recall
The University shall, in its sole discretion, after a reduction in force, determine the occasion and the advisability of recall of part or all of the laid off employees. The University shall consider seniority, ability, and qualifications, as well as the nature of the jobs for which the employees will be recalled.

20 https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/hrm/
**Hiring Preference**

Employees retain preferential hiring rights in the department in which they have been laid off. "Hiring preference" within a department shall mean that if laid off departmental employees meet the stated qualifications the department may only consider the laid off employee(s) and other employees in the same department for openings in that department. "Department" is defined as an organizational entity that has fiscal, programmatic and administrative responsibilities for employees.

**Benefits**

Eligible Administrative, Service and Support employees with a minimum of five (5) years of continuous regular employment with the University immediately before layoff, will be placed on a layoff leave of absence for one year from the effective date of layoff. Eligible Administrative, Service and Support employees with less than five (5) years of continuous regular employment with the University immediately before layoff, will be placed on a layoff leave of absence for three (3) months from the effective date of layoff. During the layoff leave of absence, the employee will be eligible to participate in the University’s benefit programs. The University will continue to pay its portion of the benefit premiums during the layoff leave of absence.

The period of leave of absence is excluded in computing length of service under the University of Missouri Retirement, Disability, and Death Benefit Plan; however, the leave of absence does not constitute an interruption of service. A layoff leave of absence does not count toward vesting in the University retirement plan.

Upon expiration of a layoff leave of absence, if the employee has not located a position, the employee will be terminated.

**Notice**

Eligible Administrative, Service and Support employees will be given a minimum of two weeks written notice of layoff because of a workforce reduction. At the University’s option, such employees may receive two week’s pay in lieu of notice. Issuance of layoff notice must be coordinated through your campus human resources office.

**Procedures**

Any department considering a permanent or temporary reduction in force should contact your campus human resources office to discuss the layoff policy and proper layoff procedures before notifying the employee(s). Contact your campus human resources office for information related to the impact of a layoff leave of absence on vacation, sick leave, personal days, and seniority.
Appendix B: Layoff Frequently Asked Questions
Layoff Frequently Asked Questions

Layoff Questions and Answers from HR 117

Note: The text in this section of the appendix (Questions and Answers 1-13) is from the policy titled HR 117: Layoff Q&As, a part of the Human Resources Policy Manual.\(^1\)

1. What does the phrase “all things being equal” mean?

   Departments retain the discretion to determine what composition of knowledge, skills, and abilities and the number of staff required for the proper functioning of a department; therefore, factors such as unique knowledge, skills, abilities, training, performance, or other relevant factors may take precedence over consideration of seniority in making decisions regarding layoff. When these factors impact the efficient operation of the department and/or an employee’s ability to perform the job, a department may determine that all things are not equal and consider these attributes to justify the retention of a less senior employee.

2. Does an employee in a layoff leave of absence lose their accrued sick leave?

   If an employee is reemployed during the period of the layoff leave of absence, the sick leave will be reinstated; otherwise, the sick leave is lost after expiration of the layoff leave of absence.

3. What happens to an employee’s personal days while on a layoff leave of absence?

   The employee retains personal days during the layoff leave of absence but any unused personal days are lost on the employee’s anniversary date. Employees should be provided an opportunity to use the personal days before commencing a layoff leave of absence unless provided pay in lieu of notice.

4. What if an employee has accrued compensatory time at the time of layoff?

   The compensatory time should be paid to the employee in a lump sum payment on your final regular paycheck based on your normal pay schedule.

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\(^1\) https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/hrm/
5. When an employee is laid off, can a department pay the employee two (2) weeks’ pay in lieu of notice?

Yes. It is permissible at the department's discretion to provide for payment in lieu of two (2) weeks’ notice. When payment in lieu of notice is utilized, the effective date of the layoff is at the end of the two (2) week period. The status of an employee who receives payment in lieu of notice is the same as though the employee were actually working those last two (2) weeks.

6. What are the relevant dates for calculating seniority in the event of a layoff?

The relevant dates for calculating seniority are as follows:

- Department Seniority Date – The first day of regular continuous employment within a department.
- University Seniority Date – The first day of regular continuous employment at the University of Missouri.

A change in a regular employee’s status (i.e., a break in service) may change their department and University date.

