

POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLARS FIVE-YEAR LIMIT GUIDELINES

Policy

The total duration of an individual's postdoctoral service may not exceed five years, including postdoctoral service at other institutions. By exception, the Dean of Graduate Studies may grant an extension not to exceed a sixth year. (APM 390-17b)

Guidelines

What counts toward the 5-year limit?

- UC appointments as Postgraduate Researcher, Visiting Postgraduate Researcher, Postdoctoral Scholar, Postdoctoral Fellow, or Postdoctoral Trainee
- Postdoctoral experience in other educational or research institutions
- Mentored postdoctoral experience in industry
- Foreign research experience if similar to US postdoctoral experience
- Other mentored postdoctoral research experience

What does NOT count toward the 5-year limit?

- Residencies
- Clinical fellow appointments with modest or no research training component
- Appointments in industry which are not mentored
- Non-academic staff appointments

Requests for exceptions beyond the 5th year for up to a total of six years will be considered if the Postdoctoral Scholar:

- Is changing fields/disciplines
- Has five years or more of postdoctoral experience, is returning from a non-academic/non-research position or from full-time parenting, and needs research retraining
- Has a postdoctoral fellowship that was awarded through a sixth year
- Needs a few additional months beyond the fifth year to complete a research project
- Has accepted a permanent position at another institution that begins a few additional months beyond the fifth year
- Would suffer hardship as the result of personal circumstances which are beyond the Postdoctoral Scholar's control (e.g., a death in the family which delayed completion of the research training)

Requests for exceptions will also be considered in other well-justified circumstances and when the additional training time would be beneficial to the Scholar.

Process for Requesting an Exception

Requests for exceptions are submitted for review and approval to the Department office and then on to the Office of Graduate Studies - Associate Dean for Programs.