1. PURPOSE/INTRODUCTION
This Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is intended to guide department representatives through the offer letter process for the following employment types: EHRA Faculty, EHRA Non-Faculty, Adjunct Faculty, Visiting Faculty, Visiting Scholar, Visiting Professional, Post Doc, and SHRA. After recruitment and pre-appointment approvals are completed, letters of appointment for employees define the terms and conditions of their employment.

In addition, this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is intended to guide department representatives through the change notification memo process including, but not limited to, the following changes: change in FTE, change in salary, change in contract, change of duties, title change, appointment removal, appointment addition, discontinuation, or SHRA time-limited status removal.

2. DEFINITIONS
Change Notification Memo – Notification of a change to an employee’s current
COS HR – Abbreviation for College of Sciences, Human Resources Office
COS Operations Team - College of Sciences leadership reporting to the Dean, consisting of the Senior Associate Dean, Associate Deans, & Assistant Deans. The Operations Team meets once/week.
Department Representative – The person submitting any action or preparing letters on behalf of their department or center
EHRA - Abbreviation for employees Exempt from the State Human Resources Act.
Financial Obligations – Financial Obligations (can include start-up packages, retention packages, facilities, lab space, summer salary, etc.) require pre-approval from the Operations Team
Offer/Appointment Letter – Confirms new or transferred appointments through a template generated and approved by University HR and Office of General Counsel

PeopleAdmin (PA7) – The position management and applicant tracking system used by NC State University

SHRA – Abbreviation for employees Subject to the State Human Resources Act

Waiver of Recruitment – The request for Waiver of Recruitment is to be used only in exceptional circumstances.

3. Offer Letter Creation Process

The Department Representative should follow the appropriate recruitment process in PA7 for EHRA Tenure and Tenure Track (POL 05.20.01), EHRA Professional Faculty (REG 05.20.34), EHRA (POL 05.15.01) and SHRA (REG 05.00.03). The College of Sciences HR Specialists are notified once a Hiring Proposal has been approved through an External Search, Internal Search, or Waiver of Recruitment in PA7. COS HR notifies the Department Representative of the University HR approval to hire via email and includes the appropriate Appointment Letter Template link.

The Department Representative prepares the offer letter based upon the terms approved in the PA7 request, including additional Financial Obligations per the Department Head, and using the pre-approved template posted on the University HR website (see “Related Policies” above). After review from appropriate Department contacts, the Department Representative sends the draft offer letter in Microsoft Word to COS HR prior to receiving any signatures.

After receiving the offer letter draft, COS HR evaluates the letter for accuracy and determines if additional review may be required based on Financial Obligations listed in the offer. It is the responsibility of COS HR to verify that any Financial Obligations outlined in the letter match the approved financial obligations by the Assistant Dean for Finance and Business Management and/or Associate Dean for Research.

- Non-salary and deferred compensation: If applicable, all relocation allowance requests must be submitted and processed via Non-Salary and Deferred Compensation form. In addition, all non-salary and deferred compensation requests will now require University HR signature. The Department Representative should send the Non-Salary and Deferred Compensation form to COS HR (pre-signed with the department head signature) to COS HR at the time the draft offer letter is sent to the COS HR office. COS HR will obtain the Dean’s signature on the form, verify and/or add project ID to the form, forward to UHR for signature, and with all signatures, will send the form back to the department along with the approved offer letter. See also FAQ #7.

- Chancellor’s Faculty Excellence Program (CFEP or “Cluster”): The following paragraph must be added to CFEP offers inserted to be the 3rd paragraph:

  This position is funded through the Chancellor’s Faculty Excellence Program, which seeks to build interdisciplinary teams in key areas. Your appointment will be associated with the [insert cluster program] initiative of that program. While your academic home will be the Department of [department], you will be expected to be an active participant in the [insert cluster program] initiative. A brief description of the initiative can be found at https://facultyclusters.ncsu.edu/clusters/[insert cluster program].