7. Are employees in a layoff leave guaranteed a job when the leave expires?

No. An employee does have departmental preferential hiring rights for the duration of the leave of absence and retains seniority in the department during this period. Upon expiration of a layoff leave, if the employee has not located a position, the employee will be terminated. For Service and Maintenance employees, see the relevant "Understanding of Policies" document.

8. Can you require an employee to use vacation for the two (2) weeks’ notice required pursuant to HR-117: Layoffs?

No. The employee cannot be required to use accrued vacation during the two (2) week notice period.

9. How will benefits be impacted during a layoff leave of absence?

HR 117 Layoffs provides that an employee in a layoff leave of absence is eligible to continue participating in the following benefit programs: medical, dental, vision, life, accidental death and long-term disability. Employees notified of a layoff should contact the HR Service Center.

10. If an employee is offered a comparable position in the same department while on layoff leave, must he/she accept the position?

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22 https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/hrm/hr_service/union1
23 https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/hrm/hr100/hr117
24 http://www.umurl.us/hrsc
Failure to return to work when offered a comparable position in the same department and at least the same salary range will result in termination. The position must be 75% FTE or greater. An employee will not be terminated for refusing a non-regular position.

11. What is the definition of executive and managerial employees as it pertains to this policy?

Executive and managerial employees are those employees assigned to EEO Groups 101 and 102. Contact your campus human resources office for assistance in identifying these employees.

12. Can an employee elect to retain accrued vacation during the layoff leave of absence?

No. Unused vacation, accrued as of the last day worked before the commencement of the leave of absence, is paid out as a lump sum.

13. Is an employee covered by the layoff policy if their position is moved from one campus to another campus and the employee does not want to relocate?

Yes. Moving a position from one campus to a different campus is a reduction of force at the original location class and the employee would be covered by the layoff policy.
Additional Questions and Answers

Pay

14. What will my final regular paycheck include?

Your final regular paycheck will include compensation for all hours worked through your last day in pay status with the department and any unused accrued compensatory time and vacation leave. If you are being paid two weeks’ pay in lieu of notice, it will be included, too.

15. When will I receive my final paycheck?

You will receive your final paycheck in accordance with your regular pay schedule.

16. When will I receive my W-2?

W-2s are printed and mailed in January for the previous year’s earnings. You need to make sure that your current address is on file to insure prompt delivery of your W-2. Submit any address changes by the last week of December to ensure proper delivery in January. You may update your address in myHR.¹⁵⁵ (Navigate to Personal Info in the left-hand menu, and click Personal Information Summary. Click the Change home/mailing addresses button if you need to make updates.)

If you elected to receive your W-2 electronically, you may view and download it in myHR.

17. My layoff leave of absence has expired, and I don’t have access to myHR to change my home address. I want to make certain that my W-2 is mailed to the appropriate place. How do I change my address?

Contact the HR Service Center.¹⁵⁶

18. What happens to membership fee deductions for the University’s recreation center?

Deductions end with your final regular paycheck.

19. What happens to my parking deductions?

Deductions end with your final regular paycheck.

¹⁵⁵ https://myhr.umsystem.edu
¹⁵⁶ https://umurl.us/hrsc
Transition Assistance Program (TAP)

20. Who is considered a regular University employee for purposes of TAP and layoff?

A regular employee is an Administrative, Service and Support staff member expected to work at least 75% full-time equivalency (FTE) with an indicated appointment duration of at least nine months.

21. Are executive and managerial employees, who are ineligible for layoff benefits under HR-117: Layoff,27 eligible for transition assistance benefits?

Yes, with the exception of seniority and preferential hiring rights, other provisions of the layoff policy apply while TAP is in effect.

22. What is the definition of a “comparable” regular University position?

A comparable position is one that has equivalent pay, benefits and other employment terms and conditions. Final determination regarding a comparable position will be made by your campus human resources office.

23. What happens to vacation, sick leave and personal days if I am placed on a layoff leave of absence?

Vacation balances will be paid in a lump sum payment on your final regular paycheck based on your normal pay schedule. Unused sick leave and personal days may not be used during the layoff leave of absence but may be reinstated if you return to a regular position before the end of the layoff leave of absence. If your anniversary date occurs during the layoff leave of absence, any unused personal days will be lost, but four new personal days will be added in the event of rehire. If you are a regular employee who is 99% to 75% FTE, you are granted personal days on a pro rata basis.

