

COVID-19 Tenured Faculty Retirement Transition Program
Frequently Asked Questions – Faculty Members

Q. What is the COVID-19 Tenured Faculty Retirement Transition Program?

A. Portland State University ("PSU") developed the voluntary COVID-19 Tenured Faculty Retirement Transition Program (the "Program") to help interested and eligible tenured faculty members make the transition toward retirement. A faculty member who participates in the Program will work with their dean and chair/associate dean to reduce up to 50% of their teaching assignments and service obligations in preparation for retiring on an agreed upon date, no later than June 30, 2022. Upon that retirement date, the faculty member relinquishes their tenure and all other employment rights and benefits.

Q. Who is eligible?

A. All tenured faculty members planning to retire between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022 are eligible to participate in the Program. Interested and eligible faculty members must sign a COVID-19 Retirement Transition Agreement.

Q. Is participation in the Tenured Faculty Retirement Transition Program Voluntary?

A. Yes. Participation in the Program is entirely voluntary.

Q. How long is the Tenured Faculty Retirement Transition Program being offered?

A. The Program was developed in response to the disruption and financial impact caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is temporarily being offered to eligible faculty members who seek retirement between July 1, 2021 and June 30, 2022. Eligible faculty members must decide whether to participate in the Program by June 1, 2021. PSU reserves the right to make changes to these dates at any time.

Q. If I decide that I wish to retire earlier than the date specified in my retirement agreement, may I modify that agreement?

A. Yes, you can ask to modify the agreement to retire earlier than the date initially chosen. Modifications accelerating the retirement date must be approved by the department chair and dean.

Q. How does the Tenured Faculty Retirement Transition Program affect my health benefits?

A. An eligible faculty member who is in good standing and who chooses to participate in the Program will receive the same health benefits that are made available to full-time faculty members until the faculty member's retirement date.

How does the Tenured Faculty Retirement Transition Program affect my salary?

A. An eligible faculty member who is in good standing and who chooses to participate in the Program will receive their regular salary until their retirement date.

How does the Tenured Faculty Retirement Transition Program affect my existing retirement benefits?

A. An eligible faculty member who is in good standing and who chooses to participate in the Program will receive the same retirement benefits that they would have received had they not participated in the Program.

Q. What does "good standing" mean?

A. "Good standing" means that the faculty member is not under disciplinary review under any applicable PSU policy and has not been the subject of formal discipline in the last 3 years.

Q. Am I eligible for normal merit increases during my time in the Tenured Faculty Retirement Transition Program?

A. Yes. Eligible faculty members who choose to participate in the Program are eligible for their normal merit increases until their retirement date.

Q. Will I still receive Post-Tenure Review during the transition process?

A. No. Once the faculty member agrees to participate in the Program, no Post-Tenure Review will occur unless the faculty member has already submitted materials for Post-Tenure Review by the time the faculty member signs the Retirement Transition Agreement.

Q. If I am currently on sabbatical or have an upcoming sabbatical planned, how does that impact my ability to participate in the Tenured Faculty Retirement Transition Program?

A. Faculty members who choose to participate in the Program will be relieved of their obligation to return to PSU after their sabbatical ends. All other duties and responsibilities under PSU's Sabbatical Leave Policy will remain the same. See https://www.pdx.edu/academic-affairs/sites/g/files/znlchr2396/files/2020-10/MOU_Sabbatical_Leaves_signed_1-18-17.pdf

Q. Can I be paid for teaching, clinical, or research activities at PSU after I retire?

A. Retired faculty are eligible for rehire by PSU immediately after retirement. It is possible to teach, provide clinical care, or do research at PSU on a separately agreed part-time basis. Such an arrangement is made individually with PSU chairs and deans and there is no guarantee of post-retirement employment.

Q. Can the agreed transition plan include post-retirement provisions?

A. Post-retirement provisions are not part of the Retirement Transition Agreement. Post-retirement provisions may be discussed separately with the department chair or dean, and faculty members may also seek emeritus status through University procedures: <https://www.pdx.edu/human-resources/emeritus-emerita-information>.

Q. What happens if I decide to participate in the Program and later change my mind?

A. The Retirement Transition Agreement is a legally binding, irrevocable agreement. Accordingly, once you decide to participate in the Program and sign the Agreement, you must abide by the terms of the Program and retire on the agreed upon date.

Q. If I have questions or want to participate in the Tenured Faculty Retirement Transition Program, who do I contact?

A. For more information, please contact [CONTACT PERSON/TITLE]