



ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY STATEMENT

Policy Title: Employment and Non-Employment at the University

APS Number: 5066

APS Functional Area: **HUMAN RESOURCES**

Brief Description:	This administrative policy statement (APS) outlines different employment roles and non-employment roles within CU. These definitions will assist in understanding the differences between roles as well as references for additional resources for specific roles.
Effective:	January 1, 2026
Approved by:	President Todd Saliman
Responsible University Officer:	Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer
Responsible Office:	Office of Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer
Policy Contact:	Office of Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer
Supersedes:	N/A
Last Reviewed/Updated:	January 1, 2026
Applies to:	All University Employees and Certain Non-Employees

Reason for Policy: This APS outlines different employment roles and non-employment roles within CU. These definitions will assist in understanding the differences between roles as well as references for additional resources for specific roles.

I. INTRODUCTION

There are many roles individuals can have with the University of Colorado. While employment roles are maintained by different areas in the university, the Board of Regents maintain the defining eligibility of benefits for all employees per regent policy 11 and details can be found in the benefits matrix.

Non-employment roles are integral to the university and provide different functions. These roles do not earn wages for time worked and the majority are not entitled to benefits.

II. EMPLOYMENT ROLES AT THE UNIVERSITY

All employees are eligible to contribute to the optional retirement savings plans: 403(b), PERA 401(k) and PERA 457.

If employees are not generally eligible for medical benefits, they may be eligible if they qualify under the Affordable Care Act.

A. Faculty

1. Definition: Faculty are defined in [APS 5060 – Faculty Appointments](#) which is maintained by the Office of Academic Affairs.
2. Personnel Matters: Regent policy 2.K delegates personnel matters to the chancellor on each campus, except for the awarding of tenure, which remains with the Board of Regents. Further delegation of non-tenure personnel matters is allowed.

3. Organizations: The University of Colorado Faculty Council represents faculty on all campuses and provides updates to the Board of Regents during regular board meetings.

B. University Staff

1. Definition: University staff are defined in [Regent Law 6: University and Classified Staff](#) and general guidelines are found in [Regent Policy 6: University and Classified Staff](#).
2. Personnel Matters: Regent policy 2.K delegates personnel matters to the chancellor on each campus and the president for System Administration. Further delegation is allowed.
3. Organizations: The University of Colorado Staff Council represents staff on all campuses and provides updates to the Board of Regents during regular board meetings.

C. Classified Staff

1. Definition: Classified staff are defined in [Regent Law 6: University and Classified Staff](#) and general guidelines are found in State of Colorado Personnel Rules.
2. Personnel Matters: Regent policy 2.K delegates personnel matters to the chancellor on each campus and the president for System Administration. Further delegation is allowed.
3. Organizations: The University of Colorado Staff Council represents staff on all campuses and provides updates to the Board of Regents during regular board meetings. Classified staff are also represented by COWINS.

D. Temporary Employees

1. Definition: Faculty or staff members who work for a limited amount of time.
2. Personnel Matters: Temporary employees are managed by the department in which they are employed. Human Resources offices at each campus offer additional support for supervisors.
3. Medical benefits: Temporary employees are generally not eligible for CU's employer health benefits but may become eligible under the Affordable Care Act regulations.
4. Leave: Temporary employees do not accrue vacation leave, and they are not eligible to receive holiday or administrative leave.

E. Student Employees

1. Definition: Student employees are temporary employees that are also undergraduate or graduate students at CU, other higher educational institutions, or high schools. Student employees are paid hourly wages to perform duties within the academic, administrative, or research functions of the university.

These appointments are limited to maximum work hours per week while attending courses and during academic breaks as described by campus policy.

Once the employee is no longer a student, this appointment cannot be used for continued employment.

2. Personnel Matters: Student employees are managed by the department in which they are employed. Student employment offices at each campus may offer additional support for supervisors.
3. Organizations: While the student government structure covers student employees in their capacity as a CU student, there is not a formal organization focused on the employment relationship.

4. Medical benefits: Student employees are generally not eligible for CU's employer health benefits but may become eligible under the Affordable Care Act regulations. Student employees are eligible for the student health coverage provided by their respective campus.
5. Retirement benefits: These appointments are exempt from paying social security (FICA) taxes but are mandated to contribute to the University of Colorado Student Employee Retirement Program (SERP) if their academic appointment falls below 6 credits for an undergraduate or 3 credits for a graduate student.
6. Leave: Student employees do not accrue vacation leave, and they are not eligible to receive holiday or administrative leave.

