

FAQs for Reduction of Hours / Furlough - Employees

What is the difference between a furlough and a layoff or separation?

Furloughs are time off from work without pay, such as a temporary reduction in an employee's days or hours of work. Furloughs are different from layoffs or terminations. During furloughs, employees remain employed and sometimes work a fully or partially reduced schedule. Layoffs or terminations involve a separation from employment.

Can I be recalled to work?

Yes, you can be recalled back to the same department and same classification title held at the time of the furlough.

What if I don't return when recalled to work?

If you are recalled back to work and choose not to return, that decision will be considered a resignation, and you will be separated from the University.

What will happen to my health and insurance benefits?

You will be able to continue with your current health insurance benefits through Franklin Pierce University. Complete the Continuation of Benefits form and return to Human Resources by April 30, 2020. If you elect to seek other coverage options, please review the following options:

- for residents in New Hampshire, access is available through Granite Advantage Program (<https://nheasy.nh.gov/#/>),
- for residents in Massachusetts, access is available through Health Connector (<https://www.mahealthconnector.org/>).
- for residents in AZ, access is available through Health-e-Arizona Plus (<https://www.healthearizonaplus.gov/Default/Default.aspx>)
- For all employees, options are available for all individuals through the marketplace (<https://www.healthcare.gov/>).

What if my check does not cover my health and insurance benefits?

Contact Human Resources to arrange options to cover your insurance premium payments. You may send a check to the Human Resources Office on a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly basis.

You may also want to apply for other health insurance coverage through the state. Refer to the contact information in the section above. If you opt for other health insurance coverage, please notify Human Resources and we will help you coordinate the transition from our group plan.

Can I apply for Unemployment Benefits?

Yes, you may be eligible for Unemployment Insurance Benefits as the furlough is COVID-19 related. For information regarding Unemployment Insurance Benefits, please visit:

- the New Hampshire Employment Services page at <https://www.nhes.nh.gov/> or (603) 271-7700,

- the Massachusetts Unemployment Insurance at <https://www.mass.gov/unemployment-insurance-ui-online> or (617) 626-6338, or
- the Arizona at www.azui.com or 1 (877) 600-2722.

How can I apply for Unemployment Benefits?

Check your state's Unemployment Insurance Benefits website. We've also included this helpful guide, 'Five Steps to File For Unemployment.' Contact Human Resources at hrdept@franklinpierce.edu if you have further questions.

Will I need to remain in contact with Franklin Pierce University?

Yes, the University will communicate with you as appropriate during this period. If your personal phone number, email or mailing address has changed recently, please provide your current contact information to Human Resources immediately.

What happens to my 403(b) contributions?

If you are on furlough, you will not be able to contribute to your 403(b) plan.

If you are working reduced hours, you will be able to continue contributing to your 403(b) through payroll reduction. If you need to make a change to the amount per pay period, please complete the [Agreement for Salary Reduction Under Section 403\(b\) Form](#).

Will Franklin Pierce still contribute to my 403(b) Retirement Plan?

No, during this period of furloughs/reduced working hours, the University has suspended contributions to 403(b) Retirement Plans.

What happens to my accrued vacation balances while I am furloughed?

You can choose whether to use your accrued vacation time during your furlough. Should you apply for unemployment insurance benefits, however, use of your accrued vacation time may impact your weekly benefit amount. If you do not return to the work with Franklin Pierce, it will be paid out to you as part of your separation from the University.

What happens to my accrued vacation balances if my hours have been reduced?

Your current accrued vacation balance will remain unchanged during this time. Further accruals will be pro-rated accordingly. Should you choose, you may use your accrued vacation time to supplement your pay during this reduction of hours. Should you apply for unemployment insurance benefits on account of your reduced schedule and pay, however, use of your accrued vacation time may impact your weekly benefit amount.

Will I receive a severance package when I am furloughed?

No. You remain employed by the University during this furlough period.

What happens to my tuition waiver for my dependent if I am furloughed?

If your dependent is enrolled at FPU, the tuition waiver may continue until your return to work, and will remain in place while you remain eligible.

Is a furlough considered a break in service?

No, a furlough is not considered a break in service because you are still employed by the University. Accordingly, at the conclusion of the furlough period, the years of service used to calculate benefit and workplace seniority will remain in place.

Can I apply for unemployment benefits if my hours are reduced?

Yes, you may still be eligible for benefits if your hours are reduced. Check with the unemployment agency in your state for more information or contact the HR Department.

When can I collect my personal items from my office?

Please contact your supervisor and to make arrangements to visit campus and collect your personal items.

Can I keep my Franklin Pierce email address/account?

No, your Franklin Pierce email is intended work and not personal use. During the furlough, you are not expected to respond to work-related emails. Although your email account will not be turned off, most accounts will receive an out-of-office message directing people to another email address; some email accounts will be forwarded to another employee for monitoring. If you are working reduced hours, you will keep your Franklin Pierce email account.