

# VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY AND MEDICAL CENTER

## HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### SUBJECT: BRIDGING POLICY

POLICY # HR-007

EFFECTIVE DATE: JULY 1, 1998, (REVISION DATE JANUARY 1, 2003)

REVISED JULY 1, 2006

## POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to define the circumstances under which the service date and benefits will be bridged following gaps in regular and term employment. Bridging may occur regardless of whether the gap results from ending employment at Vanderbilt and returning, or from moving from regular/term employment to a temporary position at Vanderbilt, or from a combination of these events.

Benefits can be bridged if a staff member has completed at least two consecutive years of service in a regular or term full-time and/or part-time position immediately prior to their last separation or changes to temporary work-status and returns to a regular or term position in less than one year. Temporary positions are not counted when determining whether two years of service has been completed.

## PROCEDURE:

- I) Staff will retain the service date in effect during the previous employment period if:
  - A. the staff member has completed at least two consecutive years of regular or term service immediately prior to separation (working a temporary position at Vanderbilt during the gap does not count), and
  - B. the gap in regular or term employment does not exceed one year.
- II) Staff who meet the requirements in section one, and who have already satisfied applicable waiting periods for medical, dental, long-term disability insurance, and life insurance will not be required to satisfy a new waiting period under this policy. Personal Spending Accounts (PSAs) are handled differently according to the plan document for these accounts.<sup>1</sup>

### Exceptions:

- A. Staff and spouses are eligible to participate in educational assistance programs<sup>2</sup> if the staff member has been full-time (30 or more hours per week) for three months before course registration. Staff are eligible to receive tuition benefits for dependent children after having been a full-time staff member for the immediate past five continuous years at Vanderbilt (or any other accredited college or

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<sup>1</sup> Please contact the Benefits Office for more information

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Tuition Reimbursement Policy and Nursing Education Policy

university, within three months of joining Vanderbilt). If a staff member has a break in service of more than three months, this benefit will not be bridged. For specific information regarding requirements and guidelines, please refer to the Educational Assistance Policy.

B. Staff eligible for FRA who have been terminated and rehired will no longer be eligible for FRA accruals and will not carry forward any balance for claims payment.

III) Bridged service counts for eligibility for vacation accrual rates. However, there is no bridging of actual earned vacation and sick time<sup>3</sup>. Vacation is paid out at time of separation. Unused sick time is not paid out at the time of separation, except if the staff member is retiring after he/she reaches the age of 62, in which case up to 30 days of accrued sick time may be paid<sup>4</sup>.

IV) The Retirement Plan for faculty and staff of Vanderbilt University is governed by the Vanderbilt University Retirement Plan. A summary of the terms and provisions of the plan may be found in the summary plan description (SPD) and is promulgated in accordance with applicable laws. The summary plan description will be provided upon request through Human Resources or may be found on the Human Resource Services web site.

V) Service date for anniversary award eligibility is determined by the service date in effect based upon this policy (see section I above).

VI) The rate of pay for the returning staff member will be determined by the applicable salary administration guidelines for the current position.

VII) Staff who return to regular or term full-time and/or part-time service will be required to complete a new orientation period (three months for hourly staff and six months for exempt staff).

VIII) Staff being rehired will be subject to a "new hire" screen of work history which may include a background check.

Refer to the Frequently Asked Questions for additional information.

**Approved by Kevin Myatt, Chief Human Resource Officer**

**Approved by Lauren Brisky, Vice Chancellor, Administration**

**Approved by Harry Jacobson, M.D. Vice Chancellor, Health Affairs**

**This policy is intended as a guideline to assist in the consistent application of University policies and programs for staff. The policy does not create a contract implied or expressed, with any Vanderbilt staff members, who are employees at will. Vanderbilt reserves the right to modify this policy in whole or in part, at any time, at the discretion of the University.**

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<sup>3</sup> Refer to the Paid Sick time and Transfer policy for further clarification.

<sup>4</sup> Refer to Retirement Benefit Policy HR-024