24. Are partial years of continuous service counted in calculating transition assistance compensation?

Partial years are counted only if you are an eligible employee with five or more years of continuous regular employment with the University immediately before layoff. If this describes your situation, a half-year or more of regular employment is considered a complete year, and less than a half-year is disregarded.

25. Does the transition assistance payment include payment for overtime?

No. The transition assistance payment will be calculated on a straight-time, or base rate, basis.

26. What is the rate of pay for the transition assistance payment?

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27 https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/hrm/hr100/hr117
Transition assistance is paid at the base rate you were being paid as of your last day worked, including shift differential, if applicable. If you worked different shifts that each have shift differential pay, your transition assistance payment will be based on the average weekly pay during the two preceding pay periods.

27. Am I eligible for unemployment benefits during my layoff leave of absence period?

If you are placed on layoff leave of absence, you may apply for eligibility determination to the Missouri Department of Labor’s Division of Employment Security.

28. When must I return the University of Missouri Transition Assistance Payment Agreement and Release (TAP Agreement)?

You must be provided at least 21 days to consider whether to sign the agreement. The layoff notice letter will specify the deadline for submitting the signed agreement. You will not receive a transition assistance payment until Human Resources receives a signed agreement.

29. Will I receive service credit for the layoff leave of absence?

No. However, you will receive service and salary credit for the lump sum vacation balance.

30. What is the impact on the payout of transition assistance if I take another job with the University before my transition assistance is fully paid?

If your new position is an FTE of 75% or greater, the transition assistance pay will be suspended during the time you are receiving pay in the new position. If the new job ends before your layoff leave of absence expires, transition assistance will be resumed and paid through the end date of the leave of absence or until you are paid the number of weeks originally owed, whichever occurs first. The end date of the layoff leave of absence will not be extended by the time in the new position. If your new position is less than 75%, you will continue to draw your transition assistance payment during the part-time employment.

31. How is the end date of my leave of absence affected if I take a benefit-eligible job with the University but am subsequently put back on leave of absence before the leave expired (e.g., I do not successfully complete the qualifying period)?

You will be returned to a leave of absence status, but the end date of your leave of absence will not be extended.

32. How is transition assistance calculated if I’ve been subject to multiple layoffs?

For subsequent layoffs occurring with no prior break in service, the number of weeks of transition assistance will be calculated based on the years of continuous benefit eligible service minus any weeks of transition assistance already paid. A break in service means:

If you have worked less than five years since the prior layoff, you will be entitled to a minimum of four weeks of transition assistance. For multiple layoffs after a break in service, the number of weeks of transition assistance will be calculated from the new benefit eligibility date without regard to prior transition assistance payments. Although prior payments of transition assistance will be considered in calculating the transition assistance
payment for subsequent layoffs, the actual length of any subsequent layoff leaves of absence will be based on your total continuous regular employment.

33. How long has transition assistance been in place?

Some form of transition assistance has been in place during the following time periods:

- December 7, 1991 – December 6, 1993
- October 18, 2000 – October 19, 2004
- March 1, 2009 – present
34. Will COBRA benefits be available to allow for continued medical, dental, vision and/or healthcare flexible spending account (FSA) coverage?

Yes. The qualifying event date for COBRA eligibility is the effective date of the layoff leave of absence. Dependents are eligible for continued medical, dental and/or vision coverage as long as they were covered under the Plan on the day before the layoff. The COBRA administrator will mail information on COBRA benefits approximately two weeks after your layoff begins. Packets will be mailed to the home address listed in your HR records. If you decide to enroll in COBRA, you will have 60 days from the date of notification on the COBRA notice letter to return the continuation election form. Once enrolled, you will make payments directly to the COBRA administrator. The COBRA benefit period will run concurrently with the layoff leave of absence. Once the layoff leave of absence has expired, COBRA benefits can continue, with full costs paid by the individual, for the remainder of the COBRA eligibility period allowed (not to exceed 18 months in total). Your layoff coverage will run concurrently with your total COBRA eligibility period.

35. Will life insurance benefits continue during the layoff leave of absence?

Yes. Basic life, supplemental life, dependent life and/or accidental death and dismemberment insurance plans can continue for the length of the layoff period. While TAP pay is active, those premiums will be automatically deducted. After TAP pay ends, premiums for those benefits must be submitted directly to the University.

