Human Resource Procedure: Employment Offer Letters

Purpose

An offer letter is a very important component of the hiring process as it clarifies, in writing, the terms and conditions of employment. It is the document that will be used should there be any misunderstandings between a supervisor and employee regarding the employee’s employment with Clemson. Therefore, all offer letters need to contain specific and accurate information about the offer of employment.

When is an offer letter used?

Offer letters need to be used in the following situations:

- New employee to Clemson
- New position for an existing employee (promotional, lateral transfer, demotion)
- The acceptance of dual employment for an existing employee

Approved Offer Letter Templates - Recommended

It is highly recommended that employment offers are made using the approved Offer Letter templates. These templates have been created for specific types of employment (e.g. Regular, Full-time, Part-time, Intermittent, TLP/TGP and Temporary). They will guide a hiring department through all of the necessary information required to be included in a letter of offer. The approved offer letter templates can be found here: http://www.clemson.edu/employment/professionals/Offer_Letter_Templates.html.

Offer Letter Approvals

Follow the standard approval process for the College/Division. Under no circumstances may an official offer of employment be made until all of the necessary approvals are obtained.

Employment Transactions that Require Board Approval

In addition to the standard approval process, any compensation action that results in a salary of $175,000 or greater, or a promotional increase of greater than 15%, the hire and salary approvals must be approved by the Board of Trustees (BOT) Compensation Committee prior to an offer letter being issued to the candidate.

A promotion is defined as the assignment of an employee by the appointing authority from one established position to a different established position having a higher State salary range (Classified positions) or, for positions without a State salary range, having a higher rate of pay (Unclassified positions).

The following information is required by the BOT Compensation Committee for a review:

- Name of position, rank or special rank, department, college
- Status of the position (new position, new center/department, etc.)
- Responsibilities of the position
- Supplemental compensation request and reason for the request
- Specific experience and/or qualifications that are required in the position and an explanation of how the candidate meets or exceeds these requirements
- Justification for exceeding the market hiring range – if applicable
- Search plan: search firm (if applicable), search committee members, position advertisement sources, etc.
Offer letter (not required if it conforms to the standard approved guidelines contained in this procedure)

Development of an Offer Letter Not Using the Approved Template

While it is highly recommended that the approved offer letter templates are used for employment offers, hiring departments may create their own offer letter. If it is decided to create an offer letter without utilizing the template, there is specific information that needs to be included depending on the employment type. A listing of specifications by employment type is summarized below.

Establishing Employment Type and Work Hours – Required In All Offer Letters:

It is important that the offer clearly identifies the type of employment that is being offered (Regular Full Time, Part time, Intermittent, Temporary or TLP/TGP) as well as the estimated number of normal work hours (30 or more hours or 28 or less hours). This determination will provide the Office of Human Resources guidance on whether the position will be benefits eligible under the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

If the position is Part-time, Intermittent, Temporary or TLP/TGP, the following is the approved language to be used in offer letters:

- **Regular (FTE) part – time and temporary positions including TLP/TGP and Intermittent positions working 30 or more hours:** Effective <insert date of hire>, your standard hours are <insert standard hours 30 or more hours> hours of service per week. Standard hours are not guaranteed hours of work, but estimated maximum hours per week that could be assigned to your position.

- **Regular (FTE) part – time and temporary positions including TLP/TGP and Intermittent positions working 28 or less hours:** Standard hours are not guaranteed hours of work, but estimated maximum hours per week that could be assigned for your position. Due to the nature of your employment with Clemson University, your actual hours worked may vary. Regardless of what position you are in, you may not work more than 28 hours of service in any week in this position. If you do need to work more than 28 hours, you must first obtain prior approval from your supervisor and the Human Resource Manager in your College or Division.

Offer Letter Requirements by Employment Type

**Staff Positions:**
Access to this offer letter template can be found at http://www.clemson.edu/employment/professionals/Offer_Letter_Templates.html

Job title
- University department
- Starting date
- Rate of Pay (salary or hourly pay)
- Normal work hours and days
- Reference to policies & procedures and benefits
- Notes that offer is contingent upon passing criminal background check
- Contact information if they have questions
Human Resource Procedure: Employment Offer Letters

Any deviation from including the information above needs to be reviewed and approved by the Office of Human Resources, in consultation as necessary with the General Counsel’s Office. All signed offer letters should be sent to the Office of Human Resources to be filed in the personnel file.

**Executive Leadership Positions (Vice Presidents and Division Heads):**
Access to this offer letter template can be found at http://www.clemson.edu/employment/professionals/Offer_Letter_Templates.html
The Office of the President has an approved template that is used for all of the President’s direct reports.
This can be revised to fit specific hiring needs, but should include the following:

- Job title and Rank, if applicable
  - Restrictions and implications of rank if cease as an Administrator
- University division/department
- Direct supervisor (President or VP)
  - Councils, Committees, etc. that the position serves
  - Annual review and reappointment process
- Starting and Ending dates
- Notice of annual appointment, if applicable, and dates of annual appointment
- Rate of Pay (Total compensation, including any supplements or additional pay)
  - Restrictions and implications of pay if cease as an Administrator
  - Moving or other expenses, if applicable
- Job Responsibilities
- Normal work hours and days
- Reference to policies & procedures and benefits
- Notes that offer is contingent upon passing criminal background check and verification of credentials
- Contact information if they have questions

Any deviation from including the information above needs to be reviewed and approved by the Office of Human Resources, in consultation as necessary with the General Counsel’s Office. All signed offer letters should be sent to the Office of Human Resources to be filed in the personnel file.

**Faculty Positions:**
Each template needs to be approved by the General Counsel’s Office. Any deviation from the approved Faculty offer letters needs to be reviewed and approved by the Office of the Provost and Office of Human Resources, in consultation as necessary with the General Counsel’s Office.

It is recommended that each college have an internal process to ensure that all Faculty offer letters utilize the approved template or conform to the above guidelines. The Office of the Provost will review every offer letter prior to the letter being issued to the candidate. It is further recommended that Faculty offer letters are uploaded to the electronic recruiting system for improved efficiency during the hiring process. All signed offer letters should be sent to the Office of Human Resources to be filed in the personnel file.

**Additional Resources:**
For assistance in preparing offer letters and determining the appropriate templates to utilize, please contact your College/Division’s Human Resources partner.

---

Revised – September 25, 2015