



New Hire Sign-On Incentive Program

A discretionary program to offer a sign-on incentive payment for certain hard to fill or high demand positions.

Scope

The system office policy allows university units to offer prospective employees a sign-on incentive payment to supplement a unit's recruiting efforts for hard-to-fill and high-demand vacant staff positions or in instances where it enables a hiring authority to secure a hire. The recruiting results should advance the University of Illinois System's overall employment goals and initiatives.

The new hire sign-on incentive program is a system-wide program coordinated by System Human Resource Services and administered by each university's human resources office and hospital human resources, as appropriate. The University has approved the inclusion of all staff positions as eligible, at the discretion of the unit.

[System Policy Statement](#)

UIUC General Guidelines

1. The new hire sign-on incentive payment is a one-time payment issued to the final candidate within 60 days of the new hire's first day of work (New Hire Date).
 - a. The new hire sign-on incentive payment will be up to 5% of the final base salary with a maximum payout of \$15,000.
 - b. The payment must be noted as a "Sign-On Incentive" in Banner.
 - c. Repayment may be required should the new hire leave in the first 12 months of employment. The Dean and Vice Chancellor, in consultation with IHR, will make that determination.
 - d. This sign-on incentive is for staff positions only. Faculty positions are not eligible.
2. All sign-on incentive payments must be approved by the college/VC unit's human resources office before communicating the payment details to the new hire.
3. All sign-on incentives must be outlined in the offer letter.

Offer Letter Template language: "In accordance with applicable University policies, you will receive a one-time sign-on incentive of \$X. It is anticipated this payment will be processed within the first 60 days of your employment. This incentive compensation is taxable income and is subject to appropriate withholding. Reimbursement of the sign-on incentive may be required if your employment is terminated, involuntarily or voluntarily, within the first 12 months."

4. Approved sign-on incentive payments to new hires should be initiated by the hiring unit and processed as a lump sum payment.
 - a. Add a lump sum job with a new suffix;
 - Change the job title to NEW HIRE INCENTIVE
 - Use the next pay period for the lump sum job to pay out automatically
 - Earn code: NHI, see the comment language below
 - Add the comment, *“IHR please correct the earn code to NHI for \$X to pay the lump sum for a New Hire Incentive payment.”*
 - Attach the signed offer letter with the sign-on incentive language included.
 - b. Confirm that the new hire requirements have been met.
 - c. **New hires must have started employment before payment may be issued.**

Exceptions

Payments may exceed 5% of the base salary while remaining under the \$15,000 maximum with the approval of the appropriate Dean or Vice Chancellor. Payments may exceed the \$15,000 maximum with the approval of the Provost or Chancellor.

Sanctions

Violations of university policies will be handled in accordance with applicable university policies and procedures which may include disciplinary actions up to and including termination from the University.

Resources

[Payroll Processing Schedule](#)

[Tax Information](#)

[Contact Information](#)

Definitions

Staff: Staff is considered academic professional and civil service employees regardless of FTE.