At the end of a layoff leave of absence, you may elect to convert basic and/or supplemental life policies to individual life insurance policies without providing proof of insurability. To convert to an individual policy, complete and submit a life insurance conversion form within 31 calendar days of the end of the layoff leave of absence.

36. Will long term disability (LTD) benefits continue during the layoff leave of absence?

Yes. Long term disability benefits can continue for the length of the layoff period. While TAP pay is active, premiums for LTD Option B will be automatically deducted. After TAP pay ends, premiums for those benefits must be submitted directly to the University.

37. How do I pay for benefits during a layoff leave of absence?

Medical, dental and vision premiums and Health Care Flexible Spending Account contributions are paid directly to the COBRA administrator.

Life insurance and LTD benefits are paid to the University during the length of a layoff leave of absence. While receiving TAP pay, premiums are automatically deducted. When TAP pay is complete, premiums are submitted directly to the University.

28 https://umurl.us/cobra
Leave

38. What happens to vacation, sick leave, and personal days when I am on a layoff leave of absence?

See the Accrued Leave Time section on page six for details on vacation, sick leave, and personal days.

39. What happens to my accrued compensatory ("comp") time?

Compensatory time will be paid out on your final regular paycheck based on your normal pay schedule.

40. If I find a job within the UM System while in layoff leave of absence, how are each of the leave accrual categories affected?

- **Vacation** – You will begin accruing vacation time in accordance with your new title and years of service.
- **Sick** – Your sick leave balance will be activated, and you will begin accruing time again.
- **Personal** – If you return to work before your anniversary date, you will be able to use your previous leave balance. If you return to work after your anniversary date, you will receive your new accruals for the year.
**Retirement**

41. Will the layoff leave of absence count toward vesting?

   No.

42. Will employees be able to access their vested benefit during the leave of absence?

   No. Employees are ineligible to access a vested benefit during the layoff leave of absence but may do so after the termination date, which is the last day the employee is on layoff leave of absence. Employees can expect to receive election forms within four to six months following the date of termination. If the employee wishes to terminate the layoff leave of absence earlier, that request must be made in writing to the department. However, the employee should contact the Total Rewards Generalist or the HR Service Center\(^{29}\) to discuss the cost of benefit coverage as an employee on leave versus the cost of benefit coverage as a retiree, and determine the relative advantages based on the employee’s circumstances.

43. Can an employee who is on a layoff leave of absence elect to retire?

   Retirement-eligible employees may elect to end their layoff leave of absence to retire at any time or elect to retire instead of being placed on a layoff leave of absence. Employees should contact a Total Rewards Generalist or the HR Service Center\(^{30}\) to discuss the cost of benefit coverage as an employee on leave versus the cost of benefit coverage as a retiree and determine the relative advantages based on the employee’s circumstances. An election to retire in lieu of a leave must be made in writing and submitted to the employee’s department.

44. If I come back to work for the University, are my years of service bridged for vesting purposes?

   You do not lose service credit. However, how this is applied depends on your current amount of service time and the gap in employment with the University. These are reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine whether time is bridged for vesting or if you will be required to vest without prior service and then add it on. You should consult with the HR Service Center.

45. Is the transition assistance payment included in the retirement benefit calculation?

   No.

46. Are employees required to pay the employee contribution to the retirement plan during transition assistance?

   No. The contribution is not charged on transition assistance payment.

\(^{29}\) [https://umurl.us/hrsc](https://umurl.us/hrsc)

\(^{30}\) [https://umurl.us/hrsc](https://umurl.us/hrsc)
47. Is it possible for me to retire now rather than take a layoff leave of absence?

If you are eligible to retire, you may do so instead of taking a layoff leave of absence. See the Retirement in Lieu of or During Layoff section on page 10 for details.

48. Is it possible to reach retirement requirements (i.e., service credits and/or age) during the layoff period, and then retire?

Typically, no. Employees should contact a Total Rewards Generalist or the HR Service Center for additional information specific to their situation.
49. Will employees who are laid off be eligible to participate in [HR 303: Educational Assistance](https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/hrm/hr300/hr303) during the leave of absence?

Employees who are on unpaid leave of absence are not eligible to participate in the HR 303: Educational Assistance program. If an employee had begun a course using Educational Assistance benefits while in a paid status and goes into an unpaid leave status after the course begins, the employee will be allowed to complete the course with the coverage of Educational Assistance benefits as long as the employee remains an employee (whether paid or unpaid) through the end of the course in which they are enrolled. Employees are not eligible for educational assistance in future semesters.

