

Frequently Asked Questions

Subject: Change to Pay Frequency for Graduate Student Employees

Updated 5/28/24

General Questions

Why is the University undertaking this change?

The current practice of paying graduate students in advance of work performed is inconsistent with all other payrolls at the University and also with best practices. Additionally, we hope to realize an added benefit to our graduate student community with more frequent payrolls. Currently, the University processes a large volume of off-cycle pay runs because graduate student appointments are not set-up on time and for this community, waiting an entire month to receive pay is not practical.

Questions About Timing

When will this change take effect?

The transition to a bi-weekly payroll will occur for the pay period beginning on July 1, 2024.

Will each school/unit be responsible for creating the new payroll calendar?

No. Central payroll administrators are currently constructing the new calendar and will disseminate the new calendar at a later time.

Will this change how effort reporting is done?

No. Effort reporting will continue quarterly.

Did you consider putting them on the existing bi-weekly payroll rather than creating a second payroll?

Yes, however adding thousands more individuals to the existing payroll would be difficult to manage in our current business process. We will continue looking for ways to streamline administrative processes and increase efficiency.

Questions About Who is and is Not Included

What student workers are specifically impacted by this change?

This affects salaried student workers that receive pay on the 15th of the month. This does not affect hourly-paid student workers or any student receiving a stipend (1st of the month). Your local payroll or HR administrator can identify individuals by running a list of anyone on the payroll "MTF".

Does this change impact both non-union and Graduate Student Union workers?

Yes, this new payroll calendar will affect all salaried (non-stipend) graduate student workers, regardless of their union status.

Questions About the Transition

How will graduate students be impacted by this change?

There will be a one-time adjustment period for graduate students who remain employed during the summer. Students will receive a regular, full month of pay on June 15th. Their next paycheck (fully in arrears) will be on July 19th and will be for two weeks of pay. In order to mitigate the financial impact this change will have during the adjustment period; the project team is working with Harvard University Employee Credit Union (HUECU) to make 0% loans available to PhD student workers who apply.

How do graduate student workers obtain a loan?

Once details of the loan program are finalized, the project team will share this information with your local payroll office.

Are non-PhD students eligible to secure a loan?

The 0% loan is available only to PhD students. The PhD students make up the vast majority of salaried student workers paid over the summer. They will also be most financially impacted by this change as for many of these students it is their sole source of income.

What PeopleSoft Hiring Form should we use to pay graduate student workers?

You should continue to use the monthly hire forms. We realize the name "monthly hire form" is no longer relevant given the transition to a bi-weekly pay frequency and are looking to change the form name in the future.

Questions for Individual School/Units

How will this change impact local payroll processing?

The move to bi-weekly will mean an additional 14 payrolls to review and process each year. It will also mean that the window to review some payrolls may need to be shortened.

Does this mean we will need to change our payroll technology?

No. All units/schools can continue using the payroll processing technology that they currently employ.