- Chancellor’s Faculty Excellence Program (CFEP or “Cluster”): If the Offer Letter is part of the Chancellor’s Faculty Excellence Program, a signature line for the Provost will need to be added to the letter. Additionally, the letter will need to be reviewed by the Provost Office prior to the ability for COS HR to approve the letter.

After COS HR approves the letter, COS HR will add initials next to “College HR CC section” and will email a PDF copy back to the Department Representative with a CC to the Department Business Officer to recognize the letter has been reviewed and approved. A standardized email has been prepared below in 6.1 which COS HR will use to notify the Department Representative of the approved offer letter. The Department Representative can move forward in obtaining the necessary signatures on the offer letter.
The fully signed letter must be returned to COS HR to be filed in the employee’s personnel file. This should be accomplished through normal procedures with the hiring process, and can be a scanned copy to COS HR so that the employee can keep the original copy.

4. Change Notification Memo Creation Process

The Department Representative should follow the appropriate position management process in PA7 for EHRA Tenure and Tenure Track [POL 05.20.01], EHRA Professional Faculty [REG 05.20.34], EHRA Professional [POL 05.15.01] and SHRA [REG 05.00.03]. COS HR is notified once a Position update has been approved in PA7.

COS HR notifies the Department Representative of the University HR approval and provides the Department Representative with a College-approved Change Notification Memo template. Notification of a change to an employee’s current appointment and can include, but is not limited to, salary, title, full time equivalency (FTE), temporary duties, etc. The Department Representative prepares the Change Notification Memo based upon the terms approved in the PA7 request, including additional Financial Obligations per the Department Head. After review from appropriate Department contacts, the Department Representative sends the draft Change Notification Memo in Microsoft Word to COS HR prior to receiving any signatures.

After receiving the Change Notification Memo draft, COS HR evaluates the letter for accuracy and determines if additional review may be required based on Financial Obligations listed in the Memo.

After COS HR approves the letter, COS HR will initial next to “College HR CC section” and will email a PDF copy back to the Department Representative with a CC to the Department Business Officer. A standardized email has been prepared below in Section 6.2 for which COS HR will use to notify the Department Representative of the approved Change Notification Memo. The Department Representative can now move forward in obtaining the necessary signatures.

The fully signed memo must be returned to COS HR to be filed in the employee’s personnel file. This can be accomplished as a scanned copy to COS HR so that the employee can keep the original copy.
6.2 Email Notification of Change Notification Approval

FROM: COS_HumanResources@ncsu.edu TO: [Department Representative/s]
CC: [Department Business Officer]
SUBJECT: Approved Change for [Candidate Name], [Department]. Effective Date: [Date]

As a result of the approved [Type of Change, i.e. Salary Increase, FTE adjustment, Retention, etc.], [insert PA7 Action code], the following memo for [Candidate Name] has been approved to move forward in printing on letterhead, obtaining signatures and to make the formal notification of change. This letter has been reviewed and approved by appropriate Dean’s Office representatives. If there are any modifications to the letter, please resubmit a new notification memo draft to COS_HumanResources@ncsu.edu for approval.

7. FAQs

7.1 Should I issue an offer letter or notification memo prior to University HR approval?
No. All written, formal offer letters and change notification memos must be pre-approved by University HR and College HR offices prior to obtaining department and employee signatures. COS HR works with University level offices in obtaining template approvals. This is why you should always use the template provided to you by COS HR. Under special circumstances, the Department Head or Supervisor may verbally discuss terms, but always with the caveat that terms are “pending approval.”

7.2 Why do I need to issue a Change Notification Memo to an employee?
The employee must be made aware, in a written notification, of any changes to their personnel information. The signed letters must be saved to the employee personnel record in COS HR and University HR.

