



Pre-Retirement and Post-Retirement Guide for Instructional Staff: teaching and non- teaching

(November 2021)

Table of Contents

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	3
<u>FILING FOR RETIREMENT: Resources and Suggested Timeline</u>	4
Information about Retirement	4
Filing for Retirement – Checklist / Timeline	5 F

Introduction:

Congratulations on reaching this important milestone after a lifetime of work and dedication to CUNY! While retirement can be an exciting time, it can also be stressful; particularly when it comes to making sure you have all your paperwork in order to ensure that your benefits and retirement income will start seamlessly upon retirement. This guide will be your one stop shop for information and resources to ensure a successful transition to the retirement you worked so hard for!

While this guide focuses on pre-retirement planning it is also helpful for those currently in retirement who have questions on retirement benefits and working at CUNY post retirement.

We encourage you to read the guide and keep it as a resource throughout your retirement journey. We also encourage you to share this information with family members, particularly those who are dependents and/or beneficiaries to any of your health, welfare and retirement plans.

FILING FOR RETIREMENT: Resources and Suggested Timeline

Filing For Retirement – Checklist / Timeline

Below is a general timeline you should follow towards your retirement. Participation in the Dedicated Sick Leave Program and/or the Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank may have an adverse impact on your Travia Leave payout. You should review your enrollment in any program that may impact your retirement benefits.

Verification of service	4 years or 6-12 months prior to retirement
Phased Retirement	4 years prior to retirement

For the flexible spending plan, you may only submit claim reimbursement for services performed up to your last day worked. While you may continue this benefit under COBRA, it will not be on a pre-tax basis, so it is wise to spend down your account prior to your last day worked to ensure you are utilizing the pre-tax benefits of the plan. As with the transit benefit plan, the flexible spending plan is a federal program and CUNY does not have the ability to waive these rules.

Types of Retirement:

Phased Retirement

This Program enables members of the faculty and staff to continue to work for the University on a part-time basis while transitioning into retirement. An employee's decision to phase is an irrevocable commitment to retire at the end of the phasing period.

Eligibility Criteria

Must be participants of the Optional Retirement Program, that is, TIAA (including those whose ORP monies were transferred to MetLife and Guardian), in order to apply.

Regular/Service Retirement

You may be eligible to receive unreduced retirement allowance after meeting a certain age and/or service requirement. Retirement allowance payments are based on your pension tier and pension system.

Eligibility Criteria

- As a member of TRS, you will receive a guaranteed retirement allowance under the Qualified Pension Plan (QPP) after meeting the minimum age and total service credit requirements specified for the retirement plan and tier you are enrolled in. You may be eligible for a reduced retirement allowance if you elect to retire, but have not met the age and service requirements specified in the plan you are enrolled in.
- As a member to TIAA, there is no minimum retirement age to begin collecting retirement income, but a minimum retirement age may be in effect for other benefits, such as New York City retiree health benefits.

You may contact your College Human Resources Office to obtain guidance on the resources that are available to you regarding retirement options. However, you **should** contact your pension system (TRS or TIAA) to discuss the retirement options and obtain comprehensive details that are tailored to the specific pension plan you enrolled in.

Disability Retirement

Members of the faculty and staff who become physically and/or mentally incapable of performing their work duties may apply for a disability retirement.

Eligibility Criteria

- In-service members of The Teachers' Retirement System of the City of New York (TRS) have two types of disability retirement: ordinary and accident.

Common Travia questions:

- 1.) Is it better to take Travia in the fall or spring?

Non-teaching instructional staff, i.e. HEOs or CLTs, are required to use their vacation first followed immediately and seamlessly by their Travia leave. They do not earn sick and/or annual leave during this period. Therefore, for non-teaching instructional staff, there is no real difference.

For teaching faculty, they will only receive vacation pay if they take a spring Travia leave; and then they receive compensation through August 31. Faculty taking a fall Travia leave do not receive annual compensation and their leave ends at the beginning of the spring semester. Therefore, for teaching faculty it is better to take Travia leave in the spring semester.

- 2.) If I am on Travia leave can I apply for Social Security benefits and will FICA taxes continue to be taken out of my of check during the Travia period if I am receiving benefits?

If you are over age 62 and on Travia Leave, you should be eligible to apply for Social Security benefits. Those members who take advantage of this, but have not yet met Social Security's requirement of reaching the current full retirement age (based on your date of birth), will be subject to Social Security earnings limitations. Your pay is still taxable and FICA (employee and employer deductions withheld for Social Security and Medicare purposes) continues, however salary received while on Travia is not considered income for Social Security earning limitation purposes. If you believe you are entitled to Social Security, but have not yet met the current full retirement age, we suggest making an appointment to see a Social Security representative to learn more about your benefits.

You will also notice that your Travia checks look the same as when you were employed. The same pension and tax deferred annuity deductions, taxes, Social Security and Medicare taxes, union dues, and VOTE-COPE are all being deducted. Federal law requires that Social Security and Medicare be deducted from all "earned" income. It may mean that your own Social Security payments will increase in the following calendar year because you made additional payments to Social Security. Again, this should be checked with your Social Security representative.

3.) Can I work while I am on Travia leave?

