

Research Visitor Appointments

Implementing Procedure

TITLE: Implementing Procedure for Research Visitors Policy.

PURPOSE: To establish clear procedures for processing Research Visitor appointments in compliance with the Research Visitors Policy. Research staff appointments are governed by a separate policy and procedure.

DEFINITIONS:

Sponsoring Entity Letter: A written statement on official letterhead from appointee’s sponsoring institution that confirms, 1) the appointee’s status per the institution (i.e. enrolled, employed, retired, etc.) and 2) the intention of sponsorship throughout the duration of the specified appointment period. The letter should include the name and contact information of an individual from the sponsoring institution who can be contacted for verification.

Proof of Insurance: An authentic record of the medical insurance policy covering the appointee and any accompanying family member(s) throughout the duration of the specified appointment period in compliance with the requirements set forth in the Research Visitors Policy. The record does not need to be an original.

Other: See the Research Visitors Policy for definitions of all approvable types of Research Visitors and other relevant definitions further to the Research Visitor appointment process and classification.

RESOURCES:

Name of Resource	Description of Resource	Location of Resource
Research Visitors Policy	Policy governing Northwestern Research Visitor appointments	TBD URL
Research Visitor Appointment Recommendation	Form to recommend a Research Visitor appointment	TBD URL

PROCEDURE: All Research Visitor appointments are initiated through the Research Visitor Appointment Recommendation Form (“the Form”) and given final approval by the Office for Research (OR). *No oral or written offer of appointment may be extended until all required approvals have been received, and no payroll action initiating the appointment can be taken until all conditions in the appointment process have been satisfied.*

NEW APPOINTMENTS:

Appointments initiated in departments or school centers

Using the Form, a faculty member makes a recommendation for a Research Visitor appointment to the department chairperson or center director, who forwards the recommendation to the dean for approval. Alternatively, the faculty member makes the recommendation for an appointment in a school center to the center director, who forwards the recommendation to the dean for approval. The Form must be signed by the faculty member sponsoring the request, department

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chairperson or school-based center director, and dean, to indicate agreement with all provisions of the appointment.

Appointments initiated in University Research Centers

Using the Form, a faculty member makes a recommendation for a Research Visitor appointment to the center director. Once the center director's signature of approval is obtained, the Form can be submitted to OR for final review and approval. For appointments initiated in University Research Centers (URC), the Form is considered ready for submission to OR without a dean's signature of approval since OR is the dean's office for all URCs.

Submission of Form and required documents

After all required signatures are obtained at the department/school or center level, the original Form, appointee's current CV, and the Sponsoring Entity Letter are submitted to OR for review and approval.

All documents are submitted together to OR by email at researchvisitors@northwestern.edu. The initiating department/school or center may include a completed Position Data Form and Appointment Form at this time or this step may be done after the appointment has received final approval from OR – See PAYROLL/FASIS SETUP.

INTERNATIONAL OFFICE:

If the appointee is a "foreign national"¹ – the initiating department/school or center must email a copy of the completed Form to the International Office at intoff@northwestern.edu, copying OR. The International Office should be notified as soon as possible of any impending foreign national appointee to begin visa application processing, if necessary, in parallel with OR's review and approval process. Once OR has given signature approval for the appointment, the final Form will be forwarded to the International Office by email for their records.

The International Office will facilitate the visa application process for all intended Research Visitors. All communication further to the appointee's visa process is undertaken directly by the initiating department/school or center without OR involvement (with the exception of unique or complicated cases).

EXPORT CONTROLS:

To ensure compliance with federal export control laws, OR will notify the Office of Export Controls Compliance (OECC) of the Research Visitor appointment by email. OECC will screen the individual and sponsoring entity (and current affiliations) against the U.S. government Restricted Party lists, as well as confirm that the individual's citizenship does not raise concerns under the export control laws.

Once screening is complete, OECC emails OR to confirm whether or not a "match" has been identified. This email is printed and added to the appointee's file.

- When no match is identified, the appointment process continues unabated.

¹ Per Northwestern's Policy On Export Controls Compliance, a "foreign national" is defined as an individual who is not a United States citizen, permanent resident alien of the United States (i.e. "green card holders"), lawfully-admitted temporary resident alien or refugee, or other protected individual as defined by 8 U.S.C. 1324b(a)(3)

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- When an entity match is identified, or when the individual's citizenship raises potential concerns, OR is notified and alerts the initiating dean's office by email to determine whether or not to proceed with the appointment. OR's notifying email to the initiating dean's office contains a letter from OECC outlining all U.S. regulations pursuant to the match and the dimension of risk entailed in the appointment. The International Office is also sent a copy of OECC's letter.
- When an individual match is identified, OR will alert the initiating dean's office by email that the appointment process cannot proceed given the nature of risk to the University. Rare cases may warrant exception, but these will be scrutinized and decided on an individual basis in consultation with the Vice President for Research.

