

Trial Period

- Authority** Approved by the Vice President of Human Resources.
- Applicability** Applies to all regular employees as defined in [Guide Memo 23.1](#), Definitions. For policies that apply to employees covered by collective bargaining agreements, refer to the agreements found at <http://elr.stanford.edu/union/index.html>.
- Summary** Section headings:
1. DEFINITION AND PURPOSE
 2. POLICIES
 3. GUIDE TO SUPERVISORS

1. DEFINITION AND PURPOSE

The trial period is an initial period of service during which the department assesses the performance of a newly hired regular employee to determine if the employee meets the requirements and expectations of the position.

2. POLICIES

- a. Length of Trial Period** — The trial period is an employee's first six months of service as a regular employee with the University, including service as a trainee. The trial period may be extended. An extension:
- (1) Requires approval of the Human Resources Manager,
 - (2) Is for a specified period of time, normally not to exceed a total of two additional months, and
 - (3) When feasible, must be communicated to the employee in writing by the department in advance of the extension.

The trial period is automatically extended for the duration of any approved leave of absence. Nothing in this policy guarantees that an employee will be permitted to complete a full, six-month trial period if earlier termination is warranted.

- b. Additional Trial Periods** — An employee who has completed a trial period is *not required* to serve an additional trial period when transferred, promoted, or assigned to different duties within the University. However, employees who have been rehired must serve a new Trial Period.
- c. Completion of Trial Period** — The department should notify the employee by the last day of the trial period that the trial period has been completed or extended. When such notice is not given, the trial period is considered to have been completed. In extenuating circumstances, the Human Resources Manager may determine that the trial period is not completed if timely notice could not be given.

- d. **Layoff Trial Period** — An employee will serve a layoff trial period for the initial six months in the new position when:
- Hired into another position following permanent layoff, or
 - Given formal notification of permanent layoff, or
 - Given notice that layoff will result if the employee does not obtain alternative employment in the same department or administrative unit.

If the employee does not complete the layoff trial period successfully, then the employee may revert to layoff status and receive any benefits that may accrue to that status. Reversion to layoff during the layoff trial period may be invoked either by the employee or by the department.

An employee may serve only one layoff trial period following any one layoff, and may invoke the option to revert to layoff status only once. If hired into a second job (either a subsequent or a simultaneous job), the employee does not serve a layoff trial period. Extension of layoff trial period or completion of layoff trial period is handled as described for the trial period.

- e. **Termination During Trial Period or Layoff Trial Period** — During the trial period, the employment relationship between the employee and the University is “at-will.” This means that it can be terminated by either the employee or the University at any time and for any reason, or no reason, with or without notice. In the event of a trial period termination, the employee may file a request for an administrative review as stated in [Guide Memo 22.18](#), Administrative Review Policy. The provisions of Guide Memo 22.15 (Addressing Conduct & Performance Issues) do not apply. The Vice President of Human Resources or his/her designee must approve such terminations.

3. GUIDE TO SUPERVISORS

Planning the Trial Period — Supervisors are expected to establish and communicate performance expectations and try to resolve problems during the trial period. Supervisors should consult with their local human resources office about problems that could lead to a request for extension of a trial period or termination of the employee during or at the end of the trial period.