



A RESOLUTION TO ENSURE DIGNITY, FAIRNESS, AND SUPPORT FOR STAFF AFFECTED BY LAYOFFS

WHEREAS, The George Washington University staff have continued to provide critical support to the institution's operations, research, instruction, and student services, despite facing budget constraints, stagnant wages, and increasing workloads;¹

WHEREAS, the university is considering staff layoffs as a cost-saving measure, which may result in the loss of valuable institutional knowledge and negatively impact employee morale and retention;^{2 3}

WHEREAS, layoffs place an added burden on remaining employees;^{4 5}

WHEREAS, staff impacted by layoffs will face significant financial and professional hardship, as they enter an unstable regional job market where mass layoffs in government, nonprofit, and contracting sectors have made securing new employment increasingly difficult;^{6 7 8}

WHEREAS, offering clear, humane, and supportive transition resources can mitigate the personal and institutional harm caused by layoffs and support future recruitment and university reputation;^{9 10 11}

WHEREAS, the Staff Council has received input from staff expressing concern over the lack of clarity and support related to potential layoffs, including the need for assistance with transition and reemployment;

¹ Iglesias, T. (2024, March 4). Staffing remains below pre-pandemic levels, student-facing offices stagnate. The GW Hatchet. Retrieved July 15, 2025, from

<https://gwhatchet.com/2024/03/04/staffing-remains-below-pre-pandemic-levels-student-facing-offices-stagnate/>

² New Measures to Protect GW's Financial Stability | Office of the President | The George Washington University. (2025, July 8). Office of the President. Retrieved July 15, 2025, from

<https://president.gwu.edu/new-measures-protect-gws-financial-stability>

³ Jakubowski, G. (2025, July 8). GW implements hiring freeze, foreshadows layoffs as FY2026 budget takes shape. The GW Hatchet. Retrieved July 15, 2025, from

<https://gwhatchet.com/2025/07/08/gw-implements-hiring-freeze-foreshadows-layoffs-as-fy2026-budget-takes-shape/>

⁴ Sayed, Z. (2013). The impact of downsizing on the remaining employees in the organisation.

<https://etd.uwc.ac.za/handle/11394/4515>

⁵ Uddin, S. M. R. (2025). The Impact of Layoffs on Organizational Culture and Employee Morale in IT Companies. *Journal of Informatics Education and Research*, 5(1), Article 1. <https://doi.org/10.52783/jier.v5i1.2067>

⁶ Peck, E. (2025, July 13). Federal workers face mass firings this summer after Supreme Court ruling. *Axios*.

<https://www.axios.com/2025/07/13/federal-workers-rif>

⁷ Brown, S. M. (2025, July 10). D.C. Unemployment Claims Surge, Ranking Worst in the Nation. *The Washington Informer*. <http://www.washingtoninformer.com/dc-unemployment-claims-rise/>

⁸ Fired Federal Workers Struggle To Get New Jobs in Private Sector—*Newsweek*. (2025, June 19). Retrieved July 15, 2025, from <https://www.newsweek.com/fired-federal-workers-employees-jobs-market-2087217>

⁹ Waraich, S. B., & Bhardwaj, G. (2003). Workforce Reduction and the Need for Outplacement Services. *Management and Labour Studies*, 28(2), 141–152. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0258042x0302800203>

¹⁰ Gumbus, A. (2003). Rightsizing Done Right: The Best Way to Handle Layoffs. *Clinical Leadership & Management Review: The Journal of CLMA*, 17(4), 198–202. https://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu/wcob_fac/271/

¹¹ *Why Competitive Severance Pay is Critical to Employer Brands*. (2024, October 28). LHH.

<https://www.lhh.com/us/en/insights/severance-pay-critical-employer-brands/>

WHEREAS, research on best practices in organizational restructuring recommends providing impacted employees with priority rehiring consideration, transition pay, continued benefits, and access to institutional programs for themselves and their dependents;¹²

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GW STAFF COUNCIL

The Staff Council is officially requesting that the university adopt the following policies and practices in the event of any staff layoffs:

