



POLICY & PROCEDURE DOCUMENT

NUMBER: 4.2920

DIVISION: Finance and Administration

TITLE: Probationary Period Policy

DATE: December 8, 2025

Policy for: All Non-Faculty Employees

Authorized by: Department of Human Resources

I. Purpose and Scope

This policy establishes a consistent framework for evaluating the performance, conduct, and overall suitability of employees during a defined introductory period at Western Kentucky University.

Effective April 1, 2026, this policy applies to all newly hired employees (non-faculty), as well as current employees who are transferred or promoted. Faculty and contractors are excluded from this policy and are governed by separate procedures.

II. Policy

All newly hired staff employees, as well as current employees who transfer to a new position or are promoted within the university will be subject to a probationary period. This probationary period is intended to provide a structured timeframe for assessing the employee's performance, conduct, and overall suitability for the role. The standard probationary period will be ninety (90) days from the effective date of hire, transfer, or promotion. During this time, supervisors are responsible for providing written performance feedback, along with coaching, and support to ensure employees meet established expectations.

III. Procedure

A. Documentation and Evaluation

Supervisors must conduct regular check-ins and provide written performance feedback at the thirty (30), sixty (60), and ninety (90) - day milestones during the probationary period. A formal evaluation should be completed no later than two weeks prior to the end of the probationary period and submitted to Human Resources.

B. Extension Criteria

The probationary period may be extended one additional time up to ninety (90) days if the employee has not had sufficient time in the role due to leave or reassignment, performance concerns that require additional time for improvement and monitoring, or the supervisor determines that more time is needed to fairly assess the employee's fit for the role. Extensions must be documented and approved, in advance, by Human Resources, and the employee must be notified in writing.

C. Leave Eligibility

Newly hired employees in a probationary period are eligible to use earned sick and vacation leave in accordance with the university policies. Newly hired employees are not eligible to take any additional paid or unpaid leave until probationary period is successfully completed. However, employees may take federally mandated leaves (such as Pregnant Workers Fairness Act or military) and any leave that was pre-approved prior to their start date.

Transferred or promoted employees may continue to take additional paid or unpaid leave according to policy.

D. Benefits Eligibility

Newly hired employees are benefits eligible on the first day of the month following their employment start date.

Transferred or promoted employees retain their existing benefit eligibility status.

E. Disciplinary Actions

Should an employee fail to successfully meet the job expectations during the probationary period, disciplinary actions may be accelerated up to and including termination.

IV. Exclusions

V. Related Policies

See also: Policy 4.8501 Disciplinary Action

VI. Reason for Revision