50. Will spouses and dependents of employees who are laid off be eligible to participate in the [HR 309: Tuition Reduction](https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/hrm/hr300/hr309) program during the leave of absence?

Spouses and dependents who are receiving tuition reduction will remain eligible for the reduction through the end of your layoff leave of absence, provided they meet the eligibility requirements of the program and you remain on a layoff leave of absence through the beginning of the course in which they are enrolled. If your layoff leave of absence ends during the semester, your spouse or dependent may complete the semester in which they are enrolled.

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31 [https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/hrm/hr300/hr303](https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/hrm/hr300/hr303)
32 [https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/hrm/hr300/hr309](https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/rules/hrm/hr300/hr309)
Re-employment

51. Are there any guarantees for re-employment? What does hiring preference mean?

While re-employment is not guaranteed, “hiring preference” within a department means the following: If laid-off departmental employees meet the stated qualifications, the department may only consider the laid off employee(s) and other employees in the same department for any job openings. It is important to note that you must actively apply for positions for which you want to be considered.

52. Is it possible that I can be hired for part-time or temporary work in another unit? If so, what happens to my layoff benefits?

- **Insurance** – Yes. The part-time/temporary work will not have any effect on your insurance benefits while your primary (benefit-eligible) position remains in layoff leave of absence. You will remain eligible to continue all insurance plans you had at the time of your layoff, and you are still required to make payments (check or money order) directly to the UM System Office of Human Resources, Benefits Department. These premiums cannot be deducted from the part-time pay.

- **Leave** – You do not accrue any vacation or sick time for the part-time position and balances remain “suspended” during this time.

- **Retirement** – Neither the layoff leave of absence nor the service in the part-time position is considered creditable for vesting or retirement. Part-time appointments would have to terminate before you could retire in certain cases, so please contact the HR Service Center to discuss your specific situation.
**Employment Records**

53. Will the University retain my employment record?

Your campus human resources office will retain information regarding your employment. If contacted for employment information, your campus human resources office will send information regarding your position and dates of service. The University’s practice is to withhold reasons for leaving; however, if you are laid off, your record will indicate workforce reduction.

54. Can I still change my employee data?

While you are in layoff leave of absence, you will retain access to any tool available through the [myHR](https://myhr.umsystem.edu) portal. During a layoff leave of absence, you will be able to change the same data in myHR that you could during active service.

55. Can I view my employee file?

Any employee can make an appointment to view their employee file. Contact campus Human Resources 24-48 hours in advance to schedule an appointment.

56. If someone (an employer, loan officer, etc.) needs to obtain an employment verification on me, where do I refer them?

Employment verifications are to be referred to [The Work Number](https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/hr/income). Details are included on the [Income & Employment Verifications](https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/hr/income) webpage.

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33 https://myhr.umsystem.edu
34 https://www.umsystem.edu/ums/hr/income
Appendix C: Transition Assistance Program
Transition Assistance Program

This appendix provides the complete Transition Assistance Program (TAP) document as approved by the Board of Curators of the University of Missouri on April 27, 2017. The TAP document also is available as a standalone document on the transition assistance webpage.35

Introduction
The University of Missouri provides transition assistance, short term, temporary income (transition assistance pay) and benefits, to employees subject to an involuntary layoff. Transition assistance applies to administrative, service and support employees. Employees not explicitly covered in HR 117: Layoff (HR117) are not eligible for seniority and preferential hiring rights with all other layoff provisions remaining in effect.

The transition assistance program, as described in this document, applies to all layoffs, beginning on or after the date of the program’s approval by the Board of Curators of the University of Missouri through June 30, 2018, and supersedes all previous transition assistance programs, documents, and approved processes.

Eligibility
All regular administrative, service and support employees (see HR 101: Employee Status (HR101)) who have successfully completed their probationary period may be eligible for transition assistance. Employees whose positions are discontinued due to a reduction in the workforce may be eligible for transition assistance, regardless of funding source. Non-regular (HR101) and probationary employees are ineligible to participate in the program.

In order for an employee to be eligible to receive transition assistance payment, the employee is required to sign the University of Missouri Transition Assistance Payment Agreement and Release.

