

Retirement FAQs

The goal of this document is to try and answer some of the most frequently asked questions from employees as they prepare to retire.

General

Who is considered a retiree?

- Beginning January 1, 2025, the eligibility definition and minimum age for retirement will be 15 years of service after age 47 (effectively minimum age of 62). Between January 1, 2018 and the January 1, 2025 full implementation date, a “7-Year Transition Schedule” will apply based on the pre-2018 retiree eligibility requirement of at least 15 years of service after age 40. Please consult the Retirement Benefits policy for more information.

When should I notify my department of my intended retirement date?

- You should notify your department as soon as possible. The sooner the notice, the sooner the department can begin the recruitment process. At a minimum, two weeks’ notice should be given.
- Employees may choose their own retirement date. An employee’s retirement date is the last day physically at work.

What happens to my vacation time?

- If sufficient notice is provided, any vacation time accrued but not used will be paid out in your final paycheck. If you have used any advanced vacation time, that time will be deducted from your final paycheck.
- Pay for accumulated unused vacation leave does not extend the employee’s length of employment.

Benefits

When do my active employee benefits end?

- Active employee benefits are effective through the end of the month in which you retire.

What benefits can I continue as a retiree?

- Retirees are eligible to continue medical, dental and vision insurance. Sentinel Benefits Group administers the dental and vision plans and pre-age 65 medical insurance plans. These plans must be in place prior to retirement. If you or a dependent is age 65 or older, then medical insurance options that coordinate with Medicare will be offered through Mercer Marketplace365.

- Some insurance (i.e. life insurance, auto/home/life insurance and long-term care insurance) can be converted to a private policy with direct billing from the company. For more information, please contact Human Resources.
- Retirees who decide to discontinue dental or vision coverage will not be allowed to rejoin the respective plan at a future date. Retirees who discontinue medical insurance coverage will not be allowed to rejoin the plan until they reach age 65.

What if I am over 65 and my spouse is under 65?

- The person over 65 would be eligible for medical insurance options through Mercer Marketplace 365 and the person under 65 would remain on the medical insurance plans that are available to Union's active employees.

What is the cost for retiree insurance?

- The College provides an inflation adjusted lump sum subsidy, to both the retiring employee and spouse/domestic partner (for 2023 the subsidy is \$11,204/\$5,602 respectively). The subsidy is used toward the cost of medical insurance premiums for retirees under age 65 and may be used toward premiums or other medical insurance related expenses for retirees age 65 and older. Retirees are responsible for the full cost of dental and vision insurance.

How do I pay for retiree insurance?

- For retirees under age 65 and any retiree with dental and vision insurance through the College, Sentinel Benefits Group will bill you monthly for insurances you choose to continue. You may pay via check each month or set up automatic payments with Sentinel Benefits Group. It is highly encouraged to send a check for the first payment regardless if you plan to set up automatic payments so that there is no lapse in coverage.
- For retirees age 65 and older, payment will be made directly to the company that your insurance is provided through.

What happens to my Flexible Spending Account?

- Payroll deductions stop with your final paycheck. You can request reimbursement for any expenses incurred prior to your employee benefits ending. You have until March 30th of the next year to request reimbursement from the account. Any monies accumulated in the account, that cannot be reimbursed, will be forfeited.

Retirement Plan

When should I contact my retirement plan to start the paperwork?

- Normally you should begin the retirement paperwork at least 3 months prior to the date you wish to receive your first retirement payment. If you begin the process less than 3 months prior to retiring, then you may experience a delay between your final paycheck from the College and your first retirement payment.

What are my payment options?

- Options vary by retirement companies and the individual funds. Please contact the appropriate company to discuss your options.

TIAA: 800-842-2252

Fidelity: 800-343-0860

Medicare & Social Security

When should I sign up for Social Security?

- It is advisable to begin the process with Social Security at least 3 months prior to your retirement date. You can apply for Social Security payments in-person, via phone or on the Social Security website.

What are the parts of Medicare?

- **Part A** (hospital coverage) is usually automatic when someone turns 65. There is no charge for Part A coverage if the person has paid Medicare taxes while working.
- **Part B** (medical coverage (i.e. doctor's appointments) must be applied for and there is a premium associated with the coverage.
- **Part C** (Medicare Advantage Plans) includes Part A, Part B and usually Part D coverage. Premiums are charged by the sponsoring Health Care Provider.
- **Part D** (prescription coverage) must be applied for and there is a premium associated with the coverage.

Do I need Medicare?

- Individuals over age 65 will need Part A and Part B coverage in order to continue retiree insurance through Mercer Marketplace 365.
- Medicare eligible disabled dependents follow the same requirements.

When should I sign up for Medicare?

- You should request Part B coverage at least 3 months prior to the date your active benefits will end. Your active benefits end at the end of the month in which you retire.
- If you are over age 65 when you retire, Union College will provide a form (Form CMSL564) to notify Social Security that you have been on group coverage. This will allow you to sign up for Part B without penalty for later enrollment.

- If you turn 65 while a retiree, you should request Part B coverage 3 months prior to the month in which you turn 65.

Miscellaneous

How do I keep abreast of what is happening on campus?

- The Union College website has a listing of all upcoming events and the various College publications.

Can I continue to use the gym and attend sporting events?

- Yes, retirees can use the gym and attend events. If you maintain a College ID, then you may use that card to enter the gym and obtain tickets for sporting events. If you do not maintain a College ID, then a guest ID can be issued by the Athletic Department.

What happens to my access to the Schaffer Library?

- Retirees continue to have access to the library and may continue to borrow materials. If you do not maintain a College ID, the library will issue a library card. Borrowing privileges remain the same for retirees where faculty may borrow materials for an academic year and administrators/staff may borrow materials for three (3) weeks.

Any suggestions for additional topics that should be included in this document are welcome. Please contact Human Resources at ext. 6108 or via e-mail at HR@union.edu.