



SCHOOL OF  
MEDICINE

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RESEARCH EDUCATION OFFICE

## **Postdoctoral Fellow Resource Guide**

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## Introduction

At the UNM Health Sciences Center (HSC), we have a strong and amazing research community that currently includes about 80 postdoctoral fellows. We greatly appreciate our postdoctoral fellows' contributions – they are an integral piece of the research, clinical and training missions and play vital roles in scientific discovery and innovation at the University of New Mexico (UNM).

UNM's goal is to provide quality research and clinical training and professional development opportunities for postdoctoral fellows, with a special emphasis on developing training plans that are tailored to the career goals of individual postdoctoral fellows. This resource guide is meant to provide information that will help enrich the experience of postdoctoral fellows at UNM.

This is one of multiple resources for postdoctoral fellows at UNM. Please also see the websites for the UNM Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (<https://postdoc.unm.edu/index.html>) and the HSC Postdoctoral Affairs Office (<https://hsc.unm.edu/medicine/education/reo/postdoctoral/>) for more information.

*This resource guide is not a contract and is not intended to create an express or implied contract of employment between the University of New Mexico and a current or prospective postdoctoral fellow. This resource guide is not an addendum or amendment to any employment contract you have with the University of New Mexico, UNM Health Sciences Center, or any other entity within the UNM Health Sciences Center. This resource guide is not intended to, nor should it be construed to, alter in any way the relationship between the University of New Mexico, UNM Health Sciences Center, or any other UNM Health Sciences entity as an employer, and any individual employee or contractor. This resource guide is not legal advice.*

## SOMREO Contact Information

The School of Medicine Research Education Office (SOMREO) is the resource for student and postdoctoral trainees at the UNM Health Sciences Center.

The SOMREO office is located in Room B61 in Reginald Heber Fitz Hall (Bldg. 211). SOMREO staff can also be reached by email at: [SOMREO@salud.unm.edu](mailto:SOMREO@salud.unm.edu), by phone at: (505) 272-1887, or by making a service request using the following link:

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/7ab4746099164362967d4d9b350c5d88>

More information is available at the SOMREO website:

<https://hsc.unm.edu/medicine/education/reo/>

A list of staff, program directors, and SOMREO leadership is available here:

<https://hsc.unm.edu/medicine/education/reo/contact/>

## New Hire Information

### New Hire Paperwork

- I-9 and Employment Eligibility Documentation
- Signed Benefits Checklist
- Employee Demographic Form
- W-4; complete online at: <https://my.unm.edu>
- Direct Deposit; complete online at: <https://my.unm.edu>

HSC Faculty Contracts Office website: <http://hsc.unm.edu/admin/fco>

### Appointment Period

An individual may be appointed as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of New Mexico on an annual basis. Postdoctoral appointments should not exceed five years.

### Internet Access

NetID: HSC NetID – access to Outlook email, HSC shared networked systems, and other HSC based applications. Will be created automatically, someone in your department will be notified. UNM NetID - Used for Campus Wide resources and for Learning Central.

### MyUNM

The MyUNM portal provides access to personal information, benefits and deductions, pay information, tax forms, annual leave balance, benefits enrollment, open enrollment, and direct deposit. Access through: <https://my.unm.edu>  
Login with your UNM NetID and password (not your HSC ID/password).

### Benefits

Postdoctoral fellows who are hired into a benefits-eligible position have 60 calendar days after their start date to complete their benefits enrollment. If you fail to enroll yourself and/or dependents during the initial eligibility period, you may not be able to enroll unless there is a qualifying status change or until Open Enrollment (which is typically held in April/May).

Information on eligibility can be found at: <https://hr.unm.edu/benefits/eligibility>.

Information on enrollment can be found at: <https://hr.unm.edu/benefits/enrollment>

\* Note that some postdoctoral fellows who are supported by National Research Service Award (NRSA) fellowships (these are typically fellows funded by NIH T or F awards) do not currently receive benefits through UNM. For more details, please contact the Director of Postdoctoral Affairs at UNM.

### Parking

Parking can be paid for via a monthly payroll deduction. The cost depends on your stipend level and the lot you select.

For more information on parking, call 277-1938 or visit: <http://pats.unm.edu>

## Salary/Stipend

The UNM Health Sciences Center follows the NIH National Research Service Award (NRSA) Guidelines for postdoctoral stipends. The stipend level for the entire first year of support is determined by the number of full years of relevant postdoctoral experience when the award is issued. Relevant experience may include research experience (including industrial), teaching assistantship, internship, residency, clinical duties, or other time spent in a health-related field beyond that of the qualifying doctoral degree specific to the field of study or position at UNM. **We highly recommend that postdoctoral fellows and mentors come to an agreement regarding the number of years of research experience before a postdoctoral contract is signed.** Once the appropriate stipend level has been determined, stipends will be commensurate with experience for that grant year.

