

CONTRACT SIGNATURE AUTHORITY

POLICY SUMMARY

Only those University officers to whom the President has delegated Contract signature authority, as detailed in the Contract Signature Authority Delegations List, may sign Contracts or other written instruments on behalf of Northern Arizona University and the Arizona Board of Regents ("ABOR"). University officials are not authorized to enter into any type of non-written or verbal Contract. Authorized signers must ensure that all applicable laws, policies, and rules are followed when negotiating and executing Contracts.

REASON FOR THIS POLICY

This policy implements ABOR Policy 3-103, which governs the signing of documents on behalf of the University and ABOR. A clear, consistent, and standardized process for designating authorized signers of binding Contracts or other written instruments promotes institutional effectiveness and accountability and mitigates risk.

ENTITIES AFFECTED BY THIS POLICY

- All University units responsible for a Contract or other binding written instrument
- All University units wishing to implement a Contract or other binding written instrument

WHO SHOULD KNOW THIS POLICY

- All University community members seeking to implement a written agreement of any kind
- Executive Team members
- Persons or entities with whom the University purports to enter into a Contract
- University officers with delegated signature authority

DEFINITIONS

Contract: a written agreement that imposes legally enforceable obligations, whether monetary or otherwise. For purposes of this policy, Contracts include, but are not limited to, binding agreements of any kind including internship and grant agreements, letters of offer, and memoranda of understanding or cooperation.

POLICY

A. Delegation of Signature Authority

Pursuant to ABOR Policy 3-103, only those University officers designated by the President, as certified to the executive director of ABOR, are authorized to execute Contracts or other binding and legally enforceable written instruments on behalf of the University and ABOR. In addition, the President may delegate his or her authority to execute Contracts and other written instruments to appropriate University officials without certification to the executive director of ABOR in the following circumstances:

1. the value of the University's obligation under the Contract or other written instrument is \$10,000 or less; and

2. the delegation of authority is warranted to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of University operations and does not unduly expose ABOR or the University to financial loss.

B. Limitations

All Contract signature authority must be delegated in writing with specific limitations delineated by the President. University officers with delegated Contract signature authority may not further delegate or transfer such authority to any other employee. No University official is authorized to enter into any type of non-written or verbal Contract. The President may rescind delegated Contract signature authority at any time.

C. Contract Signature Authority Delegations List

University officials to whom the President has delegated Contract signature authority, and the scope of the authority delegated, are recorded on the Contract Signature Authority Delegations List, which shall supersede and replace all Contract signature authority delegations issued prior to its most recent revision date.

D. Document Retention

The signing official that executes each Contract or binding written instrument is responsible for ensuring that all associated documents and materials are properly provided to the appropriate office for notice and retention in accordance with applicable record-keeping requirements. The Office of Sponsored Projects must receive all documents and other materials associated with sponsored grant proposals, contracts, and subcontracts. Contracts, Purchasing and Risk Management must receive all documents and other materials associated with all other types of Contracts or binding written instruments.

E. Enforcement

Signing a Contract in violation of this policy outside the scope of one's delegated signature authority is a serious breach of ABOR and University policy that may result in disciplinary sanctions up to and including termination of employment. A violation of this policy may also result in personal liability under [A.R.S. § 35-154](#).

RESPONSIBILITIES

Designated Contract Signers: execute binding agreements and ensure that all Contract documents or other written instruments they execute—and associated negotiation, review, and implementation processes—fully comply with all applicable federal and state laws, ABOR and University policies, and all other applicable rules.

Executive Team Members: present their recommended signature authority delegations to the President for approval and, as appropriate, certification to ABOR.

President: delegates Contract signature authority with specific limitations and certifies to ABOR those University officers authorized to bind the University and ABOR to financial obligations in excess of \$10,000.

PROCEDURES

[Signature Authority Delegation Procedure](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

Forms or Tools

[Contract Signature Authority Delegations List](#)

[Contract Signature Authority Delegation Form](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Cross-References

There are no cross-references associated with this policy.

Sources

[Arizona Board of Regents Policy 3-103](#)

[Arizona Board of Regents Policy 3-201](#)

[Arizona Board of Regents Policy 3-803](#)

[Arizona Revised Statutes § 35-154](#)

APPENDIX

None.