



The University of Vermont

To: UVM non-represented employees
From: Jes Kraus, Chief Human Resources Officer
Date: June 22, 2020
Subj: Additional Information on the FY 2021 Budget

I am writing to provide you with additional information about the cost savings measures announced in [Vice President Cate's June 4, 2020 memo to campus](#). This includes details related to vacation accrual pay outs, a retirement incentive, mandatory furloughs, and teleworking, which will take effect July 1, 2020.

In addition, answers to a range of frequently asked questions we have received about other FY 2021 budget reduction issues are now on the [Division of Finance website](#).

Mandatory Furloughs

There will be no university-wide mandatory furloughs, and we are hopeful that mandatory furloughs will be avoided in most areas. However, individual schools, colleges and business units may have unique financial or personnel situations that warrant consideration of mandatory furloughs in lieu of a more dramatic measure like layoffs. In such cases, mandatory furloughs may only be implemented in two situations:

- As a result of COVID-19, the school, college or business unit has no work for individual employees to do on a short-term basis but expects that they will return to full employment in the near future.
- As a result of COVID-19, the school, college or business unit is experiencing a significant temporary budget shortfall and requires immediate one-time savings to help alleviate the shortfall.

In all cases, implementation of furlough days must be approved by a dean or vice president. As much as possible, employees should be afforded flexibility over when they choose to take their furlough days.

Early Retirement Program

We have developed a [Voluntary Early Retirement Incentive Program](#) for employees who have reached the age of 60 and have at least 15 years of UVM service, or those of any age who have 30 or more years of UVM service as of September 15, 2020. Further information about retirement resources is available on the [Human Resource Services web site](#).

Vacation Accruals

Effective July 1, 2021, the university will cease the practice of paying for employees' accrued vacation time when they terminate employment. Over the next year, employees are encouraged to use their vacation time to reduce any accrued balances. Please note, this change does not affect accrual rates, or employees' ability to carry over their vacation balances from year to year.

Extension of the Governor's Stay Home, Stay Safe Order

Governor Scott recently extended the Stay Home, Stay Safe order through July 15, 2020, and we have received questions about the impact to staff. Most staff were able to successfully transition to telework when the order was put in place this spring. Those staff members who are able to effectively telework should continue to do so, subject to operational needs. Based on the University's business needs as we prepare for the likelihood of in-person operations in the fall, there may also be an evolving number of staff whose presence on campus is "essential." Those employees will be contacted individually by their supervisors as needed to discuss their return to campus.

Staff who cannot effectively telework have a number of options available to them, including:

- Use of accumulated leave balances;
- Request for unpaid leave;
- If eligible, use of Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) or Public Health Emergency Leave (PHEL).

Staff should work with their supervisor to determine the best option. Please note that prior use of Family Medical Leave (FMLA) will not be deducted from an employee's available Public Health Emergency Leave. In other words, even though PHEL is a form of FMLA, employees who have used FMLA during the last 12 months will still have the full 12 weeks of PHEL available to them should they need it. For further information about any of these options, please see the FAQ section on the [Human Resource Services web site](#), or contact your [Labor and Employee Relations professional \(PDF\)](#).

We appreciate that these are very challenging times, and that the recently announced salary reduction has caused stress for many employees and their families. These measures were developed to balance the university's need for a sustainable budget with our strong desire to offer some flexibility to our employees. If you have specific questions about any of these measures, please feel free to talk with your supervisor, or contact hrsinfo@uvm.edu.