

	Responsible Executive: Vice President for Human Resources (CHRO)	
	Responsible Office: Human Resources	
	Effective Date: 06/25/2025	Last Revised: n/a
	Policy Title: Internal Mobility and Noncompetitive Selection	

Policy

Northern Arizona University is an Equal Employment Opportunity employer that actively seeks to recruit, retain, develop, and promote a highly qualified, mission-driven, diverse workforce. The University values its commitment to conduct competitive searches to enhance the excellence of its workforce. The University recognizes, however, that there are situations in which a compelling justification exists to make a noncompetitive selection. Non-competitive search options also support internal mobility, advancement, and the evolving institutional talent needs and challenges.

This policy describes circumstances that may justify an appointment without a competitive search. When these circumstances exist, hiring authorities may choose or be required to conduct a competitive search process. The relevant process, approvals, and documentation requirements are managed by Human Resources and other responsible offices. The University monitors compliance with the procedural requirements and their good faith application.

Section I: Emergency Hire

- A. **Instructional faculty:** In a time-sensitive or unplanned situation—i.e., illness, death, unexpected resignation, or vacancy for a position crucial to an instructional need near the required start date for the course or during the course of the semester—a department may hire a faculty member on a temporary basis without a competitive search. The unit should begin a competitive search as soon as possible to ensure that the unit can select a candidate by the beginning of the next semester/academic year.
- B. **Non-faculty positions critical to the operations of the University:** In a time-sensitive or unplanned situation in which failure to fill a vacancy would compromise the operations of the University, the University may temporarily hire someone to fill the position while it conducts a competitive search.

Section II: Hires of Individuals Specified in a Grant, Spousal/Partner Hires, and Hires of Individuals Named in a New Employee's Letter of Offer.

- A. **Grant or contract positions:** Principal investigators may hire individuals specifically named in grants or contracts without conducting a competitive search. Other

positions funded by research grants and contracts shall be filled according to university recruitment procedures.

- B. **Spousal/partner hires (as a condition of job or retention offer acceptance):** No competitive search will be required if an individual's letter of offer, employment, or retention agreement includes a requirement that, as a condition of the individual's acceptance, the University will hire the individual's spouse or partner, so long as the President, Provost, or Chief Human Resource Officer approves such condition prior to the extension of the letter of offer, employment, or retention agreement.
- C. **Other individuals named in a new employee's letter of offer:** New employees who, as part of their employment contract negotiations, desire to hire other named individuals to assist them with ongoing work may hire those individuals without a competitive recruitment, so long as the President, Provost, or Chief Human Resource Officer approves those hires prior to the extension of the letter of offer.

Section III: Strategic Opportunity Hires

On rare occasions, the University may identify an individual whose expertise and skills are aligned with pressing University needs or strategic priorities. When time, resources, or competitive market pressures threaten the University's ability to attract such an individual on a competitive basis, a Vice President may recommend hiring that individual on a noncompetitive basis and request approval from the President, Provost, or Chief Human Resource Officer.

Section IV: Returning Employees

- A. **Emeritus faculty.** Emeritus faculty may be appointed without a competitive search when they return to the same unit to perform work related to their previous position.
- B. **Retired employees without emeritus status.** Retired employees without emeritus status may be appointed without a competitive search when they return to perform the same type of work at the same or lower pay grade or rank if their break in service does not exceed twelve (12) months from the date of retirement.
- C. **Employees who have terminated their employment with the University.** Employees who have terminated their employment with the University other than for cause may be appointed without a competitive search if they return to fill their former or

similar position if their break in service does not exceed twelve (12) months.

Section V: Advancement Due to Performance and/or Career Progression

In recognition of an employee's talents, contributions, and performance, the appropriate Vice President may appoint a current employee to a different position within the Vice President's area of responsibility without conducting a competitive search in consultation with the Chief Human Resources Officer. The employees must meet the required qualifications of the position to be eligible for the new appointment. These appointments include:

- A. Appointment to a position with higher pay or title (promotion).
- B. Lateral transfer designed to meet the needs of a hiring authority's area of responsibility, or to same/similar title/classification in another unit in collaboration with appropriate senior leadership.

Appointments and promotions described in this section are separate from the tenure and promotion requirements and process that generally apply to faculty. These appointments and promotions generally apply to staff and administrative appointments.

Section VI: Voluntary Demotion

A voluntary demotion is a movement to a class with a lower salary range upon the request or concurrence of an employee. An employee may, based on written request of the employee, voluntarily demote to a position with a lower salary range for which the employee meets the minimum qualification. Such demotion shall occur with the approval of the appropriate Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer.

Related Information*

[1.05 Employment of Relatives](#)

[Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment](#)

Policy History*

06/25/2025: Origination Date

* Related Information and Policy History are solely for the user's convenience and are not part of the official university policy.