

James R. Johnsen, Ed.D.

President

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UNIVERSITY  
of ALASKA  
*Many Traditions One Alaska*

May 6, 2019

Dear Colleagues,

Today, Chief Human Resources Officer Keli Hite McGee – with my support and with helpful input from all three chancellors – announced a system-wide redesign of human resources functions into a unified office organized into five functional areas. Instead of maintaining three separate campus organizations and a Statewide HR office, the university will now have a single human resources office that will coordinate high-quality services throughout the UA system. The new design will focus HR expertise on improved service and will be organized into five areas:

- Talent acquisition,
- Employee transitions & benefits,
- Labor & employee engagement,
- Organizational development, and
- Operations

This is not a merger - it is a complete redesign based on best practices in higher education, which will lead to increased efficiencies that ultimately serve you better. We want to make our search for new talent more efficient and our onboarding of new employees more effective. We are finding new paths for employee training and professional development. Under this redesigned structure, you will benefit from dedicated staffing and the opportunity for continual growth and development within the university.

We are taking this step to improve UA system human resources services to not only offer you a better HR experience, but also because budget cuts have left fewer HR employees managing increased workloads. By dividing work into functional areas and distributing tasks, HR employees can gain expertise and efficiencies in their areas, reduce backlogs and pinch points in current processes and structures, and increase the level of service being provided to you.

As a necessary first step to ensure HR employees have time to consider their options, all human resources employees received official layoff notice on May 6, effective September 14, 2019. Layoff provides the best benefits to those not choosing to be part of the new structure and allows those wishing to continue in the new organization time to seek a position in their area of interest and expertise.

For current HR employees who want to be a part of the new team, there are many opportunities for continued employment and contribution to the enhancement of HR

services at the University of Alaska. The initial application period will be restricted to current HR campus and statewide employees only. If there are vacant positions at the end of June 2019, recruitments will be held.

While we are three universities, we are one legal and financial entity, and we are one employer. By creating a single human resources organization with a unified presence on all campuses we can benefit from the shared scope of services as well as utilize the knowledge on the local campuses to provide a higher level of service overall. This redesign also follows numerous recommendations over the years that backroom HR functions should be combined so greater efficiencies can be realized.

If you have questions or would like to express your opinion about the change, please visit the transition website <https://sites.google.com/alaska.edu/hr-transition> where you can submit questions and feedback using an online form. We aim to be responsive to your questions and to provide as much information as possible to address employee concerns over the coming months.

Thank you for your service to the university and for joining me in support of this effort to improve human resources service and employee support throughout the UA system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James R. Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Jim Johnsen