Ruth L. Kirschstein NRSA Stipends Effective for NIH FY 2026  
(note: this table is updated yearly by the National Institutes of Health)

Career Level	Years of Experience	Stipend for FY 2025	Monthly Stipend
Postdoctoral	0	\$63,480	\$5,290
Postdoctoral	1	\$63,900	\$5,325
Postdoctoral	2	\$64,380	\$5,365
Postdoctoral	3	\$66,948	\$5,579
Postdoctoral	4	\$69,180	\$5,765
Postdoctoral	5	\$71,748	\$5,979
Postdoctoral	6	\$74,424	\$6,202
Postdoctoral	7 or More	\$77,076	\$6,423

Source: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-25-105.html>

## Benefits-Eligible Employees

### Annual Leave and Holidays<sup>1</sup>

Annual leave for postdoctoral fellows requires prior approval from the Research Mentor and shall not exceed fifteen (15) days per calendar year (10 hours/month). A maximum of 180 hours of annual leave can be accrued. Postdoctoral fellows will not be paid for any unused leave when they separate from the University. Extension of annual leave for exceptional circumstances is at the discretion of the Research Mentor.

In addition, the University of New Mexico observes specific holidays each year and most offices are closed during these holidays. Holidays are in addition to annual leave time and at the discretion of the UNM President. Presently, these holidays include: Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Day after Thanksgiving, and Winter Break. Holidays are subject to change. The calendar of specific dates for UNM holidays may be found at: <https://hr.unm.edu/calendars>

Postdoctoral fellows must recognize that research priorities may require their presence during holidays and/or weekends so that research activities are not affected. Postdoctoral fellows should discuss their schedule with their Research Mentor and, if disagreements arise, should discuss these issues with the HSC Director of Postdoctoral Affairs. The current Director's contact information is listed at: <https://hsc.unm.edu/medicine/education/reo/contact/>

### Sick Leave<sup>2</sup>

Postdoctoral fellows are eligible for 15 days of sick leave per calendar year (10 hours/month) and can accrue a maximum of 360 hours. If there are disagreements, fellows can discuss their options with the HSC Director of Postdoctoral Affairs and may request review by the Office for Academic Personnel. Postdoctoral fellows will not be paid for any unused leave when they separate from the University.

### Parental Leave

The UNM HSC recognizes that supporting postdoctoral fellows as they balance career, child rearing, and family life ultimately benefits the program and promotes overall health.

The UNM parental leave policy for postdoctoral fellows provides for 40 contract days of leave (8 consecutive weeks) per year following the adoption or the birth of a child<sup>3</sup>. A postdoctoral fellow must have at least a 50% appointment to be eligible for parental leave benefits.

Postdoctoral fellows are required to provide advance notice to their Supervisor/Research Mentor in writing as far in advance as possible of the parental leave start and end dates, ideally no less than 30 days in advance of the leave. They must also fill out a Request for Parental Leave (<https://oap.unm.edu/faculty/compensation/documents/fco-parental-leave-request-v3.pdf>) form and submit it the UNM HSC Faculty Contracts Office.

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<sup>1</sup><https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/3000/3400.html> & <https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/3000/3405.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/3000/3410.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://oap.unm.edu/faculty/post-doctoral/index.html>

HSC Postdoctoral fellows who receive funding from the NIH or another agency (through a training grant, for example) must also comply with the parental leave policies from the funding agency (such as notifying the training grant program director). If there are discrepancies between policies, please contact the HSC Postdoctoral Affairs Director.

#### **Bereavement Leave<sup>4</sup>**

Postdoctoral fellows may request paid leave from their Research Mentor for an absence due to a death in their immediate family (including spouse, children, their children's spouse, parents, parents-in-law, and siblings). In general, this paid leave is provided for up to three (3) working days.

#### **Insurance and Other Benefits**

Postdoctoral fellows are eligible for Medical, Dental, and Vision Insurance, as well as for Life Insurance, enrollment in flexible spending accounts, accidental death and dismemberment benefits, and 403(b) & 457(b) voluntary tax-deferred retirement plans. Eligibility is based on a minimum 3-month academic year contract at an appointment percent of 50% or greater.

Some postdoctoral fellows who are supported by National Research Service Award (NRSA) fellowships (these are typically fellows funded by NIH T or F awards) do not currently receive benefits through UNM but may be eligible for certain benefits through their award.

