**NU**IT
Northwestern University
Information Technology

Administrative Systems

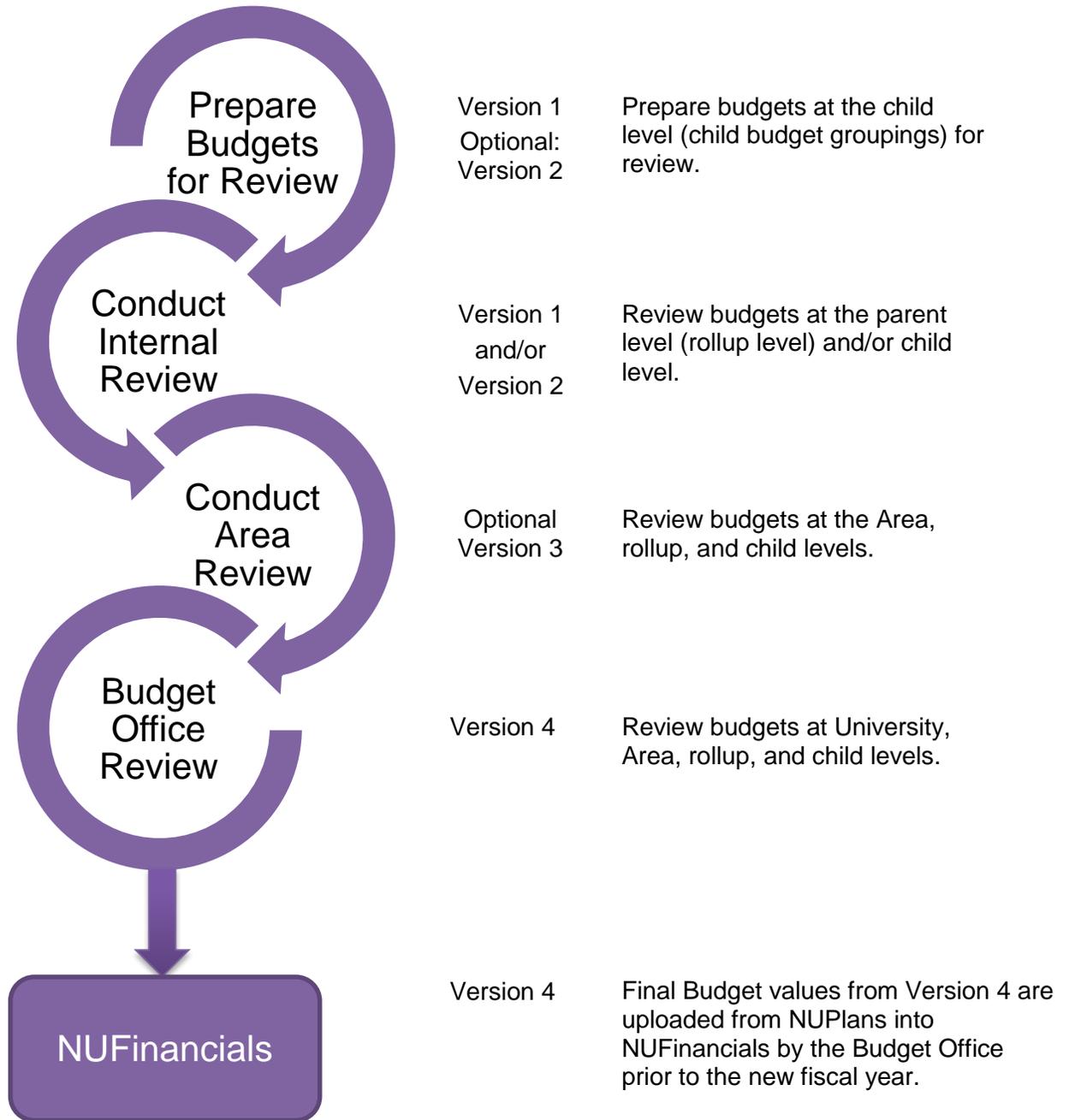NORTHWESTERN
UNIVERSITY

# NUPlans

# Distributed Review Process

## Reference

| | |
|---|---|
| Course Number | FMS701 |
| Subject Area | Budgeting |
| Creation Date: | May 9, 2013 |
| Last Updated: | April 19, 2016 |
| Last Updated By: | RB |

# Budget Hierarchy Terms and Examples

Below is an excerpt of the Northwestern University budget hierarchy with important terms noted.

Hierarchies differ in each area. Below, there are three examples.

- In the first example, Accounts Payable has 1 parent and 1 child budget grouping.
- In the second example, Law has an Area Prep File, 13 rollup levels, and child budget groupings within each rollup level.
- In the third example, FM has one parent and multiple child budget groupings.
- Budgeters budget in child budget groupings, while reviewers review at the parent or child level.

