

2022 UTK Faculty Voluntary Retirement Incentive Program

Purpose: The 2022 UTK Faculty Voluntary Retirement Incentive Program (the Program) is a proactive measure designed to promote alignment of mission and demand (e.g., new strategic investment, student demand) with campus resources. Participation in the Program is strictly voluntary.

Eligibility: The Program is open to UTK faculty, including UTIA faculty, who meet the following eligibility criteria as of June 30, 2022:

1. Designated as regular faculty in the UT system of record (IRIS) OR
2. Hold regular faculty appointments but are currently serving in administrative roles.

AND

3. Eligible for either Service Retirement¹ or Early Retirement² under the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCRS) or the Joint Contributory Retirement System (JCRS-A) or other federal retirement programs (FERS/CSRS) with at least 20 years of service; OR
4. A participant in the Optional Retirement Program (ORP) with at least 20 years of service³.

UTK reserves the right to limit the number of participants in this Program and also reserves the right to make final decisions on participation based on academic continuity and campus needs. Approved participants may also be asked to adjust the effective date of retirement based on campus needs. UTK further may discontinue this Program at any time before applicants are accepted, without advance notice.

¹ Service Retirement (with unreduced benefits) under TCRS/JCRS is open to vested members aged 60 or older with at least 5 years of creditable service, or any age with at least 30 years of creditable service; FERS/CSRS retirement is based upon age and years of service in accordance with the Office of Personnel Management guidelines.

² Early Retirement (reduced benefits) under TCRS/JCRS is open to vested members aged 55 or older with at least 10 years of creditable service, or any age with at least 25 years of creditable service; FERS/CSRS age 50 with 20 years of creditable service or any age with 25 years of creditable service. CSRS retirees may receive a reduced benefit if not 55 at the time of early retirement.

³ For purposes of this Program, “years of service” or “service” for a participant in ORP will be determined by the calculation of state service equivalent to the TCRS “creditable service” calculation (ORP creditable service equivalent).

Terms of the Incentive:

- **Applicability to retirements currently in process:** This Program is open to employees who have provided written notice to UTK administration of the intent to retire before applying to participate in this Program, so long as the employee has not yet separated from University service at the time of his/her application for participation in this Program.
- **Incentive payment:** Participants will receive a lump sum incentive payment based on a graduated schedule:
 - 20-25 years of service: 6 months of base salary;
 - 26-29 years of service: 9 months of base salary;
 - 30+ years of service: 12 months of base salary.The schedule is based on the employee's annualized base salary (not including any administrative or other stipend amounts) in effect on June 30, 2022 or the separation date, if sooner.
- **Faculty Emeritus/a:** Faculty members who retire at the rank of Professor or Associate Professor may request the title of Professor Emeritus/a. Award of the title will be reviewed under existing policies (HR0102, the Faculty Handbook, college and/or departmental bylaws).
- **Separation date:** Participants in this Program will retire with a separation date no later than June 30, 2022. All rights and obligations described in University policies and procedures remain unaffected by this Program and will continue to apply regardless of an employee's application or participation.
- **Application process:** Eligible employees will receive an e-mail attaching the application, disclosures required by law, and a sample Retirement Incentive Agreement and Release for review. Eligible employees interested in participating must complete the 2022 UTK Faculty Voluntary Retirement Incentive Program Application and return it by the established deadline to Dr. Mary Lucal, UTK Human Resources, located at 105 Student Services, or by e-mail attachment at vrip@utk.edu.
- **Notice of acceptance:** Applicants who are accepted for participation in the Program will be notified of acceptance by e-mail and regular U.S. mail. A Retirement Incentive Agreement and Release will be provided with the notice of acceptance. Participants will be required to submit the signed agreement no later than March 1, 2022. If a signed agreement is not submitted by the close of business on the required day, the offer of participation in this Program is revoked and may be offered to another applicant.