F. Student Faculty (Graduate or Undergraduate Students on Appointment)

1. Definition: Student faculty are temporary employees that are students at CU. Student faculty are paid a set wage to perform specific duties within the academic or research functions of the university. These contracts can include research duties, teaching assistants, grading, etc.

These appointments are limited to working 20 hours per week while attending courses and can work full time during academic breaks.

Once the employee is no longer a student, this appointment cannot be used for continued employment.

2. Personnel Matters: Student faculty are managed by the Graduate School or undergraduate department at each campus and maintain specific policies on leave that balance employment and academic breaks.
3. Medical benefits: Student faculty are generally not eligible for CU's employer health benefits but may become eligible under the Affordable Care Act regulations. Student employees are eligible for the student health coverage provided by their respective campus.
4. Retirement benefits: These appointments are exempt from paying social security (FICA) taxes but are mandated to contribute to the University of Colorado Student Employee Retirement Program (SERP) if their academic appointment falls below 6 credits for an undergraduate or 3 credits for a graduate student.

G. Graduate Medical Education (GME) Residents

1. Definition: Resident includes interns, residents and fellows (as those terms are defined by the American College of Graduate Medical Education) participating in a university Graduate Medical Education training program.
2. Personnel Matters: Residents are managed by the Graduate Medical Education (GME) within the School of Medicine at CU Anschutz.
3. Organizations: Residents are managed by the Graduate Medical Education (GME) within the School of Medicine at CU Anschutz.
4. Medical benefits: Residents are eligible for CU medical benefits.
5. Retirement benefits: Residents are subject to a 403(b) Automatic Contribution Arrangement and are eligible for matching contributions.

H. Working Retirees

1. Definition: Working retirees are people who have retired from CU and/or from a PERA employer. Specific rules are in place and outlined in [APS 5054 – Hiring Retirees to Work in Staff or Faculty Positions](#).
2. Personnel Matters: Working retirees are managed by the department in which they are employed. Human Resources offices at each campus offer additional support for supervisors.

3. Medical benefits: It is important to follow [APS 5054 - Hiring Retirees to Work in Staff or Faculty Positions](#) to not create conflicting relationships between the retirement medical benefits and active employee benefits.

III. NON-EMPLOYMENT ROLES AT THE UNIVERSITY

Non-employment individuals are not eligible for any medical or retirement benefits.

A. Trainees and Fellows on Stipends (3200 series)

1. Definition: Trainees and fellows receive a stipend for support and to defray expenses during an academic appointment or research training and no service to the university is expected in return for the support. Support may come from the university or external sources.
2. Payments: Stipends are paid through the Human Capital Management (HCM) system but individuals are issued a 1099 at the end of the tax year.

B. Independent Contractors

1. Definition: An independent contractor is an individual who performs services and has the right to control or direct only the result of the work and not what will be done and how it will be done. If you are an independent contractor, then you are self-employed.
2. Payments: Independent contractors are paid with operating budgets through the PSC.
3. Employee Services performs the rigorous IRS evaluation on work being performed, how the work is performed and oversight of duties.
4. Oversight: Independent contractors should be managed by the department like any other vendor providing service to CU.

C. Global Workers

1. Definition: A [CU Global Worker](#) is any employee whose work site is located outside of the United States, regardless of citizenship and residency.
2. Payments: Payments are made through the Employer of Record, which is a Professional Employer Organization (PEO). The PEO is the legal hiring entity in other countries, partnering with CU to provide human resources, payroll processing, employer tax filing, health insurance and more for employees working outside the United States.
3. Oversight: The department maintains all supervisory roles and manages the worker's day-to-day employment (remote work).

D. Person of Interest (POI)

1. Definition: Individuals recorded in CU's HRIS system to fulfill various roles such as volunteering, access to IT credentials (email, shared files, etc.) or contractors needing secure access to a CU technical system.
2. Payments: No payments are made to POIs through the POI relationship. If the POI is a vendor or independent contractor, payments are made through those relationships.
3. Oversight: POIs should be managed by the department like any other vendor providing service to CU.

E. Retirees

1. Definition: Retirees are faculty and staff who have retired from CU. Unless the individual is rehired into a Working Retiree position, no duties are expected from the retiree.

2. Payments: No payments are made to retirees for work being completed.
3. Oversight: Employee Services manages retiree benefits and can assist the employee with their relationship with the 401(a) provider or PERA.

IV. **HISTORY**

- Adopted: January 1, 2026.
- Revised: N/A.
- Last Reviewed: January 1, 2026.