

Postdoctoral Salaries and Benefits Policy – Department of Neurobiology

Definition of Postdoctoral appointee:

Postdoctoral appointment involves full-time research/scholarship and is viewed as training period to advance their academic and/or research career. The appointee must have received a PhD or equivalent doctorate, works under the supervision of a faculty member and is expected to publish the results of his/her research or scholarship.

- **Postdoctoral Research Associate (9210)** - Are University employees who are receiving additional training while performing service for the University, for which they are compensated via payroll.
- **Postdoctoral Research Associate w/Retirement (9211)** - Are University employees who are receiving additional training while performing service for the University, for which they are compensated via payroll and receive retirement benefits.
- **Postdoctoral Paid direct (9207)** – Are not employees of the University and are compensated directly from a funding agency and do not receive compensation via University Payroll. Postdocs on fellowships, training grants and traineeships are moved to this job code and are paid by accounts payable and are not considered University employee for the duration of the fellowship.

Purpose:

To establish departmental guidelines governing their salaries and benefits. This policy falls under the University of Utah School of Medicine Post-Doctoral Fellow Salary Policy. This postdoc salary policy applies to postdocs within the Department of Neurobiology as their home department. Postdocs mentored by department primary faculty who reside under a different org ID will adhere to the policy of the department or unit corresponding to that org ID. Salary and benefits should be specified in writing at the time of postdoc hire.

Salary:

1. We recommend that postdocs in the Department of Neurobiology be paid on the most current NIH NRSA Kirschstein scale, according to number of years' experience they have working as a postdoc: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-20-070.html>, according to the NIH NRSA Kirschstein scale that is effective as of their anniversary date. We recommend that salaries for postdoctoral research associates be adjusted annually to follow the current financial year NIH/NRSA stipend guidelines. Anyone with more than 7 years experience specified on the NRSA scale is recommended to receive the standard annual increases that are applied to other university staff. Individual PIs may deviate from these guidelines based on financial constraints or performance. However, compensation practices must be applied consistently within each lab in order to maintain equity. The Department Administrator should get the

approval of the relevant PI before the initial salary is set, and before each salary increase.

2. We recommend that postdocs start at a level that corresponds to the number of years of postdoctoral experience that they have completed before coming to the department. For example, a postdoc who finishes his/her PhD and then is a postdoc for six months in their thesis lab gets credit for 0 years' experience when they start in our department, and his/her raise to a year 1 postdoc would come at the anniversary of their start date in our department, whereas a postdoc who has done a first postdoc for 2 years and 3 months before starting a second postdoc in our department will get credit for 2 years of experience when they start in our department (and would get a raise to a year 3 postdoc at the 1 year anniversary of their start date in our department).
3. Salary raises for postdocs should occur on the anniversary of their start date in the department, unless otherwise specified by the terms of a fellowship. For example, a postdoc who starts here on May 1 will receive his/her first raise on May 1 of the following year.
4. In order to maintain equity, we recommend that postdocs be initially appointed with job code 9210 (postdoc res assoc) rather than with job code 9211 (postdoc res assoc w/ retirement) and that they receive health insurance benefits but are not eligible for the associated retirement benefits. Exceptions may be appropriate in extraordinary circumstances.
5. We recommend that postdocs with 5 years of experience in the department be considered to transition to job code 9211 (postdoc res assoc w/ retirement) or job code 9178 (staff research associate) or other staff position, and be made eligible for retirement benefits.
6. We recommend that the salaries of postdocs who are paid on their own individual awards from external sources be supplemented (as necessary) up to the current NIH NRSA Kirschstein pay scale from PI funds (when unrestricted funds are available). In cases where postdocs are funded by their own fellowships, all of the guidelines, restrictions, and requirements of the funding agency or foundation should be followed and take priority (e.g., the salary scale and raise schedule can be set by the funding agency). Institutional allowances associated with the fellowship may be used to cover health insurance.
7. When a postdoc transitions off an individual fellowship and an associated salary that is in excess of the NRSA level for experience, the department recommends that the salary reverts to the NRSA level for experience.

Benefits:

1. Postdocs should have health insurance. Faculty grants or research funds pay the employer portion of the postdoc's insurance. Postdocs may elect to take advantage of

their spouse's coverage in cases where this is possible. It is ultimately the responsibility of the postdoc to ensure that they have adequate insurance.

2. According to University HR policies, postdocs are eligible for 15 paid vacation days per year. They are also eligible for 8 hours per month of sick time (96 hours sick time per year) and 16 hours of personal preference days. These should be reported to the PI. The reporting process should be discussed with the PI and be consistent within each lab. The same leave recommendations pertain to postdocs on fellowship unless otherwise specified by the funding agency. The University allows 12 work weeks of FMLA leave. This is unpaid unless the postdoc uses vacation or sick leave accrued within the calendar year. [FMLA](#) information is published on the University's HR website. Postdocs on fellowship may follow the family leave guidelines of the funding agency.

Benefit eligibility chart

UNIVERSITY OF UTAH BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY CHART

Category	FTE / Anticipated Employment	Employee Supplemental Retirement	Employer Retirement ¹	Health Care Plan	Flex Spndg Accts	Life / AD&D	Long Term Disab.	Group Legal	Vacation (Prorated by FTE)	Sick (Prorated by FTE)	Holiday / Pers. Pref (Prorated by FTE)	Tuition Reduction
University Policy			Policy 5-302						Policy 5-301	Policy 5-200	Policy 5-300	Policy 5-305
POST DOCTORAL RESEARCH ASSOCIATE (Not Teaching)	=> .75 FTE => 9 Mths	YES	YES - Job Code 9211 NO - Job Code 9210	YES (All pay full-time rate)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES - 15 days/yr. subject to grant or stipend; tracked by Dept.	YES - Tracked by Dept.	YES - Tracked by Dept.	YES
	=> .50 to .74 FTE => 9 Mths	YES			YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES - Tracked by Dept.	NO
Job Codes 9210 and 9211	< .50 FTE or < 9 Mths	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
POST DOCTORAL SCHOLAR - Paid Direct - Benefit Eligible (Job Code 9207)	=> .75 FTE => 9 Mths	NO	NO	YES (All pay full-time rate)	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	YES
	=> .50 to .74 FTE => 9 Mths			NO	YES	YES	YES	NO				
	< .50 FTE or < 9 Mths			NO	NO	NO	NO	NO				NO

Approved by the faculty: December 10, 2020