

Procedures for University Policy Number 1147

All employees who seek to execute contracts on behalf of the University must be designated as an Authorized Officer or Authorized Signatory and comply with the above referenced policy and procedures. Unless otherwise stated, any capitalized terms not defined herein shall have the meanings ascribed to them in the Policy.

Role of Authorized Signatories

Authorized Signatories are authorized to approve and execute, in the name and on behalf of the University, Contracts within the scope of their authority they determine to be in the best interest of the University. Authority to sign includes physical signatures and electronic signatures that acknowledge the acceptance of and agreement to specified terms and conditions. For more information on electronic signatures, see: <https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/guidance-for-the-use-of-electronic-digital-signatures-at-mason/>.

Delegation of Signature Authority Requests

Signature Authority is granted to Authorized Signatories who need to sign contractual agreements on a regular basis to carry out University business according to departmental operational needs. Authorized Signatories should evaluate their needs on a regular basis.

Authorized Officers or Signatories may subdelegate their authority to their employees only to the extent authorized in their DSA Letter. Authorized Officers and Signatories are responsible for monitoring and supervising the contracting activity of their employees to whom they delegate Signature Authority.

At the end of the Delegation Period or earlier if needed, Authorized Signatories will be required to submit a request for the renewal, modification, or termination of their Signature Authority and submit it to their Authorizing Officer along with a copy to the Office of University Counsel to ensure continuity of service and the appropriate termination of Signature Authority.

Delegation of Signature Authority Letters (DSA Letters)

The Delegation of Signature Authority letter is the written document that expressly delegates to the Authorized Signatory the ability to sign Contracts on behalf of the University and that defines the limits of such authority. The DSA Letter template can be found in: <https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/dsa-template-for-dept-head-subdelegation-3/>

- All delegations must be in writing using the DSA Letter template;
- Signature Authority may be delegated to an Authorized Signatory for a period up to three years or for the length of the Authorized Signatory's employment, if the Authorized Signatory has a fixed term of employment.
- The DSA letter should clearly specify the types of contractual agreements the Authorized Signatory is allowed to sign and the limitations on the authority (e.g., dollar amount, term).
- Authorized Officers and Signatories may only subdelegate Signature Authority the Authorized Officer or Signatory possesses.
- The Authorized Signatory receiving the delegation will sign the DSA Letter to

acknowledge acceptance of the delegation. Both the Authorized Officer and the Authorized Signatory will keep a copy and email a copy to the Office of University Counsel.

- When Authorized Signatories are temporarily unavailable they may delegate their Signature Authority to ensure the efficient continuation of University operations and business decisions.
- A delegation or subdelegation of Signature Authority may be revoked or modified at any time in writing.
- DSA Letters to the Authorized Officers must be approved by the Office of University Counsel.

Training Requirements

All Authorized Officers and Signatories are required to complete training prior to each Delegation Period and at least every three years. The training is available in [MasonLEAPS](#) as “University Policy 1147: Signature Authority for University Contracts.” Upon reviewing the training recording and handouts, you must mark the training as complete to be registered as compliant.

Template Contracts

The Office of University Counsel has worked with several units to create approved template Contracts and Authorized Signatories should use such approved template Contracts if at all possible. When a proposed Contract is not an approved template or contains language that deviates from a template, the Authorized Signatory must submit the Contract to the corresponding office (i.e., Sponsored Programs, Purchasing, or the Provost Office) overseeing the type of Contract or submit it to the Office of University Counsel for legal review prior to signature.

Links

For any assistance related to Contracts, Authorized Signatories should seek guidance as necessary.

All academic agreements must be submitted through the Provost’s electronic MOU Process: <http://emou.gmu.edu/>.

Leases should be directed to Andre Kinney, Director Real Estate Fairfax/Prince William Campuses, Operations and Business Services.

Operational Risk Management: <https://risk.gmu.edu/contact/>

Office of University Branding: <https://brand.gmu.edu/team>

Office of University Counsel: <https://universitycounsel.gmu.edu/contact-us/>

Office of Sponsored Programs: <https://osp.gmu.edu/staff-contacts/>

Purchasing: <https://fiscal.gmu.edu/contact/>