# Distributed Review Process

This reference helps Budgeters, Reviewers, and Area Approvers navigate the budget review process using NUPlans. Areas that utilize a distributed review process can use the generic steps listed inside to design processes that fit their particular circumstances. Areas that use a centralized approach to budget preparation can find some tips and guidance for the final steps of budget preparation.

Below is an abstract of the process. Detail follows on subsequent pages.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Prepare Budgets for Review** | Version 1 Optional: Version 2 | Prepare budgets at the child level (child budget groupings) for review. |
| **Conduct Internal Review** | Version 1 and/or Version 2 | Review budgets at the parent level (rollup level) and/or child level. |
| **Conduct Area Review** | Optional Version 3 | Review budgets at the Area, rollup, and child levels. |
| **Budget Office Review** | Version 4 | Review budgets at University, Area, rollup, and child levels. |
| **NUFinancials** | Version 4 | Final Budget values from Version 4 are uploaded from NUPlans into NUFinancials by the Budget Office prior to the new fiscal year. |

# Prepare Budgets for Review

Who: Budget Grouping Members / Budget Managers

- Do you have General or Planner access only? If yes, use NUPlans Contributor to see budgets and allocations data, if applicable, at the budget grouping level.
- Do you have Prep File access? If yes, you can see Area-level allocations data in NUPlans Web and run reports in NUPlans Web.
- Do you have Reports access? If yes, reports are available in NUPlans Web to you as well.

## Process

Use the steps below to plan a review process that works with the security access profiles in your Area.

| Steps | Notes |
|---|---|
| 1. Finalize budget preparation, working with your Budget Manager or Budget Analyst for guidance on policy. | |
| 2. Commit all data.<br>Result: When you click Commit, all data (in all existing versions) are saved in the public folder for colleagues and reviewers. All data are available to NUPlans Web reports, once updated, and to allocations views. | Commit ✔ |
| 4. Optional: View reports in NUPlans Web, per your access level.*<br>• If you have access to a parent budget grouping (rollup level), you can view reports at the rollup level.<br>• If you have access only to one or more child budget grouping(s), you can view reports only at the budget grouping level.<br>• Reports can be viewed one budget grouping or rollup level at a time.<br>• *Note: Budgeters with Central Allocations should rely primarily on the "Allocation Summary – by Fund" view in NUPlans Web, instead of the "Budget Summary Report," because they use different account hierarchies to summarize data. Some categories have the same name but may differ in amount.* | |
| 5. Optional: Export reports to Excel.*<br>• It is necessary to export the "Budget Summary Report" to see hidden columns.<br>• Reports can be saved, edited, and printed, just as you would any spreadsheet. | Actions menu<br>🔼 Export |
| 6. Submit the budget for internal review. (Submit Access is required.)<br>Result: When you click Submit and confirm, the budget grouping is locked. No further edits are allowed. | Submit ⬆ |
| • Did you submit accidentally, or too early? If yes, contact your Reviewer and ask him/her to Reject (unlock) the budget grouping. Result: your budget grouping is unlocked, you may edit, and you may submit again, when you are ready.<br>• The Reject icon is available to your Reviewer on the Contributor Dashboard, after you submit, next to your budgeting grouping name. | Reject ⬇ |

# Conduct Internal Review

Commonly Called: Budget Review / Internal Review / Departmental Review / Operational Review
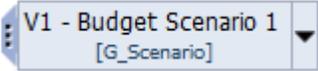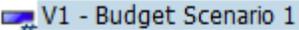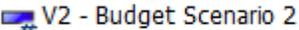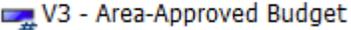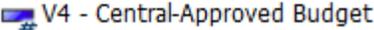
Who: Budget Managers / Reviewers / Associate Deans / VPs

- Do you have General or Planner access only? If yes, use NUPlans Contributor to see budgets and allocations data, if applicable, at the budget grouping level.
- Do you have Prep File access? If yes, you can see Area-level allocations data in NUPlans Web and run reports in NUPlans Web.
- Do you have Reports access? If yes, reports are available in NUPlans Web to you as well.