Once entered into OECC's system, screenings against the individual and sponsoring entity will continue on a daily basis indefinitely. If any individual appointed as a Research Visitor is identified as a match at any time, OECC will be automatically notified and will alert OR to execute further steps as necessary.

RISK MANAGEMENT:

It is the responsibility of the initiating department/school or center to confirm that the Research Visitor and any accompanying family members have adequate medical insurance coverage during the period of appointment. The appointee's Proof of Insurance must be submitted to the Office of Risk Management (ORM) *at the same time or before* the appointee's dossier is submitted to OR. Please note: No Research Visitor appointment will be given final approval until ORM has confirmed that the appointee has met Northwestern's health insurance coverage requirements.

If the appointee is a foreign national subject to the Department of State's Exchange Visitor Program, medical coverage can be obtained through the ORM's Visiting Scholar Plan. To enroll the appointee, the initiating department/school or center must complete a [Visiting Scholar Health Insurance application](#) and forward it to ORM. Participation in the Visiting Scholar Health Insurance Plan is mandatory for foreign national appointees unless evidence of comparable coverage, along with a [Waiver Request Form](#), is presented and approved by ORM.

Domestic appointees are not eligible for the Visiting Scholar Plan and must obtain appropriate coverage through their home institution, employer or other avenues (marketplace exchanges, Medicare, etc.). Proof of this insurance coverage must be emailed to ORM for review and approval along with a completed [Domestic Visiting Scholar Form](#).

When ORM is satisfied the appointee has met the health insurance coverage requirements for Research Visitors, an approval email will be sent to OR and the initiating department/school or center to confirm this. OR will print this email and add it to the appointee's dossier. Once OR has received ORM confirmation that the appointee has satisfactory health insurance coverage, final approval of the appointment will be considered so long as all other requirements of the Research Visitor Policy have been met.

Please note: The information recorded on any documentation submitted to ORM (e.g. Visiting Scholar Health Insurance application, Waiver Request Form or Domestic Visiting Scholar Form) must be an exact match to the information recorded on the Form submitted to OR for the Research Visitor's appointment review and approval. Any inconsistencies will delay the appointment approval process.

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RESEARCH LABORATORY SAFETY:

If the initiating department/school or center has identified on the Form that the appointee's research will involve working with potentially hazardous chemicals or equipment in a laboratory, OR will notify the Office for Research Safety (ORS) by email.

- The ORS will ensure that the appointee has met all relevant training requirements and signed any waivers required to safely and lawfully pursue their proposed research.

USE OF HUMAN AND/OR ANIMAL SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH:

If the initiating department/school or center has identified on the Form that the appointee's research will involve working with human subjects, OR will notify the Institutional Review Board (IRB) by email.

- The IRB will ensure that the appointee has met all relevant training requirements and signed any waivers required to ethically and lawfully pursue their proposed research.

If the initiating department/school or center have identified on the Form that the appointee will be working with animal subjects, OR will notify the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) by email.

- The IACUC will ensure that the appointee has met all relevant training requirements and signed any waivers required to ethically and lawfully pursue their proposed research.

OFFER AND LETTER OF APPOINTMENT:

Once all steps above have been satisfactorily executed, OR will provide the final approval signature necessary to confirm the appointment. OR will send a copy of the approved and final Form to the school dean or the University center director, advising that a letter of appointment will shortly be issued by OR to the appointee.

A verbal offer may now be made to the appointee by the initiating department/school or center, advising that an official letter of appointment will be issued from OR on behalf of the Vice President for Research of Northwestern University. The dean/director and appropriate administrator within the initiating department/school or center will be copied on the email to the appointee that contains the letter of appointment, stipulating the terms of appointment. It is the administrator's responsibility to communicate this information to the relevant PI(s). If a hardcopy appointment letter is required, the initiating department/school or center must request this by email to researchvisitors@northwestern.edu, including the intercampus mail address for delivery or request to pick up at OR.

The appointment letter will also specify privileges and responsibilities of Research Visitors, which include compliance with all [Northwestern University policies](#) in addition to completion of the following two compliance requirements:

- Research Visitors, regardless of citizenship or place of residence, must complete the [Department of Children and Family Services \(DCFS\) Mandatory Reporting form](#). This form acknowledges the individual's status as a mandated reporter, indicating that he/she understands the requirement to make a report to the Illinois DCFS Hotline whenever there is reasonable cause to believe that a child known to the individual in his/her professional or official capacity, may be abused or neglected.

