

## Resolution No. 123 of 2023 – Exhibit A

### Ulster County Procedures Relative to Hiring Freeze Policy

#### Hiring Freeze Overview

The Hiring Freeze is a comprehensive prohibition on promotions, transfers and new hires unless individually justified and authorized by the ~~Division~~ **Department** of the Budget. It includes all permanent and temporary positions, regardless of funding source, ~~except for those positions authorized pursuant to Sections 55-b and 55-c of the Civil Service Law, which cover the employment of individuals and veterans with disabilities.~~

#### Process for Filling Positions During Hiring Freeze: Waivers, Reallocations or Reclassifications

Requests for waivers to fill positions must be submitted to the ~~Division~~ **Department** of the Budget.

- **Justifications for hiring and reclassification/reallocation actions:** Requests will be approved only where there has been a demonstration that the authorization to fill and/or the classification action is for a position(s) directly related to: ensuring health and safety; generating revenue; or providing essential administrative or operational support for the core mission of the County.
- **Requirements for County departments:** When requesting such actions, County departments are required to demonstrate that such personnel need cannot be otherwise accommodated through the reassignment or redeployment of existing staff. Whenever possible, agencies are required to fill positions in essential areas by reassigning existing, qualified employees from less critical assignments.

#### Requests for Exemptions

Exemptions, sometimes called blanket hiring freeze waivers, will only be considered in the most extraordinary situations and are expected to be granted on an extremely limited basis. Departments must provide compelling justification for the need for such exemptions and must describe the consequences should the exemption not be approved.

#### ~~Process for Filling Positions During Hiring Freeze~~

~~Requests for waivers or exemptions must continue to be submitted to Department of Finance (DOF) via the Ulster County Personnel Department. County Departments are required to provide a written justification in the comments screen for requested actions. Departments may also be asked to provide additional documentation such as unanticipated financial awards (grants) notices or revisions to an allocated budget line.~~

~~Department Heads should verify that internal control and communication procedures are in place to ensure that hiring freeze waiver and exemption requests are fully authorized by the~~

~~County Executive, reviewed by the appropriate personnel and fiscal units, and checked for accuracy before they are submitted to DOF via Personnel. DOF staff cannot make corrections to hiring freeze actions which have been submitted by Personnel; requested waivers and exemptions that contain errors will be withdrawn by DOF and departments will need to resubmit new, corrected transactions to replace such withdrawn actions.~~

## **Attachments**

Attachment A: Defines hiring freeze waiver and exemption terminology.

Attachment B: Describes the acceptable criteria for approval of hiring freeze actions and the circumstances when approval of a hiring freeze waiver or exemption is required to fill a position.

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## ATTACHMENT A

### **Hiring Freeze Waiver**

A hiring freeze waiver is used to *temporarily suspend* the hiring freeze for a specific item or group of items to allow for individuals to be appointed. Once approved by the Department of Finance, hiring freeze waivers remain in force for no more than **120 days**, after which the hiring freeze is reinstated for such item(s). There are two types of hiring freeze waivers:

#### *Restricted Waivers*

- Authorize the filling of statutory salary items via Ulster County **internal** hiring or transfer.
- Authorize the filling of BDA (Budget Director Approval) ~~and other non-statutory (NS) salary items via Ulster County internal hiring or transfer~~

#### *Unrestricted Waivers*

- Authorize the **external** filling of statutory salary items using appropriate Civil Service mechanisms if Ulster County internal hire or transfer is unavailable/unlikely.
- ~~Authorize the external filling of BDA and other non-statutory (NS) salary items using appropriate Civil Service mechanisms if Ulster County internal hiring or transfer is unavailable/unlikely.~~

Statutory salary items include, for example, positions where the salary is established by **pay grades/position title**. ~~a statute such as section 130 of the Civil Service Law~~

