



VACANCY REVIEW BOARD (VRB) GUIDELINES & FAQs

RESPONSIBILITIES

College/School

- The campus VP of Finance and Administration will serve as local “gatekeeper,” responsible for all submissions. The VP is also responsible for ensuring that all personnel actions submitted to the local and/or central VRB are accounted for in the college’s financial planning and Savings Target Plans.
- Colleges must establish their own VRB equivalent for approving submissions, comprised of the VP of Finance and Administration, HR Director, and a representative from the Provost’s Office.

It is the colleges’ responsibility to consider the function of each position and its direct impact on core and essential business operations before seeking an exception. Colleges should also take the following actions:

- Establish guidelines for submissions. Colleges may continue their current processes for requesting and approving positions (such as the HEO screening committee) or amend their process by instituting a Vacancy Review committee for their campus; however, only the President has the final authority to move any position forward for consideration by the Vacancy Review Board.
- Review Part-Time Teaching and Non-Teaching positions to ensure that resources are used in the most efficient, effective, and strategic manner.
- College should only submit personnel actions or vacancy requests to the Central VRB that result in an increase in costs. Personnel actions and vacancy requests that are either cost neutral or result in a cost savings should continue to be submitted to the college VRB. See other exemptions below.

HR Advisory Services/Civil Service Support (CSS)

- Advisory/CSS will review all campus worksheets for policy guidelines, provide compensation analysis in preparation for weekly VRB meeting.

Vacancy Review Board (VRB)

- The VRB will review every campus spreadsheet on a weekly basis and provide questions, feedback and decisions to Advisory/Civil Service Support for appropriate action/follow up.

PROCEDURE

- The VRB is the final step in the review process. Campuses should continue to adhere to all action processes in place prior to submitting requests to the VRB. The VRB does not replace the regular review/approval process for actions including but not limited to search waivers and reclassifications. Action must still be presented to Campus P&B, HEO Screening, and Labor Management Committees.



- Once these existing reviews are complete, and campus Human Resources and the VP of Administration and Finance are notified, requests can be submitted by uploading the required spreadsheet to the VRB SharePoint page, with the college President or Dean copied on the email that contains the supporting documentation (justification, budget/HR form, etc.) and is forwarded to vrb@cuny.edu
- Central Office requests will require the approval of the respective Senior or Executive Vice Chancellor.
- Colleges should submit all required documents to HR Advisory/Civil Service Support for actions per usual practice/process.
- Classified requests submitted to Civil Service Support should be uploaded to SharePoint and submitted to vrb@cuny.edu.
- In general, Colleges should be able to view the results of the VRB review by accessing their respective files on SharePoint by EOD each Monday.
- Requests that miss the deadline will not be considered until the next VRB cycle.
- Requests outside of the process will not be considered.

REQUESTS EXEMPT FROM VRB REVIEW

Personnel actions and vacancy requests in scope of the VRB include those that are paid with state or city tax levy operating and capital funds, funds held by the NYS treasury (Income Fund Reimbursable), funds held by NYC (ACE, Tech Fee, Non-Misc. Income). Personal actions and vacancy requests related to staff on the Research Foundation's payroll or other non-tax levy payrolls are excluded from the VRB.

Other specific exemptions include:

- Collective bargaining related salary increases
- Settlement agreements
- Differentials and stipends
- ECP interim extensions
- Classified Employees
 - Temporary employee extensions
 - Change of employee status due to appointment from a civil service list (e.g., provisional to probable permanent)
 - College Assistant appointments
 - Skilled Trades
 - Public Safety (Campus Peace Officer, Campus Security Assistant)



- Maintenance (Maintenance Worker, Laborer & Custodial Assistant)
- Inclusive Economy funded positions
- Instructional Employees
 - Faculty tenure promotions with no salary increase
 - Faculty title promotions (assistant to associate, associate to full professor) with a slide to the nearest salary step
 - Adjunct appointments
 - Substitute Lecturer and Substitute Lecturer Doctoral Schedule appointments
 - Distinguished Professor appointments
 - Summer salaries
 - Faculty hired using the \$53 million of State funds; must be hired for the Fall 2023 semester at the latest
- Non-Teaching Instructional Employees (HEO Series and CLTs)
 - Substitute extensions (first extension for max 1 year appointment)
 - Graduate Assistant appointments
 - Reclassifications with a slide salary to the nearest step
 - Non-Teaching Adjunct appointments
 - Tutor and Peer Mentor appointments
 - Continuing Education Teacher appointments
 - Additional Hours for part-time employees

REQUESTS NOT CURRENTLY BEING CONSIDERED; please do not submit:

- × Merit increases
- × Cost of living increases
- × Pay increases in excess of 10% (This applies to non-promotional increases. Increases due to promotion to a substantially higher-level position may warrant a higher increase but must be tied to the comp range that was approved when the vacancy was posted.)
- × Pay changes with a retroactive date of **more than one month prior**
- × ECP appointments or increases that are above the maximum of the compensation range



GENERAL VACANCY REVIEW BOARD GUIDELINES

- All actions that result in an addition to headcount, or salary increase must go to the VRB unless otherwise specified. Personnel actions are defined as new hires or replacements, promotions, increases in pay, step increases, or any other change that increases compensation expenses other than those required by a collective bargaining agreement.
- The Vacancy Review Board will consider exceptions that demonstrate a direct relationship to safety, academic excellence, recruitment and retention, strategic investments, operational disruption, risk management, or cost reduction.
- The VRB will also consider campus staffing levels and the current and projected financial condition of the campus. They may also consult with University and College subject-matter experts when needed.
- All requests ***must*** include detailed calculations as to how each will be funded, where resources will be re-allocated or how revenue will be generated. **Requests without this level of detail will be returned without review.**



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How will search waivers be handled?