Disqualifying Circumstances
To qualify for transition assistance, an employee must remain in good standing. The following circumstances will disqualify an employee for the purposes of transition assistance eligibility and payments.

- Failure to perform duties in a satisfactory manner after layoff notification through the effective date of the layoff
- Refusal to accept a transfer or assignment to a comparable regular position.

35 https://umurl.us/tap
• Any of the following events that occur before or during the transition assistance payment period, to the employee, without exception:
  o Death
  o Retirement
  o Termination
  o Receipt of Long-Term Disability (LTD) benefits
  o Acceptance of another regular University position

Notice Period
Affected employee will be given a written notice of layoff at least two weeks before the effective date. The University may choose to pay affected employees two weeks of regular pay in lieu of notice. Layoff notification must be coordinated through your campus human resources office.

Transition Pay
Eligible employees will receive one week of pay, with a minimum payment of 4 weeks and a maximum payment of 26 weeks, for each year of continuous regular employment immediately before layoff. For regular employees with a specified contract end date, transition pay will not exceed the earnings an employee would have been paid through the contract end date. Transition payments are typically paid in accordance with an employee’s current pay schedule, but may be paid as a lump sum payment at the discretion of the University. Transition payment and the employee’s repayment obligations shall be in accordance with the University of Missouri Transition Assistance Payment Agreement and Release and shall not begin until the effective date of the agreement.

Transition Benefits
Eligible employees with at least five years of continuous regular University employment immediately before layoff, including those excepted by HR117, may be placed on a layoff leave of absence for one year from the effective date of layoff. Eligible employees with less than five years of continuous regular University employment before the layoff, including those excepted by HR117, may be placed on a layoff leave of absence for three months from the effective date of layoff. In all cases, this is provided that the layoff leave of absence not exceed any applicable contract end date.

During the layoff leave of absence, the employee will be eligible to participate in University benefit programs (medical, dental, life, accidental death and long-term disability). The University will continue to pay the employer portion of the benefit premiums during the layoff leave of absence. Employees who elect to retire following layoff notice are responsible for the full cost of their retiree medical benefits, offset as applicable, by any University subsidy that an employee may be eligible for as determined by the University of Missouri System Benefits department.

Employees placed on a layoff leave of absence are required to notify your campus human resources office if they obtain employment outside the University and/or if they become eligible for other benefit coverage as a result of employment. Participation in the University’s benefit programs will be discontinued if an employee becomes eligible for benefit coverage as a result of employment outside the University.

The qualifying event date for COBRA eligibility is the first of the month following the effective date of the layoff leave of absence. The COBRA benefit period will run concurrently with the layoff leave of absence. Once the layoff leave of absence has expired, COBRA benefits can continue, with full costs paid by the individual, for the remainder of the COBRA eligibility period.
allowed (not to exceed 18 months in total). The University of Missouri Benefits department will coordinate the mailing of information regarding COBRA benefits, including the timeframe for COBRA election.

Employees notified of layoff will receive any unused accrued vacation leave as a lump sum payment on your final regular paycheck based on your normal pay schedule. This rule applies without exception.

**Transition Services**

Transition services may be available through your campus human resources office, including, but not necessarily limited to:

- Resume preparation
- Development of job search strategies
- Contact information for the appropriate Division of Employment Security
Appendix D: Unemployment Assistance
Unemployment Assistance

Contact the Missouri Department of Labor, Division of Employment Security, for assistance in filing for unemployment benefits. The department advises that you file an unemployment claim as soon as you become unemployed to avoid a loss of benefits.

Regional Claims Centers (RCCs) are available:

**Address and Fax Number for All Regional Claims Centers (RCC)**
PO Box 3915, Jefferson City, MO 65102-3915
Fax 573-751-9730

**Jefferson City RCC**
Local Calling Area 573-751-9040
Outside Local Calling Area 800-320-2519

**Kansas City RCC**
Local Calling Area 816-889-3101
Outside Local Calling Area 800-320-2519

**Springfield RCC**
Local Calling Area 417-895-6851
Outside Local Calling Area 800-320-2519

**St. Louis RCC**
Local Calling Area 314-340-4950
Outside Local Calling Area 800-320-2519

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36 https://labor.mo.gov/des
Appendix E: Job Search Guidance
Improving Your Job Search

- First things first, update your resume and/or curriculum vitae. There are many free online and local resources that can help you update or develop these materials.

