

500.1 General Policy on Employee Separations

Purpose To explain the process for voluntary and involuntary separations.

Definition A Voluntary Separation refers to the separation of an employee for reasons such as resignation or retirement.

An Involuntary Separation refers to the termination of an employee for cause, such as misconduct, unsatisfactory performance or unsatisfactory attendance.

The Employment Transaction Form (ETF) refers to the document that is used to submit requests and/or approvals through the Human Resources Information System to change the status of employees (faculty and staff), and to update employment records.

Policy When an employee voluntarily resigns, to allow management time to begin the process to hire a replacement employee, Rensselaer asks that the resigning employee notify their immediate supervisor in writing in advance of his/her departure.

All employees who are leaving their jobs with Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute for any reason are required to return all Rensselaer property to their supervisor or appropriate department personnel. Employees shall be responsible for all Institute property not returned. The employee's supervisor is responsible for ensuring that all Rensselaer property has been turned in by the departing employee.

Generally, when employees voluntarily resign from the position they occupy, they are expected to be present at work on their last day of employment. Exceptions include, but are not limited to, employees on an approved leave of absence who are not able to return to work.

This policy applies to all employees, including faculty and members of the President's Cabinet.

Procedure Employee Responsibilities

When an employee resigns, to allow management time to begin the process to hire a replacement employee, it is suggested that the resigning employee notify his/her immediate supervisor in writing as follows:

<u>Status</u>	<u>Length of Notice</u>
Non-exempt	2 Weeks
Exempt	3 Weeks
Director and above	4 Weeks

In order to allow time to process pension requests, retiring employees should notify their supervisors and the Division of Human Resources, at least three (3) months before their planned retirement

date.

Department Responsibilities

The employee's supervisor should discuss the separation process with the departing employee including the requirement to return all Institute property. On or before the last day of employment the supervisor should reclaim the employee's identification card, keys, Information Technology equipment and software, and any other property including research, data materials and equipment that may have not been previously returned. It is recommended that the supervisor complete the Department Section of the Separation Checklist when an employee leaves Rensselaer. Completed Checklists are to be signed and submitted to the Division of Human Resources.

The employee's supervisor is also responsible for originating an Employment Transaction Form (ETF) terminating the employee. The ETF must also be submitted to the Division of Human Resources.

Division of Human Resources Responsibilities

After requesting the Employment Transaction Form, the Division of Human Resources should authorize payment of the final paycheck. If submitted, the Division of Human Resources must complete the Human Resources Section of the Termination Checklist including providing information to the departing employee about group insurance conversion options and other pertinent employee benefit matters. Terminating employees may be invited to participate in an exit interview.

Final Payments¹

Final payments will include:

- Pay for work performed.
- For deceased employees, final pay will be calculated to the day of death.

Final pay will be reduced by:

- required legal deductions;
- authorized deductions; and
- outstanding advance payment of wages in the form of money, credit or property in accordance with federal and state laws.

Final pay will be made in accordance with Human Resources Policy #700.2, *Pay Procedures*, provided the department has been given time to process the Employment Transaction Form.

Cessation of Benefits

The dates on which benefits coverage will stop following separation of employment are governed by the terms and conditions of employment, each insurance contract, and the requirements of the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA).

¹ An employee separating from service will not receive a payout of accrued unused Paid Time Off (PTO) leave, in accordance with HR Policy #1300.1, *Paid Time Off (PTO) Program*.

500.2 Rehire Policy

Purpose To explain the conditions under which former employees will be considered for rehire.

Definition A Rehire is defined as a former Rensselaer employee who is eligible to be reappointed to a position with the Institute.

An Approved Vacancy refers to a position that has been approved by the Divisions of Finance and Human Resources.

A Voluntary Separation refers to the separation of an employee for reasons such as resignation or retirement.

An Involuntary Separation refers to the termination of an employee for cause, such as misconduct, unsatisfactory performance or unsatisfactory attendance.

Policy Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute considers applications for approved vacant positions from former employees. Former employees who were terminated for cause, or who left the employ of Rensselaer not in good standing, are not eligible for rehire.

This policy applies to all employees, including members of the President's Cabinet.

Procedure Former employees may apply for posted positions by completing an Employment Application Form and completing all stages of the application process. When evaluating an application from a former employee, Rensselaer considers whether the former employee gave the suggested advance notice as stated in the General Policy on Employee Termination before voluntarily terminating his or her position with Rensselaer (See Human Resources Policy #500.1, *General Policy on Employee Separations*).

If an employee is rehired within 30 days of a voluntary separation, the period of absence will be considered as "service extension" for purposes of years of service for benefit accruals only. Rensselaer calculates any pension credit for prior service as required by the Employee Retirement Income Security Act.

If an employee is rehired within 12 months of a voluntary separation, an Adjusted Service Date will be used for purposes of years of service for benefit and Paid Time Off (PTO) leave accruals only. Adjusted Service Date shall be calculated by adding the break in service time to the original date of hire. Rensselaer calculates any pension credit for prior service in accordance with the

Employee Retirement Income Security Act. For all other purposes, the employee will be considered a "new hire" that includes an initial period of employment, ineligibility to use accrued PTO leave for three (3) months; and restrictions on promotions or voluntary transfers. Employees considered a "new hire" will have their initial period of employment automatically extended for any absences except holidays and bereavement leave. The extension of time is equal to the number of days absent during the initial period of employment.

Prior to Normal Retirement Date, a former employee who is receiving a benefit under the Contributory Defined Benefit Retirement Plan or the Defined Contribution Retirement Plan may be rehired following a bona fide separation from service of at least 90 days, provided that no discussion of rehire occurred prior to the commencement of retirement benefits. Normal Retirement Date is defined in the respective plan documents.

