Appointment Forms (2271)

Getting Ready:

Before initiating an Appointment Form (2271) in xTrain, the PI delegated ASST should gather the following information for each trainee:

- eRA Commons username
- current email address
- field of research code
- appointment start/end dates
- budget period of appointment
- amounts for: stipend, tuition/fees, travel
- Has the trainee been appointed to any other training grant(s) previously? What was the grant number? How long were they appointed to the grant?
    - o A trainee/scholar, who was previously appointed in xTrain to a different training grant, must be terminated from that grant in xTrain prior to appointing him/her to the new grant. This termination notice must be fully approved by NIH prior to proceeding with the appointment.
- For a postdoc, if you are unsure of which stipend level to use, always send a copy of the trainee's CV to your Grants Management Specialist for verification

Setting up a trainee eRA Commons username, *<u>if one doesn't already exist</u>*:

There are 2 ways to approach this process:

a) set up the username prior to initiating the 2271 **(HIGHLY RECOMMENDED)**
b) set up the username during the 2271 process

> ➢ *Appointment of a trainee is not allowed until the Notice of Award (NoA) for a training grant has been issued by the NIH and often, the NoA is received after the start date. Since you should not pay a stipend from a grant prior to appointing the trainee, you may find yourself in a rush. Therefore, it is best to get the username set up so everything is in order while awaiting the NoA.*

Ensure trainee eRA Commons profile is current:

- Each trainee is to verify that their personal profile in the NIH eRA Commons is complete and current.
- NOTE: Appointments will be rejected by NIH if citizenship information is not completed in their personal profile.

The Process:

1) When PD/ASST creates a New Appointment, they are prompted for the Trainee's User ID
    - A box at the bottom of the screen will prompt you to "Invite Trainee Now" or "Invite Trainee Later". This is the how you would set up an eRA Commons user ID for this trainee "on the fly", if an ID doesn't already exist.

2) Complete the required fields on the form.
    - Required fields are indicated with an asterisk (*). If these fields are not complete, the form cannot route past this stage.
    - Other fields may be completed at this time, if the information is available.
    - Since "field of research" is a required field, if unknown, select "other" and have the trainee change it once the form routes to them.
    - Pay attention to the grant year on the form. You may have to change the year and **'SAVE'** the document in order for the stipend amounts to be correct.

3) Once complete, the PD/ASST clicks the **"Save and Route to Trainee"** button. The system will ask if a message is to be sent to the trainee. This is optional.

****Sample note to trainee****
Please complete this appointment form in its entirety. Review the information entered in the 'field of research training or career development' field, and make changes if necessary.
Please click the 'Save and Route to PI' button when complete. If you have questions, contact ______.

4) The system will check for errors prior to routing to trainee
   - Errors must be corrected before you can continue
   - Warnings will go through the system without problem but should be reviewed.
   - *A common warning is: The trainee appointment end date must be less than or equal to the project period end date (this can be ignored if need be).*

5) The Trainee will receive an automated email from xTrain notifying them that they have been appointed to a training grant.
   - Any (optional) message will be included in the email along with a link to the eRA commons website.

6) The trainee logs into eRA commons and reviews/completes all information on the appointment form including:
   - Email
   - Degrees
   - Specialty board
   - Dual degree (if applicable)
   - Field of Research Code

7) Once trainee has verified all information on the Appointment Form they should then click **"Save"**
   - If they have any questions, they can contact the PI and/or ASST prior to routing the document further
   - Once all questions have been resolved the trainee should click **"Save and Route to PI"**
   - *NOTE: Many trainees click only the **"SAVE"** button thinking they are finished, when in fact, the appointment form will remain pending in a saved status if it is not "routed".*

8) An automated email from NIH is sent to the PD/ASST asking for review and finalization of the appointment form.

9) The PD/PI reviews and clicks the **"Save and Route to Agency"** button, once approved.

10) The PI must click **"I ACCEPT"** to the following in order for the form to route to the agency: **I certify that this individual is qualified for this program and is eligible to receive financial support for the period specified above. A copy of this appointment form will be given to the individual.**

11) Payback agreements for Postdocs must be printed, signed and mailed to the NIH

12) All Permanent Resident trainees appointed must have original Notarized copy of their green card mailed to the NIH

13) The agency then reviews and finally accepts the appointment form in xTrain.

14) An automated email from NIH is sent to the trainee/PD/ASST stating that the finalized version of the appointment form can be accessed in xTrain.

15) The ASST saves the complete version of the appointment form in the electronic/paper file.

Termination Notices (TN)

Getting Ready:

Before initiating termination notices in xTrain, the PD/ASST should gather the following:

- email address changes
- appointment period for each trainee
- stipend amount paid by appointment period for each trainee
- *eRA Commons usernames for each trainee not originally appointed using the xTrain system*

Who can initiate a termination notice?