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- To help keep the Northwestern community safe from sexual violence and sex discrimination, Research Visitors are required to complete the University's ["Preventing Sexual Misconduct & Sex Discrimination"](#) online course.

While at Northwestern, all Research Visitors are also required to abide by all applicable policies of their sponsoring entity.

PAYROLL/FASIS SETUP:

The initiating department/school or center should follow standard procedure for routing the [Position Data Form and Appointment Form](#) to Payroll. The **only** time these forms should be sent to OR for signature approval is when the initiating unit is a center. As the dean's office for centers, OR will review the forms for accuracy against other information contained in the appointee dossier. If any discrepancies are found during the review, OR will send questions/comments/requests back to the department/school or center for resolution. Once complete, the forms will be delivered to Payroll for processing. Department of Human Resources (HR) will then process the new appointment in the FASIS system and the Research Visitor will be assigned an Employee I.D. Number and Personnel Record; a NetID will be automatically generated within 24-48 hours.

Please note: all Research Visitors must complete a [Personal Data form](#), however, this form will **not** be accepted by OR and must be sent directly to HR for processing. If this form is mistakenly sent to OR, it will be destroyed upon receipt.

Without submission of the Position Data and Appointment Forms, no appointment will be recorded with HR and the appointee will not have access to any University systems including, a University email account, NetID, Employee ID# or WildCard privileges. If the initiating department/school or center has agreed to provide discretionary Living Allowance to a Visiting Scholar or Visiting Pre-doctoral Fellow, the specified funds will not be dispensed until these forms are completed and received by Payroll.

CHANGES TO APPOINTMENTS:

Date Changes

The initiating department/school or center is responsible for communicating **all** date changes to OR and ORM as soon as known.

The official start date for any Research Visitor must be later than the approval date of the appointment. If a start date is delayed – due to visa issues or other circumstances – by 30 days or less, an updated Form, reflecting the new dates, must be resubmitted to OR for review and re-approval. No rerouting for signature approval through the initiating department/school or center is necessary.

If the start date is delayed by more than 30 days, a new Form, with required signatures at the department/school or center level must be completed and sent to OR for re-approval. OR will specify on an individual basis whether an updated CV and new sponsoring entity letter are required.

Research Visitor appointments are for a duration of up to one year. Exceptions may be made in the case when the sponsoring entity formally requests a longer period in writing which is agreed to by the initiating department/school or center. Argonne Institute Fellows may be appointed up

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to three years. All Research Visitor appointments are coterminous with the appointee's employment or student status at their sponsoring entity.

Changes to Living Allowance

In the case when a Living Allowance is granted to, or removed from, a Research Visitor mid-appointment, the initiating department/school or center must submit the required forms (Position Data and Appointment Forms) to Payroll for processing. No funds can be dispersed to the appointee until the Payroll forms have been processed by Payroll.

Termination

OR, ORM, and HR must be notified if a Research Visitor appointment is terminated prior to its end date for any reason, or if the appointment is not renewed. Research Visitor appointments are not subject to the Northwestern staff or faculty termination process, and may be terminated at any time.

RESEARCH VISITOR REAPPOINTMENTS:

In order for a Research Visitor to remain in, or return to, their appointment beyond the approved specified duration, a new Form must be completed and submitted to OR by email at researchvisitors@northwestern.edu. As with initial appointments, reappointments for Research Visitors must contain all required signatures of approval prior to submission to OR, with the exception of those initiated within University research centers that require only the center director's approval prior to submission. Similarly, any Form for reappointment must be accompanied by the required documentation (current CV and Sponsoring Entity Letter). Proof of Insurance must also be (re)submitted and approved by ORM before OR can give final approval of the reappointment.

All procedures of the initial appointment process are followed for any reappointment. As with new appointments, the initiating department/school or center should contact the International Office as soon as possible to begin the visa extension or renewal process for any foreign national reappointment. The initiating department/school or center is required to complete a new [Position Data Form and Appointment Form](#) and submit to Payroll for processing.

TIMELINE:

The Research Visitor appointment process requires up to 5 business days for processing, barring unusual delays caused by staff absence or unique appointee circumstances. If a new appointment or reappointment needs to be expedited sooner than the standard 5 business day processing period, the initiating or host department/school or center should note this on the Form and OR will endeavor to complete the necessary review process as quickly as possible; however, all required checks and procedures will be followed regardless of pressing timeframes.