~~BDA and other non-statutory salary items are positions that do not have a statutory salary amount (e.g., a salary that is not set by section 130 of the Civil Service Law). The Department of Budget Division is required to establish the salary for these positions through approval of a BDA or a position classification action.~~ **the position title/paygrade process.**

### **Hiring Freeze Exemption**

A hiring freeze exemption is used to **indefinitely suspend** the hiring freeze for an entire agency, positions within a range of item numbers or a specific title without the need for Director of Finance to approve such actions on a position-by-position basis. Exemptions also may be requested for items whose costs are supported by a particular fund, sub-fund or account, program or position pool. (This type of action is sometimes referred to as a “Blanket Hiring Freeze Waiver.”) As noted in this policy, exemptions will only be considered in the most extraordinary circumstances.

#### *Hiring Freeze Exemptions*

- Allow for both internal and external filling to occur without any further Director of **Finance Budget** action or involvement.

- Are effective until such time as a subsequent action reinstating the freeze on such item(s) is effectuated

As previously noted, exemptions will only be considered in the most extraordinary situations and are expected to be granted on an extremely limited basis.

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## ATTACHMENT B

### HIRING FREEZE PROCESSING REFERENCE

#### **CRITERIA FOR APPROVING HIRING FREEZE WAIVERS, EXEMPTIONS REALLOCATIONS, OR RECLASSIFICATIONS**

Reallocations, reclassifications and hiring freeze waivers or exemptions may be approved when the:

- Classification action or the filling of a position is essential and directly related to protecting the public health and safety;
- Classification action or the filling of a position is essential and directly related to ensuring the generation of County revenue; or,
- Classification action or the filling of a position that provides essential administrative or operational support for the core mission of the agency.

#### **BUDGET APPROVAL OF WAIVERS OR EXEMPTIONS IS REQUIRED:**

1. To fill any positions (excluding those designated for Civil Service Law, ~~Section 55-b/c candidates~~), either permanent or temporary, whether by promotion, transfer between appointing authorities, transfer to upward level positions, transfer from a non-General Fund to the General Fund, upward reallocation or reclassification actions, reinstatements, or new hires (this includes appointments made for hold purposes only);
2. To engage the services of individuals on a contract or voucher basis;
3. To change the funding source of filled items; and,
4. To replace a non-permanent employee with a qualified individual from an eligible list or a reemployment list.

#### **BUDGET APPROVAL OF WAIVERS OR EXEMPTIONS IS NOT REQUIRED:**

1. To fill any positions via transfer to lateral or downward level positions within the same appointing authority, ~~unless such appointments involve movement from a non-General Fund and non-Special Revenue to General Fund or Special Revenue items;~~
2. To change the status of incumbents from non-permanent to permanent, such as list appointments of provisional or temporary incumbents;
3. To move incumbents in their items where those items have been reallocated or reclassified, whether downward or on a lateral basis (i.e., such employees have appointment rights). As noted previously, upward position reallocation and reclassification actions are subject to the freeze and must satisfy the above criteria;
4. To refill vacated items within the life of a current budget approved hiring freeze waiver for such items (life not to exceed 120 days);
5. To fill positions via displacements from reductions in force, such as bumping and retreating;
6. To fill positions as a result of returns from leaves of absence;
7. To change line items within the same appointing authority and funding source;

8. To facilitate mandatory advancements within, or completion of, approved traineeships, apprenticeships, or appointment level changes ~~(PR-50)~~;
9. **COUNTY PERSONNEL TO PROVIDE** ~~To move an incumbent, or an incumbent's hold item, from an encumbered to an unencumbered position, but only when required by the New York State Codes, Rules, and Regulations (NYCRR 4.11(c)); and,~~
10. **COUNTY PERSONNEL TO PROVIDE** ~~To provide a permanent hold item to an employee who has received a contingent permanent appointment under the jurisdiction of a different appointing authority, but only when required by 4NYCRR 4.11 (e)(2).~~