Policy for Voluntary Separation Program

OVERVIEW

Voluntary separation programs are often used by organizations that wish to enter into a mutually beneficial separation agreement with employees. These programs allow for a smooth exit for those employees electing this option while also allowing the organization to reinvest in its future. Waivers of liability are usually built into these programs as well. Enrollment is voluntary and is available to employees who qualify based on eligibility requirements.

SPECIFIC AUTHORITY

Board of Governors Resolution dated January 7, 2003
Section 1002.74 Florida Statutes

OBJECTIVE

This procedure will assist the University in the facilitation of an enhanced voluntary separation program for eligible University employees.

PROCEDURES

Participation Guidelines

A. Eligibility
   An employee must meet the following requirements to be eligible for the Voluntary Separation Program:
   
   1. Age 65 or older, as of December 31, 2010.
   2. Six or more years of active, continuous, salaried Florida State University service as of December 31, 2010.
   3. Employees who are paid from 100% E&G funds as of December 31, 2010.

B. Exclusions
   The following employees are excluded from participating in the Voluntary Separation Program:
   
   1. Employees who have participated or are participating in the Deferred Retirement Program (DROP).
   2. Employees who are rehired retirees.
   3. Employees who have previously entered into an agreement with a predetermined employment end date.
   4. Employees who have resigned prior to the program implementation and their resignations have been accepted.
   5. Any employee who has received notice of termination, notice of non-renewal, layoff, Reduction-in-Force (RIF) or cancellation of employment contract.
   6. OPS employees.

C. Program Components

   1. Completion of Enrollment

   Eligible employees must enroll by the program deadline, February 11, 2011, to be considered for the Voluntary Separation Program.

   In order to complete the enrollment process, the employee must:

Revised January 11, 2011
a. Submit a completed enrollment form to Joyce A. Ingram, Office of Human Resources, 6200 University Center A, by 5:00 p.m. on February 11, 2011. It is the employee’s responsibility to ensure that the form is received in Human Resources by the above referenced deadline.
b. Work with the supervisor to determine the departure date and notify Human Resources of the separation date by close of business on March 4, 2011. Any Separation Agreement for an employee who, due to organizational needs, must have a departure date later than May 6, 2011 must be approved by the President.
c. Review and complete the Voluntary Separation Agreement and return a copy of the signed and completed agreement within twenty one (21) days of receipt to Human Resources.
d. The employee must submit a copy of the signed resignation letter to Human Resources by close of business on April 8, 2011.

The department must:

Upon receipt of notification from Human Resources that an employee in his/her department has enrolled, the respective supervisor should meet with the employee to determine the departure date effective no later than May 6, 2011. Any Separation Agreement for an employee who, due to organizational needs, must have a departure date later than May 6, 2011 must be approved by the President. A departure date must be determined by close of business on March 4, 2011.

2. Voluntary Separation Agreement

Any employee participating in the Voluntary Separation Program must sign a Voluntary Separation Agreement (Agreement) releasing the University from any potential liability. Prior to completion of the Agreement, the employee will be given the opportunity to review appropriate documents and he/she may retain a personal legal counsel to assist.

3. Separation Process

The employee completes the "Employee Responsibilities" section of the Separation Checklist including:

a. Resolving the payment of any and all outstanding debts owed to the University before the employee’s last work day.
b. Returning all FSU property before the employee’s last work day.

The department completes the Separation Checklist as follows:

a. Audit the employee’s pay and leave records and forward to Human Resources.
b. Notify employee of the exit interview process. If AEX, A&P or USPS, advise the employee to contact the Employee and Labor Relations and Benefits sections in the Office of Human Resources. If Faculty, advise the employee to contact the Benefits section of the Office of Human Resources and the Dean of the Faculties in the Office of the Dean of the Faculties.
c. Collect all FSU property issued to the employee and determine if all debts have been paid. Indicate the status on the Separation Checklist.

d. Complete the “Department Representative Responsibilities” section of the Separation Checklist.

e. Process the employee’s termination in accordance with applicable University policies and procedures.

4. Separation Payment (Lump Sum)

The lump sum payment will be determined as follows:

a. For 9-month Faculty, the lump sum payment will be equivalent to the 9-month salary, less necessary withholdings, as of the date the employee signs the VSP enrollment form.

b. For 12-month Faculty, A&P, and USPS employees, the lump sum payment will be equivalent to the 12-month salary, less necessary withholdings, as of the date the employee signs the VSP enrollment form.

No post-retirement benefits are included in the lump sum payment.

The employee will receive an annual and/or sick leave payout in accordance with Florida Law, Collective Bargaining Agreements, and applicable rules and policies that were in place at the time of the execution of the Voluntary Separation Agreement. The employee will receive the annual and/or sick leave payout subsequent to separation from the University.

5. Re-employment Restrictions

a. There is a restricted rehire provision as a part of the Voluntary Separation Program Policy. An employee participating in the Voluntary Separation Program is prohibited from being rehired into a salaried Faculty, A&P, Executive Service (AEX) or USPS position.

b. Only under extraordinary circumstances, and with the approval of the appropriate Vice President, Human Resources, and the President, may a participant be rehired in a temporary non-benefit eligible position (OPS) and, for Faculty, at an Adjunct rate of pay. Additionally, under Florida Law, if the employee retires from the University in conjunction with participation in the VSP, any rehired retiree provisions as outlined by the State of Florida must be followed. See OP-C-7-C Insurance & Benefits and OP-C-7-C9 Reemployment of Retirees.

c. An employee who has more than one paid appointment at the time of enrollment in the Voluntary Separation Program must make arrangements to terminate all salaried benefits-earnings appointments before separating from the University from the salaried position through the Voluntary Separation Program.

6. General Information

Please see the Voluntary Separation Program – Frequently Asked Questions (2011).