

University of Rochester
Furlough Exemptions Policy

The following guides the University of Rochester's decision making with respect to furlough decisions made in May 2020, as a result of extreme budgetary shortfalls due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The NIH, along with the other federal agencies, is allowing for payment of idle staff provided that the University's policy also allows for this payment, irrespective of funding source. (See OMB Memorandum M-20-17: Administrative Relief for Recipients and Applicants of Federal Financial Assistance Directly Impacted by the Novel Coronavirus [COVID-19] due to Loss of Operations) In order to protect and support the University's sponsored research and to be ready to ramp up research as quickly as possible when safe to do so, UR has made a decision consistent with OMB regulation and guidance to exempt some job codes/functional roles from furloughs. Decisions made in these job codes/functional roles that are exempted from furloughing will be funding blind such that all jobs in the jobs codes/functional roles that are exempted from furloughs will be treated the same regardless of funding source. It is important to note that our job codes by themselves may not accurately capture the functional role of a given individual. For example, the same job code may be given to an individual who is a technician in a research laboratory as is given to a staff member who is responsible for supporting teaching labs or theater productions. For the current context, technical staff who work in research laboratories are excluded from furlough, regardless of whether they are paid from grants or from institutional funds, but technical staff who support the educational mission are not. The same is true of job codes/functional roles that are not exempted from furloughs in that we should treat each job the same and not make furloughing decisions based on funding source. This will mean that some individuals in job codes/functional roles that are not exempted and are funded for sponsored awards will be part of the furloughing plan. This does not mean they will necessarily be furloughed, but they will be included in the denominator in calculating the department's success in meeting their target. Job codes/classifications that are exempted from furloughing will not be part of the denominator when calculating the furloughing target.

In addition, the University has exempted individuals paid from cooperative agreements (given that the work scope is developed jointly between the federal government and the non-federal entity) from the furlough targets if these agreements are serving other institutions, or meeting critical needs for external constituents. This exemption will need to be approved by senior University leadership in the applicable school or college.

Office of the Vice Provost for Research
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