



Employment at UC

The University of California takes pride in offering attractive, rewarding employment opportunities for staff at its campuses, medical centers, national laboratories and off-campus facilities. Staff employees are a critical part of the university's mission of teaching, research and public service, and their contributions make an impact on the life of the university every day.

UC is entering a period of substantial student enrollment growth, meaning that its need for highly qualified employees in every area of responsibility is growing. At the same time, the strength of the economy in recent years has created an extremely competitive labor market. As a result, UC is placing increasing emphasis on finding ways to recruit and retain talented staff employees.

New initiatives for employees

Among the steps UC has taken to maintain and strengthen its competitive position in the employment market are:

- **IMPROVEMENTS FOR TEMPORARY EMPLOYEES** – UC has made improvements in its policies affecting temporary employees. Now, limited-term employees who accumulate 1,000 hours on pay status in a consecutive 12-month period will become eligible for membership in the UC Retirement Plan (UCRP). Because eligibility for health and welfare benefits is based in part on UCRP membership, employees who enter the Retirement Plan under the new provisions also will become eligible for full health coverage.

In addition, employees with limited appointments who accumulate 1,000 hours on pay status in a consecutive 12-month period, without a break in service of more than 120 consecutive days, will now be converted to full career appointment status. This improvement will give these employees eligibility for future merit increases, expanded grievance rights, and preferential rehire and recall rights if laid off, among other things.

- **RETIREMENT PLAN ENHANCEMENTS** – The University has improved the “age factors” used to calculate pension benefits in the UC Retirement Plan, an action which will increase payments to UC employees who retire in the future.

This improvement is intended both to reward employees who have devoted their careers to UC and to enhance the attractiveness of university employment for prospective employees. At the same time, the UCRP continues to promote UC's retention of veteran employees by providing higher levels of retirement benefits to those who retire at older ages.

- **FUNDING TO EXPAND CHILD CARE** – The UC Office of the President is offering matching funds to campuses for the expansion of child care facilities for faculty, staff and students. Campus funds of \$1 million, \$1.5 million or \$2 million will be matched, respectively, by non-state matching funds of \$750,000, \$1 million or \$1.25 million from the Office of the President.

The university also has been seeking one-time state funding to construct new child care facilities. UC currently serves approximately 2,000 children of faculty, staff and students in its child care centers, but the needs are greater. An expansion of these services will help both current and prospective employees balance their work and family responsibilities.

- **FUNDING FOR MARKET-COMPETITIVE SALARIES** – UC has requested state funds beyond the normal salary program to improve compensation for staff positions where pay levels currently lag the market. A similar augmentation in the 2000-01 state budget provided an additional increase beyond the normal salary program for lower-paid employees – an additional 2 percent for those making \$40,000 or less per year and an additional 1 percent for those making between \$40,000 and \$80,000 (subject to agreement with the university's unions). UC believes that addressing market-based salary lags is an important component in recruiting and retaining a highly skilled staff workforce.

- **BARGAINING PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS** – The university is adopting new internal processes designed to foster efficiency in contract negotiations with unions. This change includes the creation of a four-level advisory structure intended to facilitate goal setting, decision making and information gathering for collective bargaining.

UC negotiates with 13 unions over terms and conditions of employment for more than 60,000 employees statewide. The university is committed to bargaining in good faith and has reached a number of important contract agreements with its unions in recent months. Some inefficiencies in the negotiation process are built-in; collective bargaining implicitly requires parties with different goals to make compromises until they reach a mutually acceptable agreement. UC faces special challenges because of its vast size and variety of funding sources; that is, the university's flexibility can be constrained by the complex mix of revenue streams it relies upon, including state, federal and private funds and hospital revenues.

Despite these challenges, UC believes the new internal structure described above will help promote efficient, productive negotiations and better enable the university to identify and plan for emerging needs in the area of human resources and benefits.

- **RESPONSES TO INFORMATION REQUESTS** – The UC Office of Labor Relations has created a new position devoted solely to processing information requests from labor unions. In a decentralized organization as large as UC, detailed information can take time to gather, confirm and disseminate – particularly given the variety of computer software and automated payroll systems in the UC system. Still, the university will be focusing increased attention on the needs in this area.
- **LABOR POLICY INSTITUTE** – With the support of the governor and Legislature, UC has launched a multi-campus research initiative aimed at analyzing and solving problems related to employment in California as a whole. Building on the existing Institutes of Industrial Relations at UC Berkeley and UCLA, this new institute will conduct an annual or biannual study of the state of the California workforce and produce a report that interprets the results and provides policy recommendations. The institute also will pursue a variety of more specific research projects, conferences and seminars on labor and workplace issues.

The benefits of UC employment

UC strives to be an employer of choice by offering attractive compensation and benefit packages to its employees. A career at UC includes the following:

- A broad choice of medical plans with full family coverage and premiums either at low cost or fully paid by the university.
- A broad choice of other health and welfare benefits, including dental; vision; legal; and life, disability and accidental-death insurance plans.
- An attractive retirement plan and additional voluntary retirement savings options, including a 403(b) plan.
- Domestic partner health benefits.
- Attractive vacation and other paid-leave options.
- Access to internal grievance and appeal systems, including arbitration.
- The special intellectual and cultural advantages of being a member of the UC community. The university offers a stimulating work environment within an academic enterprise that is globally respected and acclaimed. Contributing to the success of the university's mission of teaching, research and public service is an important benefit for many employees.

Additionally, the university has been a progressive employer for many years and had been a leader in California's public sector in addressing a number of issues affecting employees, such as establishing policies prohibiting sexual harassment, including sexual orientation in non-discrimination policies, and establishing domestic partner benefits.

Very few unfair labor practice charges filed by UC unions have resulted in a decision against the university. Since 1979, 27 percent have been withdrawn by the union, 30 percent have been settled, and 38 percent have resulted in a ruling by the state Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) in favor of UC. Only 4 percent have resulted in a PERB ruling against UC.