

## **Policy 5-002: Personnel File**

### **I. Purpose**

To define the term "personnel file" and establish Procedures for inspection, copying, and challenges to the contents of such files.

### **II. Definitions**

- A. "Personnel file" means the current official file or files regardless of location, relating to an employee of the university, which contains documents and data recorded in the usual course of official university business relating specifically to the individual's employment qualifications, working assignments, promotions, compensation, job performance, personnel evaluations, disciplinary proceedings, and participation in university insurance and benefits programs. The "personnel file" shall include but is not limited to the employee's Personnel Action Notification form, the records of completed retention, promotion, and tenure (or continuing appointment), review proceedings (see Faculty Regulations, Part 6) and any letters or memoranda of evaluation, commendation or criticism relating to an employee which were not solicited or written under a request or promise of confidentiality.
- B. Official Custodian—The Official Custodian for Staff or Human Resources personnel files will be appointed by the Vice-President for Human Resources. The Official Custodian(s) of Faculty personnel will be appointed by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, or the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences, as appropriate.
- C. Relevant employee definitions are defined in Policy 5-001

### **III. Policy**

- A. Disclosure Policy

1. The university recognizes the right of each Employee to examine, obtain a copy of, and to challenge the accuracy of factual data in documents contained in that employee's personnel file, except for information and materials therein that are classified as "controlled" under the Utah Government Records Access and Management Act or the disclosure of which is forbidden pursuant to state or federal law.
2. Secret files or systems containing information about Employees included within the scope of this policy shall not be maintained by any university officer or operating unit. Upon request by a university employee, or by an authorized officer of the university pursuant to such a request from an employee, it shall be the duty of all university Employees with knowledge of the facts to disclose the existence and maintenance of all files or systems containing personnel information relating to that employee, whether or not such information is subject to inspection or copying by the employee.
3. This policy applies only to "personnel files" as defined herein, and does not affect any right conferred by law upon an individual to inspect, copy, or challenge the contents of other records and files files of the university that relate to that individual.
4. No person has a right under this policy to inspect, copy, or challenge the contents of the personnel file relating to any other individual, except to the extent that such person may be authorized to do so by the university.
5. Any person who is both a student and an employee of the university shall have the same right of inspection, copying, and challenge of his or her personnel file as is enjoyed by other university employees, and shall be entitled to the same right to inspection, copying, and challenge of his or her educational records as is enjoyed by other students.

#### B. Maintenance of Files

1. The primary personnel files of faculty members, academic librarians, and other instructional personnel shall be maintained by the Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs or the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences, whichever is appropriate.
2. The primary personnel files of noninstructional employees shall be maintained by the Vice President for Human Resources.
3. Secondary personnel files may also be maintained by colleges, departments, or other operating units, as may be necessary for functional efficiency
4. The Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Senior Vice President for Health Sciences and the Vice President for Human Resources shall each designate an official custodian of personnel records, who shall be assigned the responsibility for expediting compliance with the relevant provisions of this policy and Procedure.

C. Inspection and Copying

1. Upon request to the appropriate custodian, an employee of the university shall be afforded a reasonable opportunity to inspect and/or obtain a copy of his or her primary or secondary personnel file, or such part thereof as is described in the request, subject to the following limitations:
  - a. Letters or memoranda of recommendation, evaluation, or criticism which are solicited or submitted under a request or promise of confidentiality shall be temporarily removed from the individual's personnel file before it is inspected by the individual to which such letters or memoranda refer. See Policy and Procedures 6-303 (Faculty Regulations, Part 6)
  - b. Information in an Employee's personnel file which relates to persons other than the subject employee shall be temporarily removed from the file before it is inspected by the employee, if the information (1) is classified as "private," "protected," or "controlled" within the meaning of the Utah

Government Records Access and Management Act; (2) consists of personally identifiable information relating to the salary or compensation of a person other than the employee who is the subject of the personnel file; or (3) is prohibited from disclosure by or pursuant to state or federal law.

