

Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual - Policy 3260: Career Development

Draft of 03.27.24

Date Originally Issued: 10-16-1998

Revised: 05-07-2001, 03-01-2011

Authorized by [RPM 6.1 \("Performance Management"\)](#)

Process Owner: Vice President for Human Resources

1. General

The University must recruit and retain the best and the brightest employees to be successful in achieving its mission. As the University must be prepared to face a changing environment, so too must each employee. This policy describes career development programs designed to prepare employees to meet the challenges of the workplace. The University will provide these career development opportunities and the support necessary, subject to available funding and applicable policies. Employees are responsible for taking advantage of these opportunities and being competitive in their chosen careers. The University encourages the use of the education benefits for employees to improve performance in their current position and to prepare themselves for future career opportunities. Refer to [UAP 3700 \("Education Benefits"\)](#) for details and limitations.

2. Objectives

Career development programs provide employees with opportunities for lifelong learning and continuous self-improvement. Career development encourages growth and commitment from employees and increases job satisfaction, productivity, and service to the University. Supervisors are responsible for assisting employees with their career development.

3. Career Development Programs

All employees are encouraged to participate in some form of career development. The University's career development programs consist of the following opportunities that can stand alone or be combined with each other:

- continuous occupational and/or professional education and training to maintain expertise;
- career ladders to provide for planned progression within the same position; and

- career advancement to support movement to other University positions through limited competition.

4. Supervisor Responsibilities

A supervisor's performance management responsibilities include helping employees identify career development opportunities at the University. Supervisors will offer career development opportunities when available in a fair and reasonable manner, and will be evaluated on their efforts to develop staff. The University Division of Human Resources (HR) offers training sessions for managers and supervisors on how to assist their employees with career development.

5. Continuous Occupational and/or Professional Education and Training

Employees benefit from and are expected to participate in some form of occupational and/or professional education and training on an ongoing basis to ensure they keep up-to-date with their fields of expertise. Occupational and/or professional education and training comes in many forms such as academic programs, workshops/seminars, annual conferences, distance education, books/journals, specific training courses, membership in professional associations, and electronic discussion groups. Departments must pay for career development activities required by supervisors such as required training for licenses and certifications, or commitments made on an employee's performance evaluation. Departments are also encouraged to pay for other career development activities with a fair and reasonable distribution of available resources.

5.1. Education and Training Opportunities

For career development and advancement programs to be successful, training and support services for employees, supervisors, and managers are essential. The University provides many education and training opportunities for employees. Training and development programs are offered by HR. Continuing education and academic programs are also available. Refer to [UAP 3290 \("Professional Development and Training"\)](#) for more information.

6. Career Ladders: Planned Progression Within the Same Position

Career ladders are one (1) way employees can advance in their careers at the University. As defined by this policy, A career ladder is a planned progression to a higher level of job responsibility, usually reflected by a position at a higher grade than the one currently held by the employee. Since the employee and the manager work together proactively to progressively advance the employee to a higher level of responsibility, the competitive employment process does not apply to career ladders. ~~Employees in management level positions are not eligible for career ladders, and n~~Not every position lends itself to career ladder progression; however, where appropriate, career ladders provide a valuable opportunity for both employee and organizational development. Career ladders differ from career advancement discussed in [Section 7.](#) below, in

that a pre-existing vacancy is not required to initiate career ladder progression. However, future organizational needs and budget capacity are primary considerations when determining the viability of a career ladder proposal.

There are no absolute limits to the number of career ladders an eligible employee may undertake at UNM. However, because the University is committed to ensuring equal employment opportunity to all qualified individuals, the employee may complete no more than two (2) consecutive career ladder progressions without an intervening position change achieved through the competitive process. After having successfully competed for an internal position, the employee may again become eligible for two (2) more consecutive career ladder progressions. This cycle may then repeat itself, depending on individual and organizational capacity.

A career ladder plan will list the specific requirements necessary for advancement to the next level. Before an employee can be advanced to the next level, the employee must meet these requirements and demonstrate that he or she is satisfactorily performing all the job elements that distinguish the new role from the previous role. Career ladders typically include a proposed time line for completion and a proposed salary increase specific to the career ladder and employee. Refer to [UAP 3500 \("Wage and Salary Administration"\)](#) for salary determination policy. Career ladders must be approved in advance by HR. If the needs of the employee or department change significantly during the career ladder process, the career plan may be revised as necessary in consultation with HR. For detailed information on career ladder guidelines, procedures, and documentation, please refer to "Compensation Guidelines for Staff Employees" and "Introduction to Staff Career Ladders" on the [HR Website](#).

7. Career Advancement: Movement to Another University Position Through Limited Competition

Another way employees can advance in their careers is to apply for another position at the University. Although in most cases this involves movement to a higher grade, an employee may want to make a lateral move or take a position at a lower grade in order to change careers or bridge to another career path. To assist employees in advancing to other positions or changing careers at UNM, hiring officials are encouraged to interview qualified University employees for consideration to fill a position. If the hiring official chooses to search externally, internal candidates with comparable qualifications, as determined by the hiring official in consultation with HR, will be given preference.

8.3. Accountability

Hiring officials must follow applicable University policies and procedures and state and federal laws during the Career Advancement hiring process.

8. Other Resources

Guidance and assistance with career development is available from HR. The University Counseling, Assistance, and Referral Services (CARS) provides career counseling for employees. The University Career Services Office will provide advisement to University staff.