Employees on Travia leave are allowed to work. Employees can teach or perform non-teaching functions to the limit of one course or 75 non-teaching hours subject to the approval of CUNY. Outside of CUNY, there are no limits to an individual's employment.

4.) What if I decide I do not want to retire and do not want to take a full Travia leave?

The law states: "A retirement leave of absence shall be cancelled when a member on such leave files an application for reinstatement to active service." However, the law also states that such a member forfeits their right to future retirement leaves. In other words, you get only one Travia in your career, you retain days that have not been used due to your return.

You will begin to accumulate sick leave upon your return, but if you become ill, and you do not have enough sick leave in your bank to cover your absences, advancing you sick leave is at the college's discretion.

The terms and conditions relating to the counting of such days, intervening vacation periods, cancellation of such leave, reinstatement to active service, etc., shall be governed by Section 3107 of the State Education Law.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for Travia Leave you must have unused temporary disability leave (sick leave) and must have completed the minimum requirements for a service retirement if you have been enrolled in the public retirement systems. Additionally, you must

- As a member of the TIAA pension system, to be eligible you:
 - Must meet the age and years of pensionable, continuous, full-time CUNY service requirements specified under Article 27 of the PSC-CUNY Collective Bargaining Agreement.
 - Must maintain \$50,000 in reserve with TIAA-CREF to fund retiree health insurance premiums. You may require additional reserve amounts depending on the health plan you select or to cover future insurance rate changes.
 - Must elect a monthly Lifetime Income Annuity option, for a minimum of \$10,000, as the settlement option used to satisfy the standard health care premium deduction. You may be required to annuitize additional amounts from your \$50,000 required reserve if enrolled in a more costly health plan. Interest Only, Minimum Distribution and Transfer Payout Annuity are not settlement options used to satisfy health care premium deductions.

If your retirement choice is a result of a disability and you have completed 10 years of full-time service (for TIAA) or have 10 years of Total Service Credit (for TRS) prior to the onset of the

f82 (n)-4 (c)4 r(o)-2 (ic)(d)10nedmitoe yd reshore-4 (i re)9 (t)(k)6 (,)1 (amo)-2 (u)6(rv)3y,10 (Tu)1 (i) ar(o)-2 2 -

14 PSGCUNY Welfare Fund (Supplemental Benefits)

- If the employee retires as non-Medicare eligible, but the spouse/domestic partner is Medicare-eligible, then the employee should apply to receive reimbursement for the spouse/domestic partner immediately following the employee's retirement date. In this case, the retiree will be added to the reimbursement program when they become eligible for Medicare.
- If the employee retires as Medicare eligible, but the spouse/domestic partner is non-Medicare-eligible, then the employee should apply to receive reimbursement for themselves immediately following the employees's retirement date. In this case, the spouse/domestic partner will be added to the reimbursement program when they become eligible for Medicare.
- If both the employee and spouse/domestic partner are non-Medicare eligible when the employee retires, then they should apply for reimbursement as soon as they become Medicare-eligible. Spouses/domestic partners do not need to wait for the retiree to be eligible.

When to Apply For IRMAA Reimbursement

You must apply for IRMAA immediately after receiving the reimbursement for the standard premium. Your spouse/domestic partner is also eligible to receive reimbursement for IRMAA.

How to Apply For Medicare Part B Premium Reimbursement

- Members of TRS or NYCERS (po)12 -0.00JJ0 Tck(m)10Tw 6.92 (o)8 (re)-1 (c)4 (e)-1 (iv)3 (rEMC /PO (r)4 n e Er9 (o)8 (-)4 (eJJ (e)-1-24.87 -1.e7.65 0 Td5-)TjEMC /P 4MCID 21 BDC 433.21 -1.2 -@\$\$x
Members o (R)4 (S)JTJM0 Tw Y02(b)10 (l)94 (s p)- OI7 -EMC n1

Your application must be mailed to the address noted below along with a copy of: 1) your and/or your eligible dependent's Social Security Administration (SSA) letter issued to you and/or your eligible dependent showing the monthly premium; and 2) your and/or your eligible dependent's Form SSA-1099 issued to you by the SSA every January, as proof of the monthly Medicare Part B premium actually paid. If you cannot provide a Form SSA-1099 because you did not receive Social Security benefits you must provide official documentation that you paid Medicare premiums (a receipt from Social Security, cancelled checks for Medicare premium payment, or similar official documentation).

NYC Health Benefits Program

22 Cortlandt Street, 12

If you are eligible for Medicare Part B premium reimbursement (the standard and IRMAA) for prior years, but did not enroll on a timely basis, you may apply for those prior years. However, reimbursement is limited to the previous three (3) calendar years.

NOTE: If your spouse/domestic partner becomes eligible for Medicare Part B prior to you becoming eligible, you may apply to receive reimbursement for your spouse/domestic partner. Retirees receive ONE check for both themselves and their spouse/domestic partners. **Checks are not issued under the spouse/domestic partner's name.**

KEEPING IN TOUCH (Who do I contact after retirement?)

It is important to remain in contact with the agencies noted below in order to ensure there is no lapse in your benefits after retirement. You must notify the agencies noted below of any changes in status or address changes that may impact your benefits. Additionally, you should share this information with family members or beneficiaries who may need to notify the

