

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE  
CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

HELENA MORENO  
MAYOR

JOSEPH I. GIARRUSSO III  
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

CIRCULAR MEMORANDUM No. 26-02(R)

February 2, 2026

TO: All Departments, Boards, Agencies, and Commissions

FROM: Joseph I. Giarrusso III, Chief Administrative Officer

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**SUBJECT: HIRING FREEZE EXEMPTION REQUEST PROCESS**

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**I. PURPOSE**

This circular memorandum re-establishes the City's hiring freeze, which is a prudent management action to maintain fiscal stability. Instructions provided herein detail the process for requesting exemptions to the freeze.

**II. APPLICABILITY**

This freeze applies to all vacancies in the classified and unclassified service, except for the following:

- 1) Law Department: New hires of employees in attorney classifications do not require a written exemption, up to \$500,000 in new personnel costs for 2026. Once new hires exceed a total personnel increase of \$500,000 for 2026, all new hires within the Law Department will be subject to the exemption request process.
- 2) Department of Public Works: New hires of employees in the Public Works Maintenance Workers, Laborers, Public Works Maintenance Specialists, and Electrician classifications do not require a written exemption.

The freeze applies to all promotions and pay increases that were not approved by the CAO prior to the effective date of this circular.

**III. EFFECTIVE DATE**

The freeze is effective January 28, 2026. Personnel actions approved prior to this date are not subject to the freeze.

**IV. FORM ROUTING AND APPROVALS**

Appointing authorities needing an exception to the freeze must use the attached form to request prior approval from their Deputy CAO or Deputy Mayor (if applicable), the Budget Director, the Director of Finance, and the Chief Administrative Officer. After obtaining approval and

signatures from Department Head and Deputy Mayor/Deputy CAO, forms should be submitted to [budgetoffice@nola.gov](mailto:budgetoffice@nola.gov). The form must be completed prior to routing a requisition in NEOGOV for vacancies, promotions, or pay increases. New requisitions may only be routed with an approved exemption form attached. For requisitions already routing but not yet approved, departments must request an exemption and upload the approved form in NEOGOV.

Exemptions are expected to be granted for revenue-generating positions, positions funded by non-General Fund sources, and positions deemed essential for core operations, provided that sufficient justification is submitted. Requests for positions that fall outside of these categories will be considered individually by the CAO, Finance, and City leadership.

Personnel actions are forbidden without prior written approval. This includes job interviews and promises of employment, written or verbal.

Employees hired without prior approval will be subject to immediate dismissal.

#### V. INQUIRIES

All inquiries should be directed to the Budget Office ([budgetoffice@nola.gov](mailto:budgetoffice@nola.gov)).

#### Attachments:

- Hiring Freeze Exemption Request Form