- Manage your digital footprint. Think your friends are the only people who viewed those less-than-professional vacation photos you posted online? Think again. With a few mouse clicks, potential employers can dig up information about you on blogs, personal websites and social-networking site profiles. Make sure you do a thorough self-search and take any necessary corrective action.

- Enhance your marketability. Find out what skills are most in demand and take steps to give yourself an edge in these areas. Focus on sharpening your functional as well as interpersonal skills.

- Explore your career options. Sites like O*NET are useful for exploring many types of jobs.

- Once you have an idea of the type of job you’re looking for, network – online and off. Tell everyone you know that you are looking for a job, whether in-person or using professional networking websites.

- Step outside your comfort zone. Avoid limiting your search to your current industry or field. Identify your transferable skills and experiences, and communicate them to prospective employers.

- Find jobs before they are advertised. Read your local business journals and newspapers to identify companies that are hiring or expanding, and send them your resume.

- Track breaking business news on the internet. Has a company just received a new round of venture capital or are they headed for bankruptcy? Knowing this information can help you separate hot prospects from sinking ships. Google has a wonderful news alert feature that can automate this process for you.

- Use job boards to scope out companies in active hiring mode. Do you repeatedly see ads for multiple positions within the same company? Apply directly to those firms even if you do not see a specific posting within your field of expertise. Chances are they will need employees in a variety of positions and departments.

37 https://www.onetonline.org/
- Do your research on companies and industries of interest, and use that information to gain a competitive edge in your correspondence and interviews.

- Sign up for online newsletters. Companies, industries, special interest groups and associations all publish online newsletters that contain up-to-date tidbits on emerging trends, challenges and recent news. Use this information to distinguish yourself from the competition in your cover letters and interviews.

- Sign up for job alerts. Many sites, such as LinkedIn or Indeed.com, allow you to define the specific type of job for which you are looking and receive alerts when a posted job meets that criteria. You can then apply for any position directly with the employer.

- Cast a wide net. General job boards can be useful, but do not forget industry and trade association websites, which may have more targeted career opportunities.

- Customize. Tailor your résumé and cover letter for each opportunity. Employers want to see why you are the right person for their job.

- Follow up on your online correspondence. Do not wait passively for the phone to ring after you respond to a job posting. Take the initiative and follow up by phone several days later to check on the status of your application. This one action can distinguish you from the competition and get you an interview.

- Be flexible. Remain open to all possibilities, even if the job title, salary and benefits are not exactly what you hoped for. Once you get your foot in the door, you will have a chance to prove yourself.

**Preparing Your Application Materials**

Your application materials are your first chance to make an impression on your potential employer. Always submit your materials as requested (cover letter, salary requirements, references, writing samples, etc.). In addition to submitting what was requested, it is equally important to submit a neat and complete application.

**Application Don’ts**

- Skip completing the application fields and replace with “See Resume.”
- Leave out information (e.g., previous titles, salary, contact information for past employers).
- Record information inconsistencies between the resume and application (e.g., dates of employment).
- Spell words incorrectly.

**Cover Letter Tips**

- Highlight important aspects of your experience and education that pertain to the open position.
- Convey your interest in and enthusiasm for working for the organization.
- Customize the letter to the employer and the job (do not send a form cover letter).
- Describe how you can add value to the organization.
- Attach to your resume each time you contact a potential employer.
- Address the cover letter to a specific individual within the organization (example: Mr. John Brown, Manager).
- Do not list salary requirements in your cover letter unless requested. If requested, “Market pay” or “Open for pay suggestions” can be more effective than a specific salary amount.
- Check for spelling and grammar and have someone else proofread it for you.

**Resume Tips**

A resume is a catalog of your skills and abilities and a personal advertisement that outlines your qualifications for a particular job. Your resume will be a distinct presentation of your accomplishments, experience, and personality. The information you choose to include and the arrangement of the material on the page is critical in providing a good first impression to a potential employer. Remember, your resume itself is a sample of your work, especially of written communication!

- Start by listing one or more accomplishments for each position held (use the “Power Verbs for Your Resume” tip sheet\(^{38}\) for ideas on how to describe your accomplishments).
- Consider the question “So what?”—i.e., the reason the achievement was valuable.
- Include specific numbers as much as possible (e.g., managed five executive calendars; oversaw a $500,000 budget; recruited 50 new clients).
- Remember that hiring managers/recruiters are reading dozens of resumes at a time; information on your resume should be uncluttered and easy to read.
- Avoid using “fluff” or filler words to take up space.
- Check for spelling and grammar and have someone else proofread it for you.

