

Notice Requirements for Early Termination, Non-Renewal or Reduction in Effort/Salary for Postdoctoral Appointments

The time periods set out below constitute the minimum acceptable notice requirements for a dean, director, or chairperson, or his or her designee, to inform a postdoctoral associate/fellow of early termination, non-renewal, or reduction in effort/salary. More notice is generally preferable, and units should therefore strive to notify affected individuals as early as possible.

These procedures should be distributed to the relevant department chairs, directors and college administrators to assist them in their budgetary planning process.

I. NON-RENEWAL OR EARLY TERMINATION OF POSTDOCTORAL APPOINTMENTS

There are minimum notice requirements for the non-renewal or early termination of postdoctoral appointments, subject to the exceptions noted below in Section 1D. These requirements vary depending on length of service.

Postdoctoral appointments are one-year term appointments with the option of renewal only up until the maximim time in title of 5 years has been reached. In situations resulting in early termination or non-renewal of Cornell-funded postdoctoral appointments, consult Table 1 for minimum notice requirements based on term of service at Cornell.

Table 1: Minimum notice requirements for early termination

Term of Service	Less than 2 years of service	2-3 years of service	3 years of service	More than 3 years of service
Minimum Notice Required	3 months	4 months	5 months	6 months

C. Funding, budget, or other uncertainties. If funding, budget or other uncertainties create the possibility, but not certainty, of early termination of a position, the postdoctoral associate/fellow should be notified of the uncertainty, and this notification serves as sufficient notice to satisfy the above requirements. Such notice should be in writing to the individual and specifically note that it is serving as notice of early termination, should such action be necessary. It is not adequate, for example, simply to issue a blanket notification to all postdoctoral associates/fellows that funding, budget, or budget uncertainties may cause some early terminations of postdoctoral appointments.

D. Exceptions. In some situations no notice is required. These include:

- (1) An appointment clearly communicated as being non-renewable (i.e., a terminal appointment, although notice would be required for early termination of the appointment);
- (2) The termination of the grant or contract that is the sole source of salary for the postdoctoral associate/fellow and for which the postdoctoral associate/fellow is the principal investigator;
- (2) Situations in which the postdoctoral associate/fellow is not paid through Cornell; and
- (3) Cases in which the postdoctoral associate/fellow is dismissed for cause.

II. REDUCTION OF EFFORT/SALARY

Cornell views the postdoctoral role primarily as full-time, however, there may be rare, isolated situations when appointment to a postdoctoral role in a part-time capacity may be appropriate. These appointments require advance approval of the unit's dean or delegate of the dean, which may be the human resources director. For additional information and considerations please refer to the [PostDoc Appointment Memo](#).

The notice requirements for the reduction in effort, and a corresponding reduction in salary, for postdoctoral associates/fellows are in most cases less extensive than those that pertain to the early termination of such appointments. Two months of notice is required if the planned reduction in effort/salary does not affect benefit status. In cases in which such reduction will result in the loss of benefits for such individuals, the notice provisions for early termination described above should be observed. If funding, budget or other uncertainties create the possibility, but not certainty, of a reduction in effort/salary, the postdoctoral associate/fellow should be notified of the uncertainty, and this notification serves as sufficient notice to satisfy the notice requirements for a reduction in effort/salary.