

## VUSE Postdoctoral Guidelines

### **Initial Individual Development Plan (IDP):**

Since January 1, 2025, the initial IDP has been simplified to focus solely on two key components:

1. **Goals for the Postdoctoral Researcher** – A clear articulation of the researcher’s objectives during their appointment.
2. **Mentoring Plan** – An outline of the support and guidance the mentor will provide.

Additionally, the IDP includes the requirement for postdoctoral researchers to acknowledge that they will complete the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) training during their initial month of the appointment.

This streamlined IDP is completed during the hiring stage within REDCap, ensuring mutual understanding and agreement between the postdoctoral researcher and faculty mentor, while simplifying the initial appointment process.

### **IMPORTANT - Lead Time for Appointments:**

Processing new postdoctoral appointments typically requires **4–6 weeks**. For international postdoctoral scholars, additional time may be needed to accommodate visa processing and related documentation, as timelines can vary depending on the country and specific circumstances. We strongly recommend initiating the process as early as possible to ensure a smooth and timely onboarding experience.

### **Remote Work Policy:**

Requests for postdoctoral scholars to work remotely, whether within Tennessee or from another state, are now subject to stricter guidelines due to varying state labor laws. As a result, remote work arrangements will generally **NOT be approved**.

### **Leave of Absence:**

Requests for leave of absence must be submitted to the PI, with final approval by the Associate Dean for Graduate and Postdoctoral Education. International postdocs will also require approval from ISSS. Leaves of Absence for postdocs should **not exceed one year**. For specifics on the timeframes granted for each type of leave, please visit <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/postdoc/current-postdocs/human-resources-onboarding/general-information/#h2-leave-and-time-off-policies>.

**PTO:**

Postdoctoral policies regarding PTO differ from the standard HR policies at VU or VUMC. PTO covers any scheduled absences such as vacation, sick time, or extended parental leave. Postdoctoral Scholar in research receive 20 days per fiscal year, prorated by quarters (5 days per quarter: Oct. 1, Jan. 1, April 1, July 1). PTO must be used within the appointment year, and all time off must be approved by the PI/Mentor. For more information, please visit <https://www.vanderbilt.edu/postdoc/current-postdocs/human-resources-onboarding/general-information/#h2-leave-and-time-off-policies>.

**Confirmation of Funding:**

All requests for postdoc appointments or reappointments must include confirmation from the departmental Grant Manager or Senior Administrative Officer that funding is available for the position.

**Teaching Responsibilities:**

Teaching is not automatically included in a standard postdoctoral appointment. A Postdoctoral Scholar must hold a teaching appointment to carry teaching responsibilities, typically as an Adjunct Instructor. There are two scenarios:

1. Teaching as part of the postdoctoral FTE: If the Postdoctoral Scholar is teaching a full course on their own, the teaching responsibilities are included within their 1.0 FTE appointment. These responsibilities should be requested at the time of the postdoc appointment or reappointment and will be documented in the appointment letter from the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs.
2. Teaching in addition to the postdoctoral FTE: If the Postdoctoral Scholar is only assisting with a few lectures, these teaching responsibilities are considered supplemental and are in addition to the postdoctoral scholar 1.0 FTE. Requests should be emailed to Jeffrey Keever, VUSE Assistant Director of Faculty and Postdoctoral Affairs, with a memo from the Chair and the postdoctoral scholar's CV, prior to the semester in which teaching is requested. If approved, a separate appointment letter from the School of Engineering will be issued, outlining the teaching duties and any associate supplement (if applicable).