

EMERITUS AND RETIRED FACULTY FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

These Frequently Asked Questions aim to provide informational resources for ISU faculty employees considering retirement. The FAQ is divided into four sections: Planning and Process for Retirement; Emeritus/a Faculty Status; Post-Retirement Access; and Remaining Engaged Post-Retirement. If you have questions not addressed in this FAQ document, please contact your Human Resources Partner

I. Planning and Process for Retirement.

1. What is the definition of retirement?*

Retirement is defined as a separation from employment for persons age 55 or older. ISU employees who designate their separation reason as “retirement” may be eligible for [retiree benefits](#).

2. Who should I talk to if I am considering retirement?

ISU offers many employee resources for planning for retirement. Contact the Benefits Office at benefits@iastate.edu or (515) 294- 4800. Employees are encouraged to make an appointment to visit with a UHR Benefits staff member when considering retirement.

3. Do I have to apply to retire?*

There is no application to complete to retire from the university; however, you need to notify your department chair of any planned separation well in advance of the separation date so that the business process, including a payroll/benefits change, will be processed timely.

4. When do I have to notify my department of my intent to retire?*

Per the [Faculty Handbook](#), a faculty member who plans to retire should notify their department chair in writing at the earliest opportunity to allow time for a suitable replacement to be found, generally not later than April 15 for the academic year. This is also necessary for a smooth transition for you in regard to your benefits, and other necessary off-boarding issues such as those related to graduate student supervision and grants administration.

5. May I choose any retirement date?*

The designated retirement date must be a scheduled workday (and not a university holiday) and per ISU policy, employees must be present/active on the effective, last date of employment. Faculty on a 9-month, academic year appointment may retire effective May 15 or December 31 of any year. Faculty on a 12-month appointment may retire effective any working day throughout the year. A 9-month faculty member may not have a retirement date during the summer unless they are on a paid appointment during the summer, and then the effective date is the end of the paid summer appointment, generally June 30 or July 31.

6. May I change the terms of my retirement agreement once it is submitted?*

The written notification of intent to retire shall be accepted in writing by the department chair. Once offered and accepted, it represents a binding contract. If a faculty member wishes to change the effective date, it can only be changed upon mutual agreement and in writing.

7. What is phased retirement and who is eligible to participate?

The Regents-approved Phased Retirement Program allows eligible employees to apply to phase into retirement. Faculty members who have attained age 57 and have at least 15 years of consecutive service at a Regent institution are eligible to discuss with their department a schedule of phasing and a future retirement date. If approved for the program, during the phasing period, the employee holds at least 50% but not more than 65% appointment on a schedule that is mutually agreed upon between the department and the employee, and the phasing period has a maximum limit of two years. Additional information about the program, including the application form, is available from the [UHR phased retirement website](#).

8. When does my salary end if/when I retire?

Salary is paid on a monthly basis, thus the last regular paycheck will be at the end of the month in which you retire. For faculty on a 12-month appointment who have an unused vacation balance, the vacation payout will be paid out in a separate check the following month. For retirees, any payout of unused sick leave (up to \$2,000) will also be paid out in the following month.

9. When do my benefits end, and what benefits do I receive from the university once I am retired?*

Benefits end once you retire from the university:

- Medical/Prescription and/or Dental Plan:
*For retirees who had the plan for five (5) continuous years immediately preceding retirement, the retiree may elect to pay to continue the applicable ISU Plan Insurance in retirement. A spouse/partner may be insured on your plan or may be added to your plan in retirement. Retirees with less than five (5) continuous years of ISU Plan participation will have benefits end on the last day of their retirement month and will be offered COBRA.
- Long Term Disability Insurance: For employees who enrolled in Long Term Disability Insurance, the policy ends the day you retire.
- Avesis vision eyewear plan: Avesis ends on the last day of your retirement month.

For additional information, see the [Retirement Benefit Checklist](#).

10. If I pay to continue on the ISU Plan, can I change benefits plans after I retire?

Each year during the Open Enrollment period, you may make changes to your current benefits package as a retiree. You may also be allowed to change benefits if you have a qualifying life event during the year.

11. What resources are available for preparing for retirement?

The Office of University Human Resources provides extensive information for employees to prepare for retirement.