#### **Tuition Remission<sup>5</sup>**

Benefit-eligible postdoctoral fellows and their spouse/domestic partner are eligible to receive voluntary Education Benefits, including tuition remission. For more details on this program, see: <https://hr.unm.edu/benefits/tuition-remission>

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<sup>4</sup> <https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/3000/3415.html>

<sup>5</sup> <https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/3000/3700.html>

## Career Development Resources

### Secondary Advisors

It is strongly recommended that each postdoctoral fellow elect a Mentoring Committee to provide oversight, guidance, and to assess the trainee's progress in the program on a semiannual basis. The committee should consist of the primary research mentor and two secondary advisors. At least one of these secondary mentors should have general knowledge in the respective field of research. The role of the secondary advisors is to provide a source of guidance during the training experience that is independent of the fellow's primary mentor. At least one mentor should be selected for their expertise in an area that the trainee would like to develop outside of that offered in their primary mentor's laboratory that will assist the trainee in achieving their career goals.

It is recommended that the trainee and their advisors meet for a brief informal introductory meeting within one month of their selection. The trainee may then request appointments with their advisors at any point throughout their training if they choose. However, we recommend that all postdoctoral fellows meet with their Mentoring Committee twice a year to review research progress and career goals. These meetings should involve presentation of the work in progress, a summary of other milestones met (courses and workshops, presentations in journal clubs, abstracts submitted etc.,) and discussion of grant proposal(s) to be submitted. As appropriate, career planning will also be discussed, with members of the committee offering advice about opportunities to learn more about career options, how to write letters of application, and what to anticipate during job interviews.

### Individual Development Plans

Postdoctoral fellows are strongly encouraged to develop individual development plans (IDPs) that will then be updated annually. The IDP is meant to cover various areas of training. As each postdoctoral fellow will have a unique plan, these areas of training will be defined by the postdoctoral fellow in collaboration with their mentors. Suggested areas of training are "Research Activities", "Research Productivity" (i.e. publications, presentations, patents, etc.), "Professional Development" (e.g. professional associations, conferences/meetings, workshops, improvement of teaching methods, etc.), and "Other" (customized by the postdoctoral fellow).

The postdoctoral fellow and their mentors will assess the skill set of the postdoc in each of these areas and then define short-term and long-term goals to address the skills to develop. In addition, the entire training period needs to be considered in the IDP as goals may have a particular sequence or necessary timeframe for success. Mentors will guide the postdoctoral fellow in how to meet these goals to best achieve the desired career outcome.

At least annually, the postdoctoral fellow will meet with their mentors, preferably on an individual basis to ensure that the goals are specific, realistic, and being met in a timely manner. Goals will also need to be reassessed to address individual needs and to reflect the changing nature of research and/or career goals.

Science Careers myIDP is a helpful resource for developing IDPs:

(<http://myidp.sciencecareers.org>).

For another example of an IDP template, please see:

<https://hsc.unm.edu/medicine/education/reo/docs/graduate/idp-template.docx>

### Responsible Conduct of Research

The NIH mandates training in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR) for postdoctoral fellows who are supported by NIH grants. The UNM HSC offers BIOM 555 (*Problem-Based Research Bioethics*) to meet this requirement. This one-semester course covers a variety of topics, including scientific misconduct, conflicts of interest, the responsible use of animals in research, and human subject protocols. The NIH policy for RCR training is that instruction must be undertaken at least once during each career stage (e.g., undergraduate, post-baccalaureate, predoctoral, postdoctoral, and faculty levels), and at a frequency of no less than once every four years. Due to the requirement for taking RCR at each career stage, students will need to retake an RCR compliant training program during their fellowship even if they have completed RCR previously.

### Grant Writing and Fellowships

The UNM HSC offers a course in Navigating hypothesis testing and grant writing (BIOM 505). This course will discuss the ins and outs of designing a testable, fundable, hypothesis, writing specific aims, etc. and will use the NIH's own Workbook to become familiar with grantsmanship, to participate in mock study sections, and to role-play Program Officers. Participants will prepare and discuss drafts of proposals, with a focus on NIH F and K grants. This course is typically offered in the Fall. Please contact the instructor Dr. Elaine Bearer ([ebearer@salud.unm.edu](mailto:ebearer@salud.unm.edu)) for more information.

In addition, Dr. Kathryn Frieze runs an informal working group that focuses on NIH fellowship applications. The group focuses on developing an effective NIH biosketch, training plan, and mentoring plan. Please contact Dr. Frieze ([kfrieze@salud.unm.edu](mailto:kfrieze@salud.unm.edu)) for more information.