- For institutional training, career, and research education awards, the PD/PI or ASST with a PI xTrain delegated role may initiate a termination notice.
- For institutional training grants, where a Business Official (BO) needs to review the stipend amounts, a BO may also initiate a termination notice.
- For fellowships, the following users can initiate a termination notice: The fellow (who is the PD/PI on the fellowship), a BO, the Sponsor, or the Sponsor's delegate.

The Process:

1) The Termination Notice is initiated in xTrain

2) A pre-populated TN is generated in xTrain with information pulled from Trainee profile

3) Complete the required fields on the TN. Required fields are indicated with an asterisk (*). If these fields are not complete, the TN cannot route past this stage.
    - Stipends paid as stated on Termination form must equal stipend amount actually paid
    - If the Trainee terminates early, click the **"Modify Termination Date"** button and the system will automatically amend the end date and recalculate stipend on the appointment form
    - Other fields may be completed at this time, if the information is available

4) If the training appointment is being terminated early, include the reason in the summary section.

5) Click the **"Save and Route to Trainee"** button when all fields are complete.

6) The system will then ask if a message is to be sent to the trainee. This is optional.

****Sample note to trainee****
Please complete ALL information on this termination notice in its entirety. Be sure your training summary does not exceed 2000 characters (including spaces) and do not add extra lines between paragraphs. Please click the 'Save and Route to PI' button when complete. If you have questions, contact _____.

7) The trainee will receive an automated email from NIH asking them to complete their termination notice. Any (optional) message will be included in the email along with a link to the eRA commons website.

8) The trainee logs into eRA commons and reviews/completes all information on the termination notice. NOTE: When the trainee is completing the 'summary of training field', below are the instructions they receive:

    "Provide a summary of training received and research undertaken during trainee tenure. List publications, if any, resulting from the research during this period. List grants and career awards pending and received. If training appointment is being terminated early, state reason. (2000 characters maximum)"

- The system will reject the Termination Notice if:
  - Blank lines are included in the summary
  - The 2000 character maximum (including spaces) is exceeded

- If the summary is copied from a WORD doc, note that special characters do not transfer. For example, an '(apostrophe) will show up as a box. Please correct this before routing the TN.

9) Once complete, the trainee clicks the **"Save and Route to PI"** button.
   - *Many trainees click only the **"SAVE"** button thinking they are finished, when in fact, the termination notice will remain pending in a saved status if it is not "routed".*

10) The PI and ASST are sent an automated email to review and finalize the document.

11) The PI/ASST reviews and clicks the **"Save and Route to Business Official"** button, once approved.

12) The Business Official reviews the form for accuracy and completeness (be sure to send it to your correct Business Official)

13) Once approved, the Business Official clicks the **"Save and Route to Agency"** button.

14) The agency then reviews and accepts the termination.

15) An automated email from the agency is sent to PI/Trainee/ASST stating that the finalized version of the document can be accessed via xTrain.

16) ASST saves the complete version of the Termination Notice in electronic/paper file.

Helpful Links

- xTrain Site: http://era.nih.gov/services_for_applicants/other/xTrain.cfm
- eRA Commons: http://commons.era.nih.gov/commons/
- FAQs: http://era.nih.gov/commons/faq_commons.cfm#XVI
- eRA Commons xTrain External/Institutional User Guide: http://era.nih.gov/files/xTrain_external_user_guide.pdf

Listed below are two very helpful FAQs from the NIH website:

- **When appointing a trainee to a short-term training appointment or preparing a termination notice for a trainee who is terminating early, what should I do if the stipend amount computed by xTrain differs from the amount calculated by my institution?**
  NIH recognizes that institutional accounting systems may vary and may use different methods to calculate stipends for research training periods of less than one year. As a result, the xTrain system permits institutional users to overwrite the system-calculated stipend amounts for training appointments that are less than a full year. In such cases, the difference between the stipend amount provided by the institution and that calculated by xTrain must be reasonable and generally should not exceed $500.

- **I am re-appointing a trainee. Why is the correct stipend amount not appearing in xTrain?**
  When re-appointing a trainee, you should enter the new start and end dates in the Period of Appointment for the re-appointment and then press the Save button. Once the dates are saved, the appropriate stipend amounts for the new time period will appear in the *Stipend Level or Salary* drop down menu. Select the appropriate stipend level from the list.

  Note: If the re-appointment has already been accepted by NIH with the incorrect stipend amount, you should first contact your Grants Management Specialist so he or she can revert the re-appointment to its prior state and then route it back to you to make the required changes.