**Interview Do’s**

- Know where you are going. Have directions and a contact phone number with you.
- Dress appropriately and professionally.
- Arrive 10-15 minutes early.
- Bring an additional copy of your application materials.
- Practice answering interview questions out loud.
- Attend at least one mock interview, if possible, to help sharpen your skills in a low pressure environment.
- Prepare questions you have for the employer.
- Turn off the cellphone ringer.
- Be courteous—make eye contact, don’t interrupt others and avoid checking your cellphone.
- Demonstrate a positive outlook.

\(^{38}\) https://careerservices.uni.edu/sites/default/files/docs/resume_verbs.pdf
Appendix F:
Online Resources for Exploring Career Options
Online Resource for Exploring Career Options

Use these online resources to explore career options and plan your job search. Many of the websites listed offer assistance in career planning, assessing your skills, revising or developing your resume and cover letter and organizing your job search.

- The University of Missouri System offers a variety of resources for managing your career, including informational interviewing, job shadowing and networking tips. www.umsystem.edu/ums/hr/tmr/my_career_plan

- Campus career centers offer online resources and referral information for employees.
  - MU – http://career.missouri.edu/career-resources-for-you
  - UMKC – https://career.umkc.edu/
  - Missouri S&T – https://career.mst.edu/services/
  - UMSL – http://www.umsl.edu/depts/career/

- The Missouri Division of Workforce Development’s website includes job openings, career information, labor market information and a listing of Missouri Career Centers throughout the state. https://jobs.mo.gov/jobseeker/about-us

- Monster's resources include cover letter and resume writing services, a Career Mapping tool, interviewing and negotiating advice, as well as a comprehensive jobs database. www.monster.com

- LinkedIn’s resources include networking, as well as a comprehensive jobs database. www.linkedin.com

- Your source for employment information and inspiration, including tools to plan and manage your career, job search and resume. http://careeronestop.org

- The O*NET system features a set of valuable assessment instruments for individuals looking to find or change careers. You can find occupations that are similar to yours, find occupations that use similar tools, skills or knowledge that match your own, or take assessments to help your figure out your next move. http://online.onetcenter.org

- Upon completing the Jung Typology Test, you will obtain your type formula, strengths of the preferences and type description. You will then obtain a list of the most suitable career choices based on your personality, along with some educational institutions where you can receive a relevant degree or training. www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JTypes1.htm
This site is designed as a supplement to the book *What Color Is Your Parachute: A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career-Changers*. It lists many websites and services that are useful for a job search.

www.jobhuntersbible.com/
Appendix G: Resources for Coping with Job Loss
Resources for Coping with Job Loss

Job loss can have a profound effect on your emotional wellbeing. There is a typical cycle that most people experience. Please seek help using the resources available on your campus and/or online articles.

**Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**  
The EAP is a free, confidential service available to you and your family. Seek help for a variety of personal concerns, including stress management, depression, financial pressure or relationship difficulties. Services include screening, referral, problem solving, crisis intervention, consultation and training/development.

Find campus locations and hours for [EAP services online](http://umurl.us/eap)³⁹. You may also contact your campus human resources office for a full list of assistance options.

**Articles**  
**When Job Loss Strikes: How to Survive and Thrive**  

**Advice for an Involuntary Job Seeker**  
[https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/career/alumni/career-services-alumni/advice-involuntary-job-seeker](https://studentaffairs.duke.edu/career/alumni/career-services-alumni/advice-involuntary-job-seeker)

**Displaced Workers Find There’s More to Job Hunting Than Resume**  
[www.jobdig.com/articles/544/Displaced_workers_find_there%27s_more_to_job_hunting_than_resume.html](http://www.jobdig.com/articles/544/Displaced_workers_find_there%27s_more_to_job_hunting_than_resume.html)

**How to Build Your Self-Confidence after a Layoff**  

You may also find some interesting articles offered on the EAP website:  
[www.umsystem.edu/totalrewards/benefits/eap_training_programs](http://www.umsystem.edu/totalrewards/benefits/eap_training_programs)

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³⁹ https://umurl.us/eap