

## Academic Rehired Retiree Process

The policy and guidelines can be found on the Illinois Human Resources website at <http://humanresources.illinois.edu/retirees/re-employment.html>.

No service by a SURS annuitant or U of I retiree can be allowed in advance of required approvals.

RR requests should be submitted as soon as possible prior to the start of the appointment, but preferably a minimum of at least one month in advance of the start to help prevent delays in the approval and start of the appointment. For newly hired retirees, we recommend the request be submitted two months in advance in order to allow enough time for the RR request to be fully approved as well as all other approvals (ex: background check, OAE approval) processed prior to the start of the appointment.

Academic retirees are limited to working up to an equivalent FTE of .50 no matter what plan they retired from.

Units need to keep track of the hours worked so as not to violate the policy and potentially create a PPACA issue as well as monitor the Rehired Retiree Progress Report to lessen the chance of a retiree becoming an Affected Annuitant. The RR Progress Report can be found on the Systems HR Reporting Portal at [HR Reporting Portal](#).

Discussions about post-retirement employment may not begin until after retirement. If at the time of retirement, the retiree is planning to come back to work post-retirement, SURS and/or the IRS may consider the retirement invalid.

The University is required to report to SURS each year for annuitant appointments (Illinois Human Resources handles the reporting requirement to SURS):

- Hiring an annuitant (Return to Work) – within 60 days of the retiree’s appointment start date
- Earnings each SURS year - by September 30 to report all earnings through August 31 (late appointments and labor distributions (PZAREDS) impact the reporting timeline causing the university to be out of compliance with the reporting requirement).

Vacation payouts to retirees is included in their overall earnings as a retiree and could cause them to become an affected annuitant. Please keep that in mind as you appoint retirees on a 12 month service basis and continue to monitor a retiree’s leave usage.

### **SURS Annuitants –**

- are not allowed to return to work (including on a volunteer basis) until the 61<sup>st</sup> day post-retirement
- if retired under the University’s Staff Voluntary Retirement Plan, cannot apply for any type of re-employment for at least six (6) months.
- are limited to working up to an equivalent FTE of .50.
- are limited to earning up to 40% of their Highest Annual Earnings (HAE) calculated by SURS on non-exempt funds. If a retiree is close to the 40% HAE, a Close to Affected letter will be needed. Exempt funds are unlimited, however, units must still keep in mind the personal earnings limitation of the retiree.
- may be subject to a monthly earnings limit or annual earnings limit which may be less than the 40% HAE. The retirees are provided this information from SURS and must provide the information to the unit.

### **Self-Managed Plan Retirees or Retirees who took a Lump Sum Payment of their SURS contributions -**

- do not have to wait 60 days before returning to employment at a SURS covered institution
- must wait six (6) months to return if retired under the University’s Staff Voluntary Retirement Plan.
- are limited to working up to an equivalent FTE of .50.
- do not have a Highest Annual Earnings limitation.
- do not have an earnings limitation.

## General Information:

- The rate of pay and FTE should be related to the duties being performed.
- Units must rely on the retiree to provide the personal earnings limitation (whether it be a monthly or annual limitation).
- If the service date(s) change after the RR Request form has been fully approved, units should contact [ihr-acad-rr@illinois.edu](mailto:ihr-acad-rr@illinois.edu) requesting the date(s) be changed on the form. The dates on the RR Request form and the dates entered in HRFE need to match.
- If Emeritus/Emerita status has not yet been granted by the BOT for a faculty member, they must be rehired as a Visiting Professor (with appropriate rank) and a search waiver will be required.

## ***Common Mistakes on the RR Request:***

### Section 2 –

- SURS Affected Annuitant – marked ‘Yes’ when the retiree is not an Affected Annuitant
- First Rehire Date – this needs to be the date the retiree was first rehired as a retiree, even if there has been a separation after the initial rehire.
- SURS Highest Annual Earnings – does not match the HAE amount on Statement of SURS Annuity Status Form.
- Statement of SURS Annuity Status Form is not attached in Section 2.

### Section 3 –

- Ensure pre-retirement title is entered correctly.
- No Department or College name entered.
- Separation Date is incorrect.
- If given Emeritus/Emerita status, the full title should be entered as it was approved by the Board of Trustees
- If given Emeritus/Emerita status, the date the status was effective should be entered. The unit should have a copy of the approved BOT item showing the effective date. The date will always be the day after their retirement date, even if emeriti status was requested/approved after the employee retired.

### Section 4 –

- Job title – If the individual was granted Emeritus/Emerita status, that title should be used. If paying on an hourly basis, the title should be the Emeritus/Emerita with (AH) after. For academic hourly appointments, the title should be Academic Hourly (no classification needed).
- Service Begin Date – must be within the SURS year in which the appointment falls (9/1/XX – 8/31/XX) unless the appointment is for teaching. If teaching, the date should reflect the period of teaching (fall semester, spring semester, or full academic year). For teaching fall semester, the service begin date should reflect 8/16/XX.
- Service End Date – cannot be later than 8/31/XX.
- Is Appointment paid 9/12 – for those retirees providing service for the full academic year, they must be paid 9/12.
- Appointment FTE – cannot be greater than .50. Should also be calculated based on previous service as a non-retired employee providing the services are similar
- Equivalent FTE – applicable to academic hourly appointments. Cannot be greater than .50. May need to adjust the total gross amount or dates of service to bring the FTE within the .50
- Rate of Pay – needs to reflect the 1/12<sup>th</sup> rate for employees paid 9/12. Should reflect the monthly rate based on the service dates.
- Total Gross Pay – can be a set amount for a course or specific service as agreed upon and offered. If a specific amount needs to be paid and the dates are other than full months, the unit is responsible for calculating the

adjusted monthly amount. Cannot reflect an increase from pre-retirement appointments or previous retiree appointments unless the University has a salary program.