Other grant writing workshops are offered periodically through the UNM Comprehensive Cancer Center and the UNM Clinical & Translational Science Center (CTSC).

### Mentoring

The UNM HSC offers a course entitled "Faculty to Learner: Mentor Development" that is open to postdoctoral fellows who are interested in careers that involve mentoring. This course is typically offered twice a year. For more information, please see: <https://hsc.unm.edu/medicine/faculty-careers/mentoring/>

### ERA Commons ID

It is recommended that every postdoctoral fellow acquire an ERA Commons ID. Please contact the administrator of your home department, they can help you with this process.

### Careers Outside Academia Seminar Series

The HSC hosts a monthly seminar series that highlights Ph.D. scientists in careers beyond traditional academic faculty careers. Presenters, who are often alumni of UNM, have come from diverse career paths, including biotech/pharma, government, patent law, science writing, and compliance. Please contact Dr. Judy Cannon ([jucannon@salud.unm.edu](mailto:jucannon@salud.unm.edu)) for more details on upcoming talks.

### Postdoctoral Travel Awards

The Office of the Vice President of Research (OVPR) provides travel awards of up to \$1,500.00 for travel to present research at a national or international conference. For more information on eligibility, application materials, due dates and other requirements, see:

<https://postdoc.unm.edu/postdoc-travel-awards.html>

### Careers in Management/Teaching

UNM's Anderson School of Management (ASM) offers courses in Professional Science and Technology Management. The goal of these courses is to prepare students for jobs in industry, government, & non-profits. Postdoctoral fellows are eligible to use their tuition remission benefit to take courses at the Anderson School. For more information on available courses, see:

<https://hsc.unm.edu/medicine/education/reo/graduate/bsgp/bsgp-stm.html>

Postdoctoral fellows interested in a Teaching Career are encouraged to enroll in Biomed 540 (University Science Teaching), a class that focuses on the principles of how people learn and methods of teaching and assessment.

## Wellness Resources

### Health Sciences Library & Informatics Center (HSLIC) Resources

HSLIC offers study rooms, a wellness room (including praying rugs), nap pods, menstrual products in all restrooms, universal restrooms, and a lactation room. These resources are primarily for students but open to all.

Other HSC wellness resources:

<https://hsc.unm.edu/about/wellness/>

<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/publish?EQBCT=cad44d420f6f4fd0ac5605ff636fe15b#dashboard>

<https://hr.unm.edu/wellness>

### UNM HSC Fitness Center

The HSC Wellness Center is open 24/7 and available to all HSC faculty, staff, and trainees. The facility is badge-access only. No outside guests are permitted. Click [here](#) for a link to the location of the Fitness Center.

If you are eligible for tuition remission, you can use it to pay for New Mexico Sports and Wellness membership through UNM Continuing Education. More info here:

<https://continuinged.unm.edu/search/publicCourseSearchDetails.do?method=load&courseId=2165635>

### UNM Childcare Center

If you have any questions regarding the program, enrollment, or the status of the waiting list, please contact the UNM Children's Campus at (505) 277-3365 or send an email to:

[unmccenrollment@unm.edu](mailto:unmccenrollment@unm.edu)

### UNM Global Education Office

The UNM Global Education Office (GEO) is a resource for international postdoctoral fellows at UNM. The office offers a number of services and activities, including immigration and orientation advising and English language instruction. For more information, visit the GEO website:

<https://global.unm.edu/>

### Counseling and Psychotherapy Services

The UNM HSC Office of Professional Well-Being provides free and confidential services to promote professional resilience and well-being for UNM faculty and trainees. These services include the following:

- Curriculum, didactics, resources, and workshops to help you build skills in time management, communication, quality improvement, sleep hygiene, financial wellness and personal resilience.
- Confidential and accessible mental health resources, including peer-to-peer support for faculty and information on off-campus resources

To learn more, go their website at: <https://hsc.unm.edu/medicine/about/well-being/> or email [opw@salud.unm.edu](mailto:opw@salud.unm.edu)

### Counseling Assistance & Referral Services (CARS)

CARS is a confidential Employee Assistance Program that serves postdoctoral fellows along with faculty, staff, and retirees. CARS provides help with personal and work-related issues through

free services. For more information or to make an appointment call (505) 272-6868 or visit the [CARS website](#).

### Peer Connect

PeerConnect offers one-on-one peer counseling. If you'd like to talk to a peer, email the Peer Connect office at [peerconnect@salud.unm.edu](mailto:peerconnect@salud.unm.edu).