A: The regular process for search waivers and employee actions will still apply. Once the Office of Human Resources and the Office of Recruitment and Diversity have reviewed submissions, you will be given the OK to submit your request to the VRB inbox.

Q: What is the difference between a vacancy request and a personnel action request?

A: A Vacancy Request is to commence a search or appoint a new hire. A Personnel Request is an action necessary for a current CUNY Employee such as a reclassification, functional title change, or salary change.

Q: What is the difference between a New Position and a Replacement?

A: If the position was newly created or if the position has been vacant for more than 1 year, it should be considered New.

Q: If a candidate worked for a CUNY college before, but had a break in service and is being rehired, is this considered a new hire for VRB purposes?

A: Yes.

Q: Are requests for regular ECP appointments being considered or only appointments that are interim?

A: Regular ECP appointments will be considered and require complete supporting documentation.

Q: Do we need to submit a request to make an offer for a position already approved by the VRB?

A: No, if the offer is within the compensation range approved by the VRB then no additional approval is required and an offer may be extended.

Q: How will postings be handled?

A: The college should go through the current process with campus HR directors approving the job description. The college would then complete the Vacancy Review Request portion of the SharePoint spreadsheet for VRB review.

Q: How often will the VRB be meeting and what is the cutoff for submissions?

A: Meetings are on Fridays and the submission deadline is Noon the prior Thursday (4 business days).

Q: We received VRB approval to hire from a search, but the candidate in the request has denied the offer or rescinded their acceptance of the appointment, do we need to submit another request?

A: If the appointment is within the initially submitted salary range, the campus does not need to submit another request.



FUNDING SOURCES

Q: What types of Tax Levy funds are in the scope of the VRB?

A: Personnel actions and vacancy requests in scope of the VRB include those that are paid with state or city tax levy operating and capital funds, funds held by the NYS treasury (Income Fund Reimbursable), funds held by NYC (ACE, Tech Fee, Non-Misc. Income).

Q: What types of Non-Tax Levy funds are in the scope of the VRB?

A: Any personnel actions or vacancy requests that impact the Research Foundation's payroll or a non-tax levy payroll is exempt from the Central VRB review but should continue to be closely monitored at the local/campus level.

Q: May I hire someone on tax levy funds if the position is funded by a grant or through philanthropy funds?

A: No, these positions should be hired on the Research Foundation's payroll, unless the funding is in perpetuity (i.e., paid with proceeds from endowment funds).

NON-TEACHING INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

Q: Is VRB approval required to appoint a new substitute HEO?

A: Yes.

Q: Is VRB approval required to appoint a substitute from a search?

A: Yes.

Q: Is VRB approval required to appoint a new interim ECP?

A: Yes.

Q: How will reclassifications with slides instead of step increases be handled? (For example, an aHEO going into a HEOa title may be moving from a salary of \$86,188 to \$86,645).

A: Reclassifications with a slide do not need VRB review, but still must follow the current review process with campus Human Resources and UHR/Advisory Services.

Q: Are functional title changes allowed?

A: At this time, functional title changes without a change in compensation should continue through their current approval process and **do not** require VRB approval.

Q: Do Graduate Research Assistants have to be reviewed by the VRB?

A: No, see pp. 2-3 for list of titles and actions exempt from VRB requirement.

Q: Most PhD students have NTA appointments to qualify for NYSHIP with the funds being reimbursed by grants. Do these have to be reviewed by the VRB?

A: No



INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF

Q: If a candidate served as a College Assistant, HEO, etc., and is receiving a new Adjunct assignment but has continuously worked, is this considered a new position for VRB purposes requiring approval?

A: Yes.

Q: Do faculty promotions without an additional step increase need to go to the Board for approval?

A: At this time, Faculty promotions without increased in compensation due to step movements should continue through their current approval process and do not need VRB review.

Q: Do summer adjunct appointments have to be reviewed by the VRB given that they are only appointed for classes that produce revenue for the colleges?

A: Colleges should submit an overall staffing plan (as part of their Savings Plan) for multiple part-time appointments (greater than five) rather than individual submissions for approval.

Q: Are Distinguished Professor reviews and recommendations subject to the VRB?

A: No.

Q: Are Sabbaticals/Fellowships already in progress subject to the VRB?

A: No. Presidents have discretion subject to financial ability.

Q: Are Salary Above Base offers subject to review by the VRB?

A: Yes.

Q: Are tenure recommendations reviewed by the VRB?

A: No