- Funding and Labor Distribution – if paying on State funds, be sure the FUND reflects the correct fiscal year.

#### Proposed Appointment Category:

- For anyone hired to teach, the Retired faculty re-employed to teach courses... should be checked.
- Anyone hired to do research, even if not paid on research funds (although that should be rare), should have the Retired faculty or staff re-employed to conduct research option checked.
- For academic hourly appointments hired to do research, both the Retiree re-employed in an hourly academic/research/faculty/clinical capacity **and** Retired faculty or staff re-employed to conduct research options should be checked.

#### Proposed Job Description –

- The duties can either be listed in the RR request form or a job description attached. For academic hourly or academic professional appointments, a job description approved by IHR **must** be attached.

Justification for Request (if the justification is entered in the box, a separate attachment is not necessary):

Must answer all three questions:

- Describe the critical nature of this position/hire to achieving the unit's strategic goals.
- Confirm the hire will not create a budget deficit.
- Verify there is no other way to allocate duties to complete the work associated with this position (basically, we are looking for why it is necessary to hire a retiree vs. having a current faculty or staff member perform the duties).

#### Approval to Reappoint Sought Via the Following Employment Procedures:

- Hire exempt from search process per campus office for diversity, access, and equal opportunity – should only be checked if the retiree has the status of Emeritus/Emerita, or a continuing academic hourly in the same job/same unit.
- Retiree selected as a result of an open search – checked if hire was done via a search. Attach the search approval email (not the search summary) in the RR request in Section 4.
- Waiver of search with appropriate rationale – to be checked for those employees for whom a search waiver was granted or for academic hourly appointments for which the Academic Hourly Appointment form was processed. The search waiver approval email or the Academic Hourly Appointment form should be attached in the RR request in Section 4.

#### General Comments –

Comments are always helpful especially to indicate a specific amount of money to be paid for the job (regardless of FTE), or any other information that will be helpful in explaining any special circumstances. If the RR Request is being submitted within two weeks of the start date, an explanation for the delay in the submission should be provided in the comments.

## Approvals –

Be sure the RR request is routed through the appropriate levels.

### Common Mistakes on the Statement of SURS Annuity Status form:

- Only the retiree should be completing the Statement of SURS Annuity Status form.
- Make sure the most recent form is completed (currently dated 3/4/2021).
- The Statement of SURS Annuity Status form is to be attached in Section 2, not Section 6.

1 –

- Make sure the name is listed.
- The retiree must enter/select the Employer from which they retired (a drop down is provided when using the form electronically).

2 –

- If the retiree checks they retired from the Self-Managed Plan or took a lump sum payment of their SURS contributions, they only need to answer question #9, sign and date the form.
- If the retiree checks they are receiving a monthly annuity they must complete the rest of the form.

3 -

- The retiree must enter their current SURS annual gross annuity amount (if receiving an annuity from SURS).

4 –

- The retiree must enter their UIN if they retired from the University of Illinois (if receiving an annuity from SURS) or have been rehired as a retiree by the University of Illinois previously.

5 –

- No information is entered by the retiree. They just need to read the information as a reminder of their earnings limitations and impact of exceeding that limitation (if receiving an annuity from SURS).

6 –

- The retiree must enter their Highest Annual Earnings (or estimated HAE if final figure has not yet been calculated) as provided by SURS (if receiving an annuity from SURS). Be sure this is not the same figure as their gross annual annuity they entered in question 3.

7 –

- The retiree only needs to enter any/all appointments they hold/will hold within the SURS year in which their appointment falls, including month/day/year (if receiving an annuity from SURS). We do not need appointments held in a SURS year outside the appointment year being requested. Example:

University of Illinois	9/1/21-8/31/22	\$12,000	Yes or No (as appropriate)
Illinois State University	11/1/21-5/31/22	\$10,000	Yes or No (as appropriate)
University of Illinois	8/16/21-5/15/22	\$15,000	Yes or No (as appropriate)

8 –

- The retiree must indicate whether or not they are an affected annuitant (if receiving an annuity from SURS). This is frequently checked 'Yes' in error as they check yes since they are an annuitant and don't read the question or review the definition of an Affected Annuitant. If the retiree is actually an Affected Annuitant, special approval must be obtained from Illinois Human Resources to hire the retiree and the unit must pay the amount associated with hiring an Affected Annuitant.

9 –

- The retiree must check Yes or No as to whether or not they are competent and an adult age 18 or over.

The retiree must print their name, enter the date they signed the form and then sign the form (electronic signatures with date are acceptable). Note: the Statement of SURS Annuity Status form must be signed within 1-2 months of the RR Request form being submitted.

### ***Routing***

When the RR request is complete and all necessary documents are attached to the RR request, the request should be routed through the unit, college (or second level review if not part of a "college") with final route to ihr-acad-rr@illinois.edu.

Forms to be attached to the HRFE transaction (what needs to be attached to the HRFE transaction will be indicated in the Message to the Unit box in Section 6 of the RR request):

Approved RR request form (not the email approval) – All  
Statement of SURS Annuity Status form – All  
Fully signed job description – Academic Hourly  
Background Check approval email – New hires and change in employee group  
OAE email approval – Specialized faculty, Academic Professional, Academic Hourly  
Accepted Offer Letter – All

I-9 completed in Tracker – Newly hired retirees

Revised 7/27/2021