You may contact [University Human Resources](#) for questions and to schedule a 1-1 consultation with a benefits specialist or attend one of the all-day retirement workshops. In addition, the following are helpful for planning:

- [University Human Resources Retiree Benefits](#)
- [Ready, Set, Retire Presentations](#)
- [University Human Resources Retirement Checklist](#)

12. How do I plan financially for my retirement?

Faculty who want to plan financially for their retirement may choose to reach out to their personal financial planner or to [TIAA \(Teachers Insurance Annuity Association of America\)](#) or [IPERS \(Iowa Public Employees' Retirement System\)](#).

II. Emeritus/a Faculty Status

1. What is the difference between being retired and being designated emeritus/a?

Any employee meeting the criteria for retirement is eligible to retire. Only faculty members who meet certain criteria, or faculty who have been nominated by their department, may be conferred the honorific emeritus/a title.

2. What is emeritus/a status and who is eligible?

Emeritus is an honorific title conferred on a faculty member upon retirement in recognition of past meritorious service to the University. It is not an employment status. Emeritus designation is automatic for faculty retiring with ten (10)+ years of service and at the rank of Professor (tenured or term). In all other cases, it may be conferred upon retiring faculty (tenured or term) if nominated by, and supported by, the departmental faculty and approved by the college dean and the Senior Vice President and Provost. The emeritus nomination must be processed or requested via Workday at the time of retirement. The full Emeritus/a policy is described in [Faculty Handbook](#) 6.4.

3. What are the responsibilities of emeritus/a faculty?

An emeritus/a faculty member must abide by all University policies as articulated in the Faculty Handbook and in the ISU Policy Library. Emeritus/a faculty are subject to the same Faculty Conduct Policy as current faculty. Violation of policy is grounds for removal of the emeritus/a designation (see [Faculty Handbook](#) 6.4).

4. What are some of the privileges allowed emeritus/a faculty?

Per the [Faculty Handbook](#), an emeritus/a faculty is:

- listed by title in the online University Catalog
- included on institutional communications to faculty
- afforded the same status as regular faculty with respect to all events, activities, and services sponsored or provided by the University
- provided office space when such space is available
- able to keep ISU email address

5. Can I remain engaged and continue research and other academic activities as emeritus/a faculty?

Iowa State University welcomes emeritus/a faculty to be active members of the ISU community and to remain active in their scholarship. There are several social and cultural opportunities offered for all retirees (see below). Emeritus/a faculty may continue to be active in scholarship (see “Remaining Engaged Post Retirement” below). However, note that there is a legal distinction between serving the University as an employee and engagement as emeritus/a. Emeritus/a faculty may not serve as instructor of record for any credit course as this is an academic activity appropriate for paid employment only.

6. I have already arranged with my chair to be rehired immediately following my retirement so I can finish up some projects. Will this be possible?*

Federal regulations require a “bona fide” retirement via separation. In rare instances, it may be possible to be rehired from retirement. The [ISU Post Retirement Employment Policy](#) (see [ISU Policy Library](#)) requires that: 1) a rehire must be primarily for the University’s benefit; 2) no prearrangement (verbally or in writing) to return is made prior to retirement; and 3) there must be a minimum of 30 days break in service.

III. Post-Retirement Access

1. Can I still use my ISU affiliation (including my emeritus/a title, if applicable) in professional correspondence and on papers or books after I retire?

Yes, you may continue to use your ISU affiliation post retirement. Note that all ISU retirees and spouses are entitled to receive an ISU Photo ID card. For information on getting a free ISU Retiree Photo ID, visit the [ISU Card website](#) or call the ISU Card Office at (515) 294-2727. The ISU Retiree Photo ID Card can be used to access services at Parks Library, University Recreation Services and the Lloyd Veterinary Medical Center.

2. Will I have continued access to my Iowa State e-mail account after I retire?

The continuation of the Net-ID is a privilege allowed to all emeritus/a faculty. Note that the continuation will require an annual renewal through IT Services (i.e., all emeritus/a faculty will receive notice of the need to renew the Net-ID account). Retirees who are not emeritus/a will have the Net-ID (email) suspended as of their last day of employment.

3. Will my ISU library privileges continue after I retire?

Yes. The ISU Retiree Photo ID entitles retirees to check-out privileges at Parks Library.

