

Purpose of this Handbook

This Administrative Professional (AP) Handbook summarizes Washington State University (WSU or University) policies and procedures for Administrative Professional personnel. It conveys information regarding WSU services, facilities, and employee benefits, as well as other information required by state and federal governments. The handbook is web-based with links to complete information on most subjects. Periodic updates will be provided electronically on the Human Resource Services website and announced through WSU Announcements. If you have questions about information in the handbook, please contact Human Resource Services at 509-335-4521.

Administrative Professional employees provide key support in the areas of research, public information, development, computer systems and network programming, personnel, legislative relations, internal audit, counseling, graphic arts, and extension and/or continuing education. Others serve as executive heads, principal assistants, managers, supervisors, and serve in related capacities that maintain continuity of operations within the University community. As a group, Administrative Professional employees function as a significant link between the teaching, research, extension, and Civil Service staff who support WSU's mission.

About Washington State University

A Brief History

Washington State University was founded March 28, 1890, less than five months after Washington's entry into the Union, by the first Washington legislature. WSU was established under the Morrill Act of 1862, which provided grants of land to each state for a college providing education in agricultural and mechanical arts as well as in the liberal arts.

The Morrill Act opened higher education to groups who previously had been excluded. In a quiet way, the Morrill Act was a revolutionary document aimed at enhancing the equality of higher education opportunities.

WSU originally was named Washington State Agricultural College and School of Science; however, before the first classes began in January 1892, the name was changed to Agricultural College, Experiment Station, and School of Science of the State of Washington. In 1905, the name once again was changed, this time to State College of Washington. This name endured until 1959 when it was changed to Washington State University. Refer to the WSU website for additional information: wsu.edu.

Past presidents of WSU were George Lilley, 1891–92; John W. Heston, 1892–93; Enoch A. Bryan, 1893–1915; Ernest O. Holland, 1916–44; Wilson Compton, 1945–51; C. Clement French, 1952–66; Glenn Terrell, 1967–85; Samuel H. Smith 1985–2000; V. Lane Rawlins, 2000–07; Elson S. Floyd, 2007–15; and Daniel J. Bernardo, 2015–16. Kirk Schulz, WSU's current chief executive, became President in 2016.

More detailed information about President Kirk H. Schulz, Presidential committees, the Board of Regents, and Washington State University can be found on the President's website: president.wsu.edu.

Characteristics, Mission, and Strategic Plan

As a public, land-grant and research institution of distinction, Washington State University enhances the intellectual, creative, and practical abilities of the individuals, institutions, and communities that we serve by fostering learning, inquiry, and engagement.

Washington State University offers a premier undergraduate experience, conducts and stimulates world-class research, graduate and professional education, scholarship and arts, and provides an exemplary working and learning environment that fosters engagement.

WSU is guided by a commitment to excellence embodied in a set of core values: Quality and Excellence; Integrity, Trust, and Respect; Discovery, Innovation, and Creativity; Land-grant Ideals; Diversity and Global Citizenship; Freedom of Expression; Stewardship and Accountability. A copy of the Strategic Plan can be found at strategicplan.wsu.edu.

Policy for Administrative Professional Employees

Administrative Professional employees are exempted from the civil service rules in accordance with RCW 41.06.070. The Administrative Professional Handbook applies to all Administrative Professional employees. Those employed as medical residents who are governed by a designated accrediting authority are subject to the governing documents related to their specific residency. Medical residents shall refer to the appropriate policy handbook that corresponds with their program. Athletic coach's terms and conditions of employment may be governed by an employment agreement.

The Administrative Professional Handbook conveys information about the nature, operation, and organization of WSU, summarizing WSU policies relating to Administrative Professional employees. Neither this handbook nor any University policies, procedures, or practices shall be construed as an express or implied contract of employment or a promise of continued employment. Although this handbook contains a compilation of current policies relating to Administrative Professional employment, these policies evolve over time as the institution and its internal and external environments change. For these reasons, the University reserves the right to revise this handbook, or any of its policies or benefits, or to institute new policies or benefits, provided these changes are not inconsistent with state and federal law. Any such modification applies upon adoption by the University, regardless of previous provisions that may have been in effect. The most current revision of the handbook is available on the Human Resource Services website: hrs.wsu.edu.

The laws of the State of Washington and appropriate Washington Administrative Code provisions also apply to all employees, as does the University's Business Policies and Procedures Manual (BPPM). The manual can be found at policies.wsu.edu. All University policies are subject to federal and state laws; where there is deemed to be a conflict, the provisions of law apply.

Recruitment, Selection, and Salary Procedures

Washington State University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. The procedures for recruitment, selection, and salary determination of Administrative Professional personnel are outlined in BPPM chapter 60 as follows:

- Recruitment and Selection of Administrative Professional Personnel, BPPM 60.17
- Classification and Reclassification, BPPM 60.02
- Administrative Professional Salary Determination and Adjustment, BPPM 60.12

For information and assistance, please contact Human Resource Services at 509-335-4521 or refer to the HRS website: hrs.wsu.edu.

Employee Designations

Overall responsibility for personnel administration lies with the Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer. The following definitions have been established for WSU Faculty, Administrative Professional, and Civil Service employees. Whenever questions arise about the designation of an Administrative Professional employee, the Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer, in consultation with the appropriate administrative officers and Human Resource Services, will make the final decision.

- **Faculty:** Employees who are appointed to faculty positions and perform academic, research, extension, and library duties as determined by the Faculty Manual.
- **Administrative Professional (AP):** Employees who perform duties which are exempted from civil service in accordance with RCW 41.06.070. A general summary of exemption criteria may be found in Attachment A.