7.3 Why does COS HR need to review my letter? Isn’t that going to add delays to my ability to make an offer or provide a notification efficiently?
The letter is prepared after approval from University HR. However, there are policies, expectations, and approvals that are required at the College level. COS HR is responsible for ensuring letters are standardized at the College level and have been approved by all appropriate College officials.

COS HR understands the need for a quick turnaround to notify candidates of an offer or employees of a change. COS HR is committed to a 48 hour turnaround for every step in the process that falls under COS HR responsibility (References Process Maps in Sections 5.1 and 5.2).

7.4 I want to add a phrase or sentence to the letter, is that OK?
Yes, however, please remember that adding or modifying a letter will require re-review by COS HR.

7.5 Does the Dean need to sign for all letters and/or memos? What letters and/or memos require the Dean’s signature?
The Dean’s signature needs to be on all SAAO, EHRA Faculty and EHRA Professional letters indicating an appointment, reappointment, promotion, or salary adjustment. The Dean’s signature is not required on letters for Post Docs and SHRA employees unless the Dean is the hiring manager.

7.6 Does the Department Head need to sign all letters and/or memos for employees in the department?
It is College rule that any letter requiring the Dean’s signature (see FAQ 5) is required to have the Department Head signature. If a signature line for the Department Head is not already included in the template, it will need to be added. The Department Head signature is required before the Dean will sign a letter or memo.

7.7 Does the Office of General Counsel need to review my letter draft?
It depends. COS HR is responsible for ensuring templates have already been approved by the Office of General Counsel. These are the templates that COS HR provides to the Department Representative at the time the
University HR approval is completed. Having templates pre-approved by General Counsel streamlines the process, ensures standardization within the College and reduces approval time. However, some unique letters may require additional approval by the Office of General Counsel. It is COS HR’s responsibility to notify Departments if additional approvals are required.

7.8 My department would like to offer relocation allowance to a new hire. How does this fit into the Offer Letter process?

Effective January 1, 2018 moving expense reimbursements are fully taxable as income. As a result of this change to the tax law, NC State has updated relocation allowance guidelines to provide greater flexibility to the University and its employees. Relocation allowances granted must comply with POL 05.15.03 (Non-Salary and Deferred Compensation), be authorized in advance, and paid from non-state-appropriated funds. When the draft Offer Letter is sent from the department to COS HR, the department-completed Non-Salary & Deferred Compensation Form should be sent along with the draft offer letter. COS HR is responsible for getting the Dean’s signature & University Human Resources for approval prior to receiving an approved offer letter. Once fully approved by the Dean and University Human Resources, COS HR will send the form back to the department HR Partner and Business Officer. At that point, the department knows they can move forward with the offer to the candidate.

8. Changes & Review

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<th>Subsection</th>
<th>Summary of Changes</th>
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<tr>
<td>Section 3</td>
<td>3: Add Provost to CFEP Cluster Hire letter review</td>
<td>3/13/2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>Section 6</td>
<td>3, 4, 6.1, 6.2: Remove CC to Department Head and Dean’s EA</td>
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<td>6.1, 6.2: Add the comment to “print on letterhead”</td>
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<td>Section 1</td>
<td>Definitions: edit system title. Q1 edits.</td>
<td>4/2/2018</td>
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<td>Header Section</td>
<td>Updated links to related polices</td>
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<tr>
<td>Definitions</td>
<td>Clarified definitions and put in alphabetical order</td>
<td>8/16/2019</td>
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<td>Added website and webpage links</td>
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<td>Section 5</td>
<td>Removed screenshots of process maps and added links to process map</td>
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<td>Added process of Non-Salary &amp; Deferred Compensation Form, when applicable, to the Offer Letter process section</td>
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<td>All</td>
<td>Replaced NTT &amp; Non-Tenure Track with Professional Faculty</td>
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<td>Clarify FAQ 5, when the Dean’s signature is needed.</td>
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<td>Added FAQ 6 College Rule per the Dean, and following decision in HRP/DBO meeting on October 13, 2020.</td>
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