- (1) Priority Reemployment: That all employees impacted by layoffs receive priority consideration for any staff roles posted at the university within the twelve (12) months following their separation date.¹³
- (2) Voluntary Early Retirement and Part-Time Work Options: That prior to any involuntary layoffs, the university implements and publicizes both (a) a voluntary early retirement option for eligible employees and (b) an option for employees to voluntarily transition to part-time work, where operationally feasible. These measures should be offered in alignment with university policy and legal requirements and designed to reduce the need for layoffs wherever possible.¹⁴
- (3) Severance Compensation and Benefits: Severance packages should include one week of base pay for each year of completed university service, with a minimum of four (4) weeks and a maximum of up to 20 weeks of pay, less the appropriate withholdings. Employees should receive one month of health insurance benefits without employee premiums. Employees with an annual base salary under \$100,000 should receive an enhanced severance package in recognition of the disproportionate financial impact layoffs may have on lower-earning staff.¹⁵
- (4) Tuition Continuity: Reaffirm that any laid-off staff members enrolled in GW courses, as well as their dependents enrolled under the university's tuition benefit program, be permitted to complete the current academic semester without financial penalty or disruption to their tuition benefits.¹⁶
- (5) Payout of Accrued Leave: Reaffirm that all impacted employees receive full payout of their accrued, unused vacation leave in accordance with university policy, without delay.¹⁷
- (6) Outplacement Support Services: That all laid-off employees be provided with access to comprehensive outplacement services at no cost, including but not limited to individualized career coaching, résumé and cover letter assistance, interview preparation, job search strategy support, and access to career

¹² Feldman, D. C. (1994). Better practices in managing layoffs. *Human Resource Management*, 33(2), 239–260. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.3930330206>

¹³ *Benefits of Rehiring Former Employees (Plus Tips)*. (2025, June 6). Indeed Career Guide. Retrieved July 15, 2025, from <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/benefits-of-rehiring-former-employees>

¹⁴ Isaksson, K., & Johansson, G. (2000). Adaptation to continued work and early retirement following downsizing: Long-term effects and gender differences. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 73(2), 241–256. <https://doi.org/10.1348/096317900167001>

¹⁵ *Why Competitive Severance Pay is Critical to Employer Brands*. (2024, October 28). LHH. <https://www.lhh.com/us/en/insights/severance-pay-critical-employer-brands/>

¹⁶ *Terminations | Human Resource Management & Development | The George Washington University*. (n.d.). Human Resource Management & Development. Retrieved July 15, 2025, from <https://hr.gwu.edu/terminations>

¹⁷ *Transfers and Departures | Human Resource Management & Development | The George Washington University*. (n.d.). Human Resource Management & Development. Retrieved July 15, 2025, from <https://hr.gwu.edu/transfers-and-departures>

development workshops and job postings. These services should begin prior to the employee's departure date and remain available for a minimum of three (3) months following separation. The university should also designate a point of contact within Human Resources to coordinate these services and ensure impacted staff receive timely, personalized support during their transition. ¹⁸

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the university leadership directs unit heads and supervisors to immediately reassess and rebalance workloads to ensure that remaining staff are not expected to absorb unreasonable additional responsibilities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That these provisions be communicated clearly and promptly to any impacted employees and their managers, and that Human Resources publish written guidance outlining the implementation of these support measures. ¹⁹

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, That this Resolution to Ensure Dignity, Fairness, and Support for Staff Affected by Layoffs be appropriately inscribed and conveyed to university leadership, and included in the GW Staff Council's official meeting minutes for July 2025.

That the GW Staff Council hereby expresses its full support for ensuring dignity, fairness, and stability for staff affected by layoffs, and urges university leadership to adopt these measures to protect the well-being of its workforce and preserve institutional strength during a period of transition.

THE STAFF OF THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY HEREBY EXPRESSES ITS FULL SUPPORT FOR PRIORITY REHIRING OF ANY LAID OFF STAFF, THE IMPLEMENTATION OF VOLUNTARY EARLY RETIREMENT AND VOLUNTARY TRANSITION TO PART-TIME WORK, THE INCREASE OF SEVERANCE PACKAGES TO FOUR (4) WEEKS, THE CONTINUITY OF TUITION BENEFITS FOR APPLICABLE STAFF AND THEIR DEPENDENTS UNTIL THE END OF THE SEMESTER AFTER THE DATE OF TERMINATION, THE OFFERING OF OUTPLACEMENT SERVICES, THE REASSESSMENT AND REBALANCING OF WORKLOADS FOR REMAINING STAFF, AND FOR CLEAR AND PROMPT COMMUNICATION REGARDING STAFF LAYOFFS.

Authored by: Courtney Frost

Sponsored by: Staff Experience Committee



Adopted by Vote

July 18, 2025

Kimberly Fulmer, President on behalf of
Executive Officers of the GW Staff Council
Staff Representatives of GW Schools and
Divisions

¹⁸ Waraich, S. B., & Bhardwaj, G. (2003). Workforce Reduction and the Need for Outplacement Services. *Management and Labour Studies*, 28(2), 141–152. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0258042x0302800203>

¹⁹ Feldman, D. C. (1994). Better practices in managing layoffs. *Human Resource Management*, 33(2), 239–260. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.3930330206>