- **Civil Service (CS):** Employees who are covered under the State of Washington Office of Financial Management Civil Service Rules.
- **Bargaining Unit Covered (BU):** Employees who are covered by the terms and conditions of Collective Bargaining Agreements.

Position Allocation – Appointments

Human Resource Services (HRS) is responsible for ensuring all Administrative Professional positions meet the Exemption Criteria as outlined in [RCW 41.06.070](#) for a given category and are properly allocated. This is accomplished through a job auditing process that includes a review of the position duties. Administrative Professional appointments must be benefits-eligible for a minimum of 50% FTE (full-time equivalent) and for more than a 6-month appointment term (i.e., 6 months plus 1 day). Contact HRS for template offer letters which can be sent outside Workday.

Reappointment of a Retired Employee – Appointments

Prior to extending an offer to or re-appointing an individual who has previously retired from WSU or from other Washington state employment to a temporary or permanent AP position, HRS must be contacted to discuss the appointment. In some cases, the applicable retirement plan may impose limitations on the nature and duration of the appointment.

Summer Appointments

Administrative Professional personnel hired on less than 12-month appointments may accept summer appointments.

Employee Benefits

New employees must complete all insurance and retirement enrollment forms within 31 days of initial hire to ensure benefit rights. For enrollment and benefit information, contact HRS at 509-335-4521 or visit the website: hrs.wsu.edu/benefits.

Health Insurance, Life Insurance, Long-Term Disability, and Long-Term Care Insurance

Administrative Professional employees who work at least half-time (50% FTE) per month and are expected to be employed for more than six months are eligible for insurance benefits. Basic benefit coverage begins the first day of the month following employment, unless eligible employees begin work on the first working day of the month, in which case coverage begins that day. Optional coverage begins the first of the month after the forms are submitted, or after the insurance underwriter approves the request.

There is an annual open enrollment period in which employees may change their medical/dental plans. Changes in life and Long-Term Disability insurance may be requested at any time and are subject to insurance underwriting.

The Washington State Health Care Authority is the agency responsible for the purchase and coordination of health insurance benefits through the Public Employees Benefit Board plans.

Eligible WSU employees may also participate in medical Flexible Spending Accounts, Dependent Care Assistance plans, automobile and homeowner insurance plans, and long-term care insurance plans.

Retirement Plan Eligibility and Participation

Administrative Professional employees who are appointed to at least a half-time (50% FTE) per month position and are expected to be employed for more than six months are required to participate in either the WSU Retirement Plan (WSURP), with the current retirement vendor being TIAA, or the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) Plan 3. An employee appointed to an eligible position may elect to enroll in one of the plans during the first 30 days of employment. If at the end of 30 days they have not chosen a plan, they will be automatically enrolled in the WSURP. If a new employee has prior service in a State of Washington

Department of Retirement Systems (DRS) plan, it may impact what retirement plan they are eligible to participate in while working at WSU.

Employees who are reclassified to an eligible Administrative Professional position may be given an option to irrevocably enroll in the WSU Retirement Plan within 30 days of reclassification or elect to continue their participation in the DRS plan. Prior retirement elections may impact the ability to change plans due to reclassification.

Under the DRS/PERS plans, employees elect how much they would like to contribute, with contribution rates ranging from 5%–15%. The employer contributions are set by the State legislature. For the WSURP, WSU matches employee contributions on a one-for-one basis in accordance with the following requirements:

- Under age 35 - 5 percent employee contribution is required
- Age 35 and Over - 7.5 percent employee contribution is required
- Age 50 and Over - Optional 10 percent employee contribution

The WSURP is a 403(b) defined contribution retirement plan where the employee determines how funds are to be invested. The PERS Plan 3 plan is a 401(a) hybrid plan, where employer contributions fund a defined benefit/pension benefit. In the PERS Plan 3, the employee contributions fund a defined contribution retirement benefit and the employee also determines how funds are to be invested.

In addition to the required retirement plans, eligible employees may contribute to one of the voluntary retirement programs offered at WSU, including TIAA's voluntary investment plan, or the State of Washington's Deferred Compensation Plan. Contributions are not matched by the University but may be made on a pre- or post-tax deferred basis, for as little as \$15 per pay period up to the maximum allowed by the Internal Revenue Service.

Payroll Services

New employees must complete a W-4 withholding certificate. See the [Workday: Manage your Payroll Options: Complete Federal Withholding Elections Reference Guide](#) and [Workday: Manage your Payroll Options: Complete State and Local Withholding Elections Reference Guide](#) for information on how to complete the W-4 form.

Employees are encouraged to authorize the University to deposit their net pay directly into their designated bank account. See the [Workday Payroll Guide: Complete Payment Elections Reference Guide](#) for enrollment procedures. Employees who do not choose to participate in the direct deposit program will receive a paycheck by mail. All employees have electronic access to their payroll statements.

In accordance with state law, pay periods are semimonthly lagged, with 24 paydays per calendar year. A schedule of state paydays is published each year on the Payroll Services website: payroll.wsu.edu.

Pertinent Laws and Policies

Non-Discrimination Statement

In matters of admissions, employment, housing or services, or in the educational program or activities it operates, WSU does not discriminate or permit discrimination by any member of its community against any individual on the basis of; race, creed, color, national or ethnic origin, sex and/or gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, religion, marital status, physical, sensory or mental disability, including the use of a trained guide dog or service animal, immigration or citizenship status (except as authorized by federal or state law, regulation, or government contract), or status as an honorably discharged veteran or member of the military.