

FAQ for employees who want to help with the budget situation

Everyday ways to save

Q: I want to help with the budget situation. What can I do?

A:

- Cut back on office supply usage, including paper and copying.
- Take energy conserving actions:
 - Lowering the heat from 72 to 70 degrees during the work day
 - Lowering the heat to 65 at night
 - Using task lamps instead of overhead lights
 - Disconnecting under-used fax and phone lines
 - Closing blinds when you leave your office for the day
 - Turning off lights when you leave your office
 - Turning off of printers and photocopiers at the end of the day
- Cut back on travel expenses. For example, utilize videoconferencing and telephone conferencing when available. (See [BPPM 95.00](#) for more information on Travel)
- Give back to WSU. Visit [WSU Foundation](#) for more information
- Request a reduction in FTE after fully examining implications, or explore phased retirement options.

Reduction to your Full Time Equivalency (FTE)

Q: Can I voluntarily request to reduce my FTE?

A: Yes. Reduced FTE, decreases the number of hours an employee normally works in a given year. An employee can request the reduction in writing to their supervisor. The request will then be reviewed and a determination will be made.

Q: How much can I voluntarily reduce my FTE?

A: Reduction cannot be to less than 50%.

Q: Can I voluntarily request to reduce to a 9 month appointment term from a 12 month appointment term as an FTE reduction?

A: Yes. Employees can request to reduce the term of their appointment to not less than 6 months.

Q: Will voluntary reductions in FTE affect my salary and benefits?

A: Yes. This will impact your salary, benefits and leave accruals.

Q: If I voluntarily reduce my FTE, will I lose my benefits eligibility?

A: No. Change in FTE does not change benefit eligibility as long as you remain in a 50% appointment.

Q: Will voluntary reductions in FTE affect my retirement service credit?

A: No. Change of FTE should not impact earning of service credit for DRS (PERS, LEOFF) participants. Retirement Contributions for TIAA/CREF participants will remain at the same percentage (5%, 7.5% or 10%) of the reduced earnings based on the new FTE.

Q: Can I request to return to my previous FTE?

A: An employee can submit a written request to their supervisor to increase their FTE. The request will then be reviewed and a determination will be made.

Phased Retirement Options

Q: What is phased retirement?

A: In phased retirement the employee sets a date for retirement and reduces his/her FTE, until he/she is fully retired. The phased retirement guidelines provide information on requirements for AP employees and faculty to engage in this program and contractual options for phased retirement: (See [Phased Retirement Guidelines](#))

Q: Is Phased Retirement an option for all plan participants?

A: No. Phased retirement is available for WSU Retirement Plan participants (TIAA-CREF), but is not an option for Department of Retirement Systems participants (PERS, LEOFF) (PERS, LEOFF) participants

Q: What is the process?

A: Submit a written request for phased retirement to your appropriate Dean, Provost, VP, Director, Chancellor for review and consideration. A contract will be developed to memorialize the phased retirement; you will have the opportunity to review it with your attorney, financial planner or other professional to the extent desired.

Related Resources

- Review phased retirement processes with HRS Benefits
 - [Phased retirement guidelines](#):
- Visit with a TIAA/CREF representative or independent financial advisor to review possible sources of income available to you while on a phased retirement.