

Preparing for Retirement: Information & Resources

Newly retired employees and those considering retirement are sure to have questions. Individuals from Human Resources are available to help you start your planning.

The retirement of an experienced staff member has a large impact on the operation of an office or department. Whenever possible, employees preparing to retire are asked to give a minimum of four months' notice; however, six months to one year's notice would help your department head plan appropriately for the future. Please submit a signed and dated letter to your supervisor, stating that you are retiring and the date of your last day of work. Your supervisor will share your letter with Human Resources.

Vacation or other paid leave may not be used to extend your official termination date. Any accrued and unused vacation you have earned as of your official retirement date will be paid to you. (If appropriate, please also check your union contract for additional information.) Please note that if you are eligible for a vacation or sick time payout, federal taxes will be deducted at a supplemental rate of 25%. The balance on all outstanding loans from the college must be paid on the date of retirement.

Social Security

Full Social Security benefits normally begin (depending in part on date of birth) as early as age 65. Reduced benefits (equal to approximately 80 percent of the full benefit) are normally available at age 62. Contact the local Social Security Administration (SSA) office or contact Social Security through their Website www.ssa.gov to determine the terms of eligibility.

Smith College Defined Contribution Retirement Plan

Human Resources recommends meeting with your retirement services provider(s) for an individual consultation as you prepare to retire. These consultations are held on campus.

Free in-person individual guidance appointments are available by calling:

- Mary Ellen Gordon, Voya - (877)645-5206

You may also call a representative by phone, or access your account online:

- Voya: (800)584-6001 or smithcollege.beready2retire.com
- TIAA: (800)842-2776 or www.tiaa-cref.org

- Fidelity: (800)343-0860 or www.fidelity.com
- American Century: (800)345-3533 or www.americancentury.com

After retirement, retirees have full access to their assets subject to plan limitations. Call your retirement service provider(s) for assistance with transactions.

Health Insurance

Employees who participate in the College's Health or Dental Plan and who retire at or after age 62 and before age 65 with 10 consecutive years of service may participate in the college's early retirement program. Through this medical benefits program, retirees can continue their enrollment in the college's health and dental insurance plans for themselves and their spouses until age 65. The college contributes 50 percent of the normal employer contribution until the retiree reaches age 65.

Medicare advises individuals to enroll for Medicare Part A (hospitalization) three months before turning age 65, even if you are actively employed. Because there is a premium for Medicare Part B (medical), Part D (drugs), and medicare supplemental plans, employees often don't enroll for these coverages until three months before their group health coverage through Smith College will end. Your Smith benefits, including health coverage, ends on the last day of the month in which you retire (unless you elect coverage under the Early Retirement Option). If you do not enroll by the end of the Medicare Enrollment Period that applies to your situation, the Social Security Administration may impose an ongoing premium penalty of 10 percent for each 12-month period that you could have had Medicare Part B but did not sign up. There are different Medicare Enrollment Periods for different situations. We strongly recommend that anyone nearing retirement contact the local Social Security Administration office, or contact Social Security via the website at www.ssa.gov, and review www.ssa.gov/pubs/10043.html for more information regarding applying for Medicare. SSA Office: Holyoke, (877)480-4989; toll-free, (800)772-1213.

Retiree Supplemental Health Plan

Those retiring at or after age 65 may purchase the Benistar Health Insurance Plan underwritten by the Hartford. They may also enroll eligible dependents. This plan is similar to a medicare supplemental policy, which provides additional coverage to Medicare Parts A, B and D. For information on the Benistar program, please contact MountainOne Insurance Agency, Inc. at 413-663-2384. Keep in mind that your only opportunity to enroll in this plan is when you are initially

eligible; you must be covered by Smith's group health insurance when you enroll, and you will need to have enrolled in parts A and B of Medicare. Please contact MountainOne at least six weeks before you need coverage.

Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985, otherwise known as COBRA, is a law that allows employees to temporarily continue (for up to 18 months) their health, dental, vision, Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and Flexible Spending Account benefits when their employment ends. Under this law, you may continue the health and/or dental coverage you currently carry through Harvard Pilgrim, Delta Dental and EyeMed. The cost is 102 percent of the gross premium. Typically, the cost for health insurance through COBRA is greater than the monthly premium for medicare supplemental insurance. However, since most medicare supplemental insurances do not offer dental coverage, continuation through COBRA may be a consideration for retirees who want to continue dental coverage or for those who retire before reaching age 62. Flexible spending accounts for medical expenses may continue through COBRA on an after-tax basis only, and only through the end of the calendar year in which the employee retires. The necessary paperwork must be completed within 60 days of the date of loss of coverage in order to continue benefits under COBRA. COBRA coverage begins on the day after the last day of coverage through Smith College so there is no break in coverage. A bill will be sent each month from Benefit Strategies for the portion of the premium that must be paid before the end of the grace period. In the event of nonpayment, benefits will be terminated with no option for reinstatement. For further information about COBRA benefits, contact Benefit Strategies at 888-401-3539.

Celebrating 65, a free educational program offered by Harvard Pilgrim, is available at www.harvardpilgrim.org/smithcollege. The program consisting of several informational webinars that provide reliable, comprehensive information to help you better understand your Social Security, Medicare and retirement health care options. Also available on the website is a helpful brochure, which you can print and save.

The **SHINE Program** (Serving Health Information Needs of Elders) is a state health insurance assistance program that provides free health insurance information, counseling and assistance to Massachusetts residents with Medicare and their caregivers. For more information about the SHINE program, visit: <http://www.mass.gov/elders/healthcare/shine/serving-the-health-information-needs-of-elders.html>.

To schedule an appointment with your local SHINE counselor, call (800)243-4636. Press “5” if calling from cell phone, or press “3” if calling from a land line. You may also make an appointment with a SHINE counselor by contacting the office of elder services or council on aging in your hometown.

- Amherst: 413-259-3060
- Easthampton Senior Center: 413-527-6151
- Easthampton Community Center: 413-527-5240
- Northampton Senior Center: 413-587-1228
- LifePath in Greenfield: 413-773-5555

More Resources

www.mass.gov/elders

www.medicare.gov

www.ssa.gov

OneCard

Retirees and their spouses or partners are eligible for OneCard identification cards, which give them access to a variety of campus services. Retirees may use their OneCards to take out materials from the libraries, to charge meals at the Campus Center, and to use the gym and fitness center. Make an appointment to receive a Retiree OneCard by calling 585-4487 or sending an e-mail to OneCard@smith.edu. The OneCard office is in Stoddard Hall 203. For more information, please visit onecard@smith.edu.

E-mail and Network Computer Accounts

Retirees with 25+ years of service continue to be eligible to use college e-mail and network computer accounts. Direct your questions regarding the use of these resources to the IT Service Center in Stoddard Hall 203 at 585-4487 or ithelp@smith.edu.

Life Insurance

Upon retirement, retirees may convert their group life insurance coverage to an individual policy. Human Resources will mail an enrollment form with cost and coverage information to your home close to your last day at work. To enroll,

complete the enrollment form and send it with payment to the insurance company within 31 days after the last day of the month in which you retire.

Parking

Retirees are eligible to purchase a decal for parking on campus. The cost of the decal and the applicable parking regulations are the same as those for faculty and staff.

Please note: While every attempt has been made to ensure the accuracy of this summary, the legal documents, policies or certificates pertaining to the various benefits prevail in the event of any discrepancy. The policies summarized here are not conditions of employment and are subject to change. Smith College reserves the right to amend, modify or withdraw in its sole discretion any provision contained in this summary. This summary does not constitute a legal document. Neither this document nor any of its terms or provisions constitutes a contractual obligation of Smith College.

If you have questions, please contact Human Resources at (413)585-2270.