2. A request to inspect may be oral or written and shall describe generally the records or data in the personnel file which the individual wishes to examine. The person seeking inspection shall, upon request, produce appropriate documents or other evidence of identity.
  - a. Upon verifying the identity of the requesting person, the custodian of the files shall take appropriate steps to comply with the request with reasonable promptness.
  - b. When immediate inspection is not feasible or appropriate, the custodian shall cause the personnel file to be assembled (including any data maintained in electronically stored format) and made available for examination by the individual as soon as feasible, ordinarily not to exceed 10 working days after the request, at a reasonable place and time (during regular business hours) to be designated by the custodian.
  - c. The inspection shall take place in the presence of the custodian or designee of the custodian of the personnel file. No changes or alterations may be made to any documents in the file, and no documents may be removed from the file.
  - d. A memorandum recording the request and the making of the inspection shall be inserted in the file by the custodian immediately after the inspection has been concluded.
3. A request for copies of the personnel file, or any part thereof, must be in writing.

- a. Before the requested copies are prepared, the cost of copying shall be calculated by the custodian of the file pursuant to a schedule of charges established from time to time by the Vice President for Human Resources, and the requesting individual shall tender payment to the university cashier of the amount of the estimated cost of such copying.
  - b. Upon receiving evidence of payment of the estimated cost of copying, the custodian shall arrange to prepare copies in accordance with the request and make them available to the requesting individual with reasonable promptness.
  - c. The written request for copies shall be placed in the employee's personnel file, together with a memorandum recording the date and manner of the response to the request.
4. Challenge to Contents
- a. An employee of the university may at any time challenge any factual statement or entry of factual data in his or her personnel file upon the grounds that it is inaccurate, misleading, inappropriate, or otherwise in violation of individual rights, provided that a separate process of appeal has not been available to the employee under any other University policy or Procedure.
  - b. Employees who question the accuracy of information in their files should discuss their concerns with the appropriate departmental Chair/Director. The Chair/Director will consider the objections and has the option of recommending that the Official Custodian of the file remove the information in question, if appropriate. The employee may also make a challenge directly to the Official Custodian. The Official Custodian will work with the parties to arrive at a mutually agreeable solution.
  - c. The Official Custodian will make a recommendation to the cognizant vice-president. The cognizant vice-president will render a final decision

regarding any changes in, deletions from, or additions to the personnel file to assure that the file includes only factually accurate, truthful, and relevant information. The employee shall be advised in writing of all approved modifications.

- d. Should the disputed information be retained in the file, the employee may submit a written statement identifying the alleged errors or inaccuracies. The statement will remain in the file as long as the disputed information is retained.

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*[Note: Parts IV-VII of this Regulation (and all other University Regulations) are Regulations Resource Information – the contents of which are not approved by the Academic Senate or Board of Trustees, and are to be updated from time to time as determined appropriate by the cognizant Policy Officer and the Institutional Policy Committee, as per Policy 1-001 and Rule 1-001.]*

#### **IV. Rules, Procedures, Guidelines, Forms and other Related Resources**

- A. Rules
- B. Procedures
- C. Guidelines
- D. Forms
- E. Other related resources
- F. References (*reserved*)

#### **V. Contacts**

The designated contact officials for this Policy are:

- A. Policy Owner (primary contact person for questions and advice): Director of Benefits for Human Resources.
- B. Policy Officer: Chief Human Resource Officer

These officials are designated by the University President or delegee, with assistance of the Institutional Policy Committee, to have the following roles and authority, as provided in University Rule 1-001:

*"A 'Policy Officer' will be assigned by the President for each University Policy, and will typically be someone at the executive level of the University (i.e., the President and his/her Cabinet Officers). The assigned Policy Officer is authorized to allow exceptions to the Policy in appropriate cases.... "*

*"The Policy Officer will identify an 'Owner' for each Policy. The Policy Owner is an expert on the Policy topic who may respond to questions about, and provide interpretation of the Policy; and will typically be someone reporting to an executive level position (as defined above), but may be any other person to whom the President or a Vice President has delegated such authority for a specified area of University operations. The Owner has primary responsibility for maintaining the relevant portions of the Regulations Library... [and] bears the responsibility for determining -requirements of particular Policies... ." University Rule 1-001-III-B & E*

## **VI. History**

- A. Renumbering: Renumbered as Policy 5-002 effective 9/15/2008, formerly known as PPM 2-0.1
- B. Revision History:

Current Version: Revision 3

Effective dates: October 11, 2011 to present

Editorially revised October 11, 2011 -

Editorial changes were made to this document to reflect the changes in employee definitions as set forth in [Policy 5-100](#).

Earlier versions:

Revision 2: effective dates June 29, 1984 to October 10, 2011 (editorially revised July 11, 2007)

Revision 1: effective dates May 14, 1979 to June 28, 1984