4. Will I have access to ISU Recreational Services after I retire?

ISU retirees and their spouses/partners are eligible to join Recreation Services for a yearly fee, semester pass, or summer pass.

5. Will I have continued access to my office and lab after I retire?

Upon retirement, a faculty member vacates their office and laboratory space which is returned to the department for use. Some departments provide a shared office space for use by emeritus/a faculty. You will need to talk with your department chair about available options.

6. Can I purchase my computer from ISU upon retirement?

You can speak with your department chair about the possibility of purchasing your computer equipment upon retirement. This is negotiated on a case-by-case basis and is dependent on the needs of the unit.

7. Do I continue to have access to my PI incentive funds or other grant funds after I retire?

No. Any funds left are transferred to the department and managed at the discretion of the department chair. For active external grants, the funding agency must be informed that a principal investigator (PI) has retired and informed who the new PI will be. The agency's rules regarding any residual grant funding will apply.

8. What access do I have to parking post-retirement?

Retired or emeritus faculty have [various options for parking](#):

- You may purchase a permit (general staff or medical) each year. It is prorated at the first of every month. Permits are available online through Access Plus on the Home Tab.
- You may purchase a general staff daily parking permit for \$2.00/day. These would be scratch permits you could keep in your car and scratch the day you come to campus. These are available at 27 Armory (limit of 10 per each request).
- You may pay at any of the meters or prepay parking lots on campus.
- If you only come to campus occasionally you may request a visitor permit. Visitor permits are valid only in General Staff and Student Parking Lots only.

9. Can I continue to receive flu vaccines through Occupational Safety on campus at no cost?

The Flu Shot Clinic at ISU is available to retirees on the ISU Plan who are not yet 65 years of age.

10. Can I continue to participate in programs available through ISU Wellbeing?

At this time, ISU Wellbeing program access is not available to retirees. However, UHR is considering future enhancements which could make this program available to retirees. "Wellness and Health" information is currently available at the [ISU Retirees Association website](#).

11. Am I eligible to audit or register for ISU courses of interest to me, either at a special rate or at no cost?

Retired faculty may register for courses and they will be expected to pay full tuition and fees for all courses taken.

IV. Remaining Engaged Post-Retirement

1. Am I eligible to serve as a PI or Co-PI on grants and contracts post retirement?

Retired faculty who previously served as PIs and who are awarded emeritus/a status may continue to serve as PIs on existing sponsored projects and compliance protocols, and they are automatically eligible to serve as co-PIs on new sponsored projects or compliance protocols. The use of university resources, such as space, equipment, etc., by emeritus/a faculty requires the approval of the department chair. See the Office of the Vice President for Research policy on eligibility.

2. Am I eligible to teach after retirement?*

Teaching is an activity carried out by current paid employees. Retired faculty who are asked by their department to teach may do so on a short-term contract basis at the rank of lecturer. For more details, see the [Post-Retirement Employment Policy](#). This would not affect your retirement benefits, but you are not eligible for additional benefits after you retire.

3. Am I eligible to serve as a major professor to graduate students following retirement?

Retired ISU graduate faculty members may continue to serve for any on-going graduate student post-retirement, but a co-major professor who is a member of the graduate faculty must also be identified. For newly formed master's or doctoral Program of Study Committees, emeritus faculty can only serve as a member and must be willing to participate actively. The [Graduate College Policy](#) provides more detail.

4. Am I eligible to supervise student workers or other employees following retirement?

No. Only current employees may supervise other employees, including student hourly employees.

5. What opportunities are there for me to stay engaged with other retired or emeriti colleagues post-retirement?

Within the Iowa State University community, there are two organizations that bring together the community of retired or emeritus faculty:

- [ISU Retirees Association](#)
- [Osher Lifelong Learning Institute \(OLLI\)](#)

6. Are there any other ways for me to continue to be engaged with the university?

There are several opportunities for emeritus/a faculty to remain engaged within the ISU community after retirement. These include, but are not limited to:

- Assisting the department or college with external award nominations for current faculty
- Assisting the department or college with alumni or donor relations
- Offering to serve on college or department advisory councils
- Presenting a lecture in your area of expertise for the campus or Ames community