## Process

Use the steps below to plan a review process that works with the security access profiles in your Area.

| # | Steps | Notes |
|---|-------|-------|
| 1 | View a parent budget grouping or a child budget grouping.<br><br>1. Log in to NUPlans Contributor.<br>2. On the Contributor Dashboard, click the plus signs (+) to expand the budget hierarchy from the Area to the rollup level(s) to the child budget grouping(s).<br>3. Click a budget grouping name. Result: the file opens in a new window. | |
| 2 | Confirm that all child budget groupings that you review are submitted.<br><br>• In NUPlans Contributor, view the Dashboard.<br>• When all child budget groupings that rollup to parent are submitted:<br>  ▪ The State of each child budget grouping is Locked.<br>  ▪ The State of the parent budget grouping is Ready. | Children<br>🔒 Locked<br><br>Parent<br>🟢 Ready |
| 3 | Optional: View allocations and analyze the results of budgeting.*<br><br>• If you have General or Planner access, you can view allocations data in the NUPlans Contributor Allocations view per budget group.<br>• If you have Prep File access, you can view allocations data in NUPlans Web. | |
| 4 | Optional: View reports and analyze the results of budgeting.*<br><br>• With access to a parent budget grouping, you can view reports in NUPlans Web at the rollup level or at the budget grouping level.<br>• *Note: Reviewers with Central Allocations should rely primarily on the "Allocation Summary – by Fund" view in NUPlans Web, instead of the "Budget Summary Report," because they use different account hierarchies to summarize data. Some categories have the same name but may differ in amount.* | |
| 5 | Optional: Export reports to Excel.*<br><br>• It is necessary to export the "Budget Summary Report" to see hidden columns.<br>• Reports can be saved, edited, and printed, just as you would any spreadsheet. | 🔵<br>Actions menu<br>📤 Export |
| 6 | Compare versions of the budget (V1 and V2), if applicable.<br><br>• In NUPlans Web, reports show important values from all existing versions side-by-side (Budget Version Report and Historical Budget Report).<br>• In NUPlans Web, the Allocations views show all existing versions side-by-side.<br>• In NUPlans Contributor, you can toggle from one version to another using the Context dimension "G_Scenario." | |

| # | Steps | Notes |
|---|-------|-------|
|  | Context:<br>V1 - Budget Scenario 1<br>[G_Scenario]<br><br>1. From any view (except Versions Summary) in NUPlans Contributor, locate the version toggle shown above under the heading "Context."<br>2. Click the drop-down arrow shown above. Result: a list of all possible versions appears:<br>V1 - Budget Scenario 1<br>V2 - Budget Scenario 2<br>V3 - Area-Approved Budget<br>V4 - Central-Approved Budget<br>3. Select a version. Result: the version that you selected appears in the view. |  |
| 7 | Make a note of your preferred version (V1 or V2) of each budget grouping and communicate that to the Area Approver / Area Finance. |  |
| 8 | Reject (send back) budgets for further work. Reject is also a solution if a budgeter submits accidentally or too early, or if you want to edit the budget.<br>1. Log in to NUPlans Contributor.<br>2. On the Contributor Dashboard, locate the child budget grouping name, and click the Reject icon (shown at right). Result: a confirmation prompt appears.<br>3. Click Yes to confirm. Result: the child budget grouping is unlocked to allow edits. | Reject |
| 9 | Edit a child budget grouping. (You cannot edit at the parent level.)<br>1. From the Contributor Dashboard, click a child budget grouping name. Result: the budget preparation file opens in view-only mode.<br>2. Click the Take Ownership icon (shown at right). Release ownership if necessary (see appendix).<br>3. Click Continue to confirm. Result: the budget opens in edit mode. You can change values in white columns.<br>4. After editing, click the Commit icon (shown at right) to save edits publicly. | Take Ownership<br><br>Commit |
| 10 | Submit budgets at the parent level to Area Approvers. (Submit access is required.)<br>1. Log in to NUPlans Contributor.<br>2. From the Contributor Dashboard, click the parent budget grouping name. Result: all child budget groupings that roll up to the parent open in one new window.<br>3. Click Submit. Result: a confirmation prompt appears.<br>4. Click Yes to confirm. Result: the parent budget grouping is locked. All versions of each child budget grouping are visible to Area Approvers.<br>State your preference of version (V1 or V2) in a separate communication. | Submit<br><br>Parent<br>Locked |
| 12 | View the Area-Approved Budget. Refer to step 6.<br>• After the Area Approver / Area Finance approves the budget, they may create Version 3 to reflect the Area-Approved Budget. If so, V3 is visible in NUPlans Web reports, allocations views, and in NUPlans Contributor via the version toggle. |  |

# Appendix

## How to: Release Ownership

Prep File users may remove another user's ownership of a budget grouping if the current owner isn't available to release it. This process doesn't affect any data the current owner has entered. They will still be able to view their uncommitted data. Only child budget groupings that have a state of 'Reserved' and have had ownership taken at the child level can be released. After releasing ownership you may need to log out of Contributor and log back in to view the budget grouping as available again.