500.3 Stay and Exit Interviews

Purpose To obtain on-going feedback from employees regarding their work experience at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in order to improve retention.

Policy Employees from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute may be invited to participate in a Stay Interview during the tenure of their employment, and/or an Exit interview when separating from the Institute. The Stay and Exit Interview process may include the completion of a survey and/or a personal interview with a representative of the Division of Human Resources and/or a representative of their Portfolio leadership. The purpose of the survey and interview is to obtain opinions and feedback from employees about working at Rensselaer – what we do well; what could be improved; and are your work expectations being met, etc. All employees are encouraged to be honest, candid, and forthright in the Stay and Exit Interview processes.

This policy applies to all employees, including members of the President's Cabinet.

Procedure Stay Interview

All regular, full-time faculty and staff are encouraged to participate in a New Employee Orientation Program. After the completion of this program, faculty and staff are invited to a 90-day follow up, which is designed to obtain feedback about the on-boarding experiences and working at Rensselaer.

Staff members may also be invited to participate in a Stay Interview with a representative of their Portfolio leadership and/or a representative of the Division of Human Resources at various times during their employment experience at Rensselaer.

The goal of Stay Interviews is to obtain feedback from current employees with the purpose of enhancing the employment experience and improving retention.

Exit Interview

When notified of an employee's separation, the Division of Human Resources will contact the separated employee and request that they participate in the Exit Interview Program, which may include the completion of an on-line survey and/or an interview with a representative of the Division of Human Resources.

Employees are assured that information obtained from their participation in the Stay and Exit Interview program are maintained in confidence by the Institute and will not affect their future job references or prospects for reemployment.

500.4 Reductions in Force

Purpose To establish the criteria and procedures for a reduction in force.

Definition A Reduction in Force (RIF) occurs when financial or economic conditions, changing programmatic priorities, budgetary constraints, the non-renewal of grants or contracts, reorganization or other business conditions require the Institute to eliminate positions.

Policy Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute highly values the contributions of employees and attempts to provide regular employment. However, in the event it becomes appropriate for the Institute to reduce its regular work force, this policy establishes procedures to ensure effective implementation of the reduction-in-force process. Employees, who are paid from a grant or contract, are not eligible for discretionary salary and/or benefits continuation under this Policy.

It is the policy of Rensselaer, whenever feasible, to use attrition to reduce staff levels. However, in the event that attrition is not feasible or sufficient, the appropriate Cabinet Member, Department Manager, and the Division of Human Resources will identify the job positions most important to continue the Division's/School's operations in the most efficient manner. Any reductions in force that are appropriate will be determined based on the skills sets, competencies and overall ability to perform the ongoing or future work of the unit or organization, as well as other relevant factors in the particular circumstances.

Any reduction in force or elimination of work that impacts on an individual's employment must be approved by the appropriate Cabinet member(s) **AND** the Vice President for Human Resources, before it is announced and implemented. Any such contemplated action that will likely affect 5 or more employees must be reviewed and approved by the President.

Separation due to a reduction in force will be considered a final separation from that position at Rensselaer. An employee who loses his or her position during a reduction in force will have no recall rights to the same or similar position.

This policy is not to be used in the case where the employee is subject to termination for cause, including but not limited to: unacceptable conduct or behavior; unsatisfactory performance; or unsatisfactory attendance.

Procedure Department management, appropriate Cabinet members, and the Vice President for Human Resources, will determine work functions or activities to be eliminated and identify the job(s) of the individual(s) performing the work functions or activities to be eliminated. The skills sets, competencies, and overall abilities that are necessary to perform the ongoing or future work of the unit or organization will be the basis for determining which position(s) are eliminated, as well as other relevant factors in the particular circumstances.

Written documentation relating to the identification of an employee for reduction in force should be retained for three years.

Each employee separated by a reduction in force will be notified in writing by the Vice President for Human Resources and the appropriate Cabinet Member. The layoff notice will be given to each employee in person by the department manager where reasonably possible.

Employees will be provided the Current Job Openings and can apply as an internal applicant for any vacant position for which they qualify.

Salary and Benefits Continuation

Upon executing a valid release of all claims against the Institute, an employee separated because of a reduction in force may, at the discretion of the Institute, be provided with salary continuation that the employee would not otherwise be entitled to.

An employee separated because of a reduction in force will not be paid accrued, unused PTO upon separation.

Health insurance coverage will be provided by Rensselaer for the period of salary continuation at the current employee rate and coverage level. Continuation beyond that time will be handled in accordance with established Rensselaer policies and all applicable laws.

Retirement plan benefits will be provided according to the terms of Rensselaer's retirement plans.

A Rensselaer employee who is receiving tuition scholarship benefits for the employee, spouse or children prior to the day of separation will continue to receive the benefit through the end of the semester in which the separation occurs.

The separated employee may be rehired if: a position becomes available; the individual submits a new employment application; and Rensselaer determines the separated employee qualifies for the position based on training, education, experience, and past performance. If an employee is rehired within 12 months of separation, an Adjusted Service Date will be used for purposes of years of service for benefit and Paid Time Off (PTO) leave accruals

only. The new rate of pay will be based on the salary of the new job classification. Restoration of benefit service in Rensselaer's retirement plans will be in accordance with the plan documents.

The Division of Human Resources will provide benefits counseling for each employee affected by a reduction in force.

Employees, who are paid from a grant, contract, or endowment funds are not eligible for discretionary salary continuation, or the payment of accrued unused Paid Time Off. Benefits continuation beyond the end of the grant or contract will be handled in accordance with established Rensselaer policies and all applicable laws.