### FOR IMMEDIATE HELP

1. DIAL [988](#) – 24/7 Lifeline for Emotional, Mental or Substance Misuse Support
2. [Psychiatric Emergency Services](#). Open 24 hours/day, 7 day/week. Call 505.272.9038. Available to all.
3. [Agora Crisis Center](#) – Hotline staffed by trained specialists – 505.277.3013. If you go to website, you can also find information for a chat hotline. Available to all.
4. [New Mexico Crisis and Access Line](#) (NMCAL)– 24/7 free and confidential support – 855.662.7474. Available to all.
5. [SAMHSA](#) - Provides 24/7, 365-day-a-year crisis counseling and support to people experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters.

### Learning Environment Office (LEO)

The mission of LEO is to foster an inclusive learning environment where teachers, staff, and learners thrive, and relationships are mutually respectful and beneficial to each other and to our institutional climate. The primary goals are to increase exemplary behavior and decrease incidents of learner mistreatment. Learn more about LEO at:

<https://hsc.unm.edu/medicine/education/leo/>

### Campus safety

LoboGuardian is an app designed to increase user safety through real-time interactive features that create a virtual safety network of friends and family. LoboGuardian allows users to designate “Guardians” to act as a virtual safety escort in timed Safety Sessions. The LoboGuardian website also links to additional campus safety topics.

For a free download, go to <http://loboguardian.unm.edu/>

The **UNM Police Department** can be reached at: **(505) 277-2241**.

### Recreation facilities & programs

The Recreational Services Department of the University of New Mexico provides a wide variety of opportunities to enhance the educational, recreational, and cultural experiences of a diverse University community. For more information, go to: <https://recservices.unm.edu/>

### LGBTQ Resource Center

The LGBTQ Resource Center strives to create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere for all members of the University of New Mexico and surrounding community. For more information, see: <https://lgbtqrc.unm.edu/>

### Women’s Resource Center

The Women’s Resource Center is a place of advocacy, support, and safety for all members of the University of New Mexico and the greater community. It offers educational, social, and cultural

programming aimed at encouraging women's self-determination and community engagement. For more information, go to: <https://women.unm.edu/>

### Sexual harassment and assault

The University of New Mexico is committed to maintaining a campus environment that is free from sexual harassment and assault. To ensure that the best and most effective services and process for handling sexual assault on campus are available, UNM has created a Sexual Misconduct and Assault Response Team (SMART). SMART is part of the university's overall efforts to reduce sexual violence on campus. It is a victim-centered, victim-controlled coordinated response team composed of community and university organizations to quickly respond to cases of sexual violence while providing appropriate services to all parties involved. SMART responders make services for victims a priority. Victims of sexual assault may choose to activate one, or all, components of the response team: medical, counseling, law enforcement, and/or the student conduct process. If you have been sexually assaulted, it is important to remember it is not your fault. Seek the appropriate services so all your needs can be met. If you wish to be accompanied by a trained and sensitive advocate, you can call the Rape Crisis Center's 24-hr hotline at 505-266-7711 and an advocate will meet you. For more information on how to utilize this service, including contact information, click [this link](#).

### Ombuds Services

Ombuds Services is a no-barrier, first-stop for UNM employees, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students seeking guidance, information, and insight from a trusted, skilled neutral in a setting that is confidential, independent, and informal. They provide a variety of informal services to assist UNM employees, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students in maximizing productivity and resolving conflicts. They listen respectfully, offer information about available resources, and emphasize collaboration and fair consideration of all sides of an issue. For more information, go to: <https://ombuds.unm.edu/>

### Interactive UNM Map

<https://map.concept3d.com/?id=1984#!ct/58454,58447,67657,70294,81672,82811?s/>



The UNM PDA was established in 2022 to advocate for Postdoctoral fellows. PDA goals include:

**Promoting scholarly learning**

- Through research presentations, including an annual postdoc research day, lightning talks, and other opportunities

**Networking Opportunities**

- Numerous events both within and outside of UNM (including with peers at NMSU and Sandia National Labs)
- Within/outside of the PDA network, including with faculty and graduate students
- These include outings, coffee hours, and other social activities

**Professional Development**

- To facilitate training in communication and grants writing
- Career Development Workshops, focusing on resume writing and other skills

**Advocacy and Support**

- Advocating for fair treatment for postdoctoral fellows
- Mentor/mentee dispute resolution
- Identifying issues within the PDA world

For more information, go to the PDA website:

<https://postdoc.unm.edu/postdoc-association/index.html>