Navigation: NUPlans Web > Applications > Administrative > Release Ownership

1. Select the child budget grouping to release.
2. Optional, select whether or not to notify the current owner of this release via an email sent by NUPlans.
3. Click Release Ownership.
4. Click Continue, click OK.
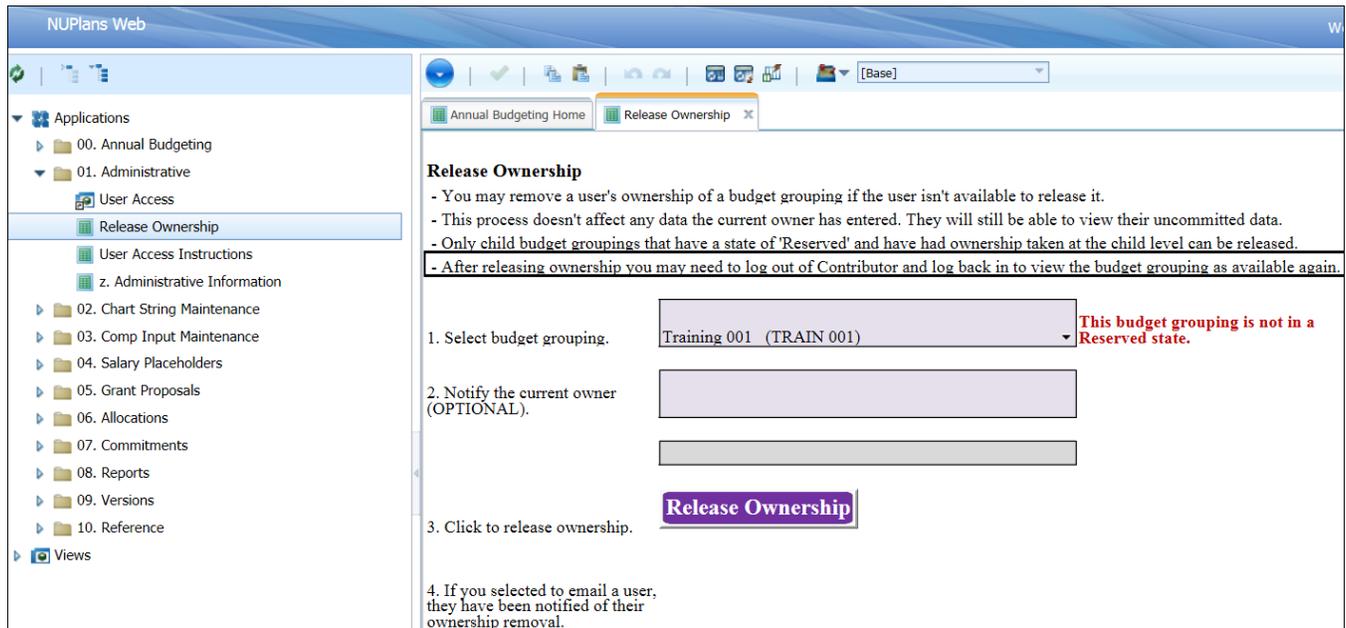
# How to: Edit a budget that was submitted

The Distributed Review Process as documented in the preceding pages assumes that child budget groupings are submitted prior to review (Conduct Internal Review and Conduct Area Review).

After child budget groupings are submitted, Reviewers must first reject the budget grouping in order to Take Ownership of the budget and perform any edits.

1. Log in to Contributor.
2. From the Contributor Dashboard, click the child budget grouping name.
3. Click Reject  Result: a confirmation prompt appears.
4. Click Yes to confirm. Result: the child budget grouping is unlocked to allow further edits.
5. If the reviewer wishes to edit and is not the current owner, ownership needs to be released. This can be done by the owner on the dashboard  or by a Prep File user in NUPlans Web.
6. Click the child budget grouping name to open the budget.
7. Click the Take Ownership icon 
8. Click Continue to confirm ownership. Result: the budget opens in edit mode.
9. Edit any value in the white columns.
10. Press <Enter> or click Recalculate  to save edits privately and see the results of your edits.
11. After editing and seeing the results, click Commit  to save edits publicly and include them with the budget submitted to review.

# How to: Submit a budget on behalf of someone else

If you have access to a budget grouping, you may submit a child budget grouping on behalf of someone else.

Before submitting, you should ensure that anyone who recently entered data also committed that data. Communication with your colleagues prior to submitting is essential to including all final edits in the submitted budget.

1. Log in to Contributor.
2. If the State is Work In Progress/Reserved, ownership needs to be released before you can submit. This may be done by the current owner on the dashboard  or by a Prep File user in NUPlans Web.
3. Click the child Budget Grouping Name to open the budget.
4. Click the Take Ownership icon 
5. Click Continue to confirm ownership. Result: the Submit icon illuminates.
6. Click the Submit icon  Result: you see a confirmation prompt.
7. Click Yes to confirm. Result: the budget is locked to prevent any further edits, and the budget is ready for review at the parent level.