

College/Division Administrator Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2018

Valerie Coleman-Ferguson, Associate General Counsel

Processing of foreign national H1B and Permanent Residency Applications

- Kate Hammons is responsible for processing H1B applications
- Eva Gray is responsible for processing Permanent Residency referrals

H1B Information

- The application process for H1B is currently taking longer, between five to six months, because the applications are being reviewed more thoroughly
- Departments submitting applications should provide more lead time.
- Premium processing is available, but adds at \$1,225.00 per application
- Submission documents include:
 - The forms with all information filled out
- The employees questionnaire and documents Requests for Evidence (RFE) from the government are becoming more common, and have increased by 45%.
 - These are requests for additional information, which could include simple documents but can also be more complicated.
 - Requests for entry level faculty are generally more complex because the intent is to help ensure that this job qualifies as an H-1B specialty occupation The University is responsible for providing the evidence and your department may be responsible for the cost of assistance from outside counsel.
 - To help prevent requests, please provide thorough detail in the job description section. This is needed to confirm that the salary is appropriate.

Permanent Residency Information

- Because the H1B is generally for six years, tenure track faculty need more work authorization
- In order to use the special handling category, It is important to submit requests to sponsor permanent residency forms before the employee reaches their anniversary date (within 12 months of when the offer letter was signed).
- If the anniversary date is missed, there are other options available. These options will be reviewed by outside counsel, the department and the Office of the General Counsel..
- Outside counsel is used for Permanent Residency applications
 - State law requires that the attorney that processes the application be approved by the Texas attorney General
 - General Counsel does a Request for Qualifications to identify outside counsel and contracts with approximately 5 firms for this service
 - Faculty members may occasionally not understand the requirement and obtains their own attorney and then brings documents back to the University to sign. This is not authorized and departments receiving forms that did not come from Eva Gray or the approved outside counsel should contact Eva Gray.
 - Faculty can select a firm from those that the University contracts with if they desire.
- There are certain notices of filing that must be posted for specific time periods. Eva Gray will provide the notices to post and to take the posting down. Notices should not be posited

College/Division Administrator Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2018

or taken down other than under Eva's instruction. If they are, the process may need to start over.

- Billing for Permanent Residency:
 - The department identifies the amount they are going to pay in the Request to sponsor Permanent Residency Form.
 - The outside counsel is informed and will inform the foreign national what the university pays and what they will pay.
 - The outside counsel bills the Office of the General Counsel for the University portion. These bills must be approved by the Office of the Attorney General. General Counsel will obtain the approval and then send the bill to the department to pay.
 - It is very important that departments pay on time. The outside counsel has already provided the service and is entitled to payment.
- Audit files for Permanent Residency are very important.
 - For audit purposes, the records must be kept for five years.
 - It is the department's responsibility to retain all relevant documentation.

Further Training

- General Counsel would like to do a session with the College/Division employees that handle Permanent Residency and H-1B processing.
- Because each College/Division has a different structure, Karin Livingston will send a list to the CDA group who will fill in the persons that should attend.

Maira Artola, HUB Specialist

Use of HUB Resellers

- The University's HUB performance is something that is reviewed by many areas
- There are opportunities for improvement by using HUB resellers
 - In FY2017, over \$700,000 could have been spent with HUB resellers
 - The HUB department has created a list of resellers and will continue to add to the list
 - The price is the same as that from the primary company
- If a department has any specific questions on HUB resellers, or needs assistance in identifying HUB vendors, please contact Maira
- The HUB Operations Department is compiling a list of HUB vendors and has more than 400 business listed. If you need assistance finding a HUB vendor, they can help.

David Navarro, Payroll Director

Tax Changes

- Withholding changes have been made in the Payroll system and were reflected in the February 1 payroll checks.
 - Employees may see different amounts due to the withholding changes, because of January merit increases, or because they made a change to their W-4.
 - No changes were made to W-4 information (married/single status) by Payroll

College/Division Administrator Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2018

- The tax basis for Non-Resident Alien (NRA) has changed
 - The tax withholding for NRA's is calculated on the following basis
 - [(monthly salary x 12) + IRS Specified Amount]
 - The IRS Specified Amount was increased from 2,300 to 7,850
 - NRA's will have more taxes withheld as a result
 - The IRS Specified Amount does not increase the employee's gross income, it is only used for the purpose of calculating withholding
- Moving expenses are now taxable to employees
 - The moving expenses must still be processed on a voucher through the Tax Department so that Payroll can be notified.
- The W-4 form will change, the IRS is to have the new form out by the end of February
 - The new form will change completely because of the change in allowances
 - The IRS is also to come out with a calculator to help people decide what to change in the new forms.
 - Do not offer tax advice, encourage people to talk to their own tax advisor

Karin Livingston, Assistant Vice President for Finance and Controller

UBIT Tax Changes

- UBIT – Unrelated Business Income Tax
- Check with the Tax Department if you are starting a new revenue generating activity to determine whether your activity could be considered taxable for UBIT purposes.
- In the past, areas with a UBIT tax loss could be netted against areas with UBIT taxes owed. This will no longer be the case.
- The Tax Department is looking in to which areas will have to pay, and whether we will need to make quarterly estimated tax payments.
- As they get further in their review, the Tax Department will contact you if you are an area that will now have to pay UBIT
- The estimate for the entire System is quite low

No Boycott Israel Form

- The No Boycott Israel form instructions were sent out in January.
- There have been many questions on the form, including its use for online software purchases, speaker honorariums, purchases of gift cards, and the definition of a company.
- We will review the questions and work with appropriate departments to determine if any changes can or should be made.
- Please send questions to me to be added to the list.

Upcoming Travel MAPP changes

- Changes have been submitted for the Travel MAPP. They have not yet been approved. If approved, the changes will be:
 - Conference hotels would be allowed without an exception from MAPP as long as the hotel is identified in the registration documents.

College/Division Administrator Meeting Minutes
February 8, 2018

- Rather than have the dollar limits for travel included in the MAPP, which is not updated on an annual basis, the MAPP will reference travel limits that will be published on the AP Travel website.
 - Limits will be updated annually in October, when the General Services Administration updates their rates.
 - Limits will be based on average rates for high cost travel cities for the three categories: in Texas, in continental US other than Texas, and outside the continental US
 - These limits have the same authority as MAPP, similar to the references to Cash Handling Procedures and Asset Management Procedures referenced in the relevant MAPPs.
 - Deviations from the published rates will still require an exception from MAPP.

Policy Review

- Please review the redline SAM and MAPP changes available on their website. The changes can be important to your area.
- The areas responsible for updating the policies pay attention to comments and concerns.