**UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA**

**Tenured Faculty Voluntary Separation Incentive Program Guidelines - 2021**

1. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Tenured Faculty Voluntary Separation Incentive Program (TFVSIP) is to implement a limited time incentive to eligible University of North Dakota (UND or University) employees in order to achieve specific institutional objectives. These objectives include:

1. Provide incentive to those who may be considering retirement.
2. The TFVSIP will assist administration in the planning of the budget of 2022-2023.

Interested individuals will be provided with a window of opportunity to submit voluntary applications for consideration. The University maintains the right to continue the program beyond the original schedule, and/or initiate similar programs in the future. Participation in the program is voluntary for both the University and the tenured faculty member. Tenured faculty members are not guaranteed participation in the plan, and the decision to approve an applicant is entirely at the discretion of the University.

The University anticipates approving as many applications as possible. The University has discretion to limit the total number of applicants approved for reasons, including but not limited to, preserving the vitality of the affected programs and services, as well as the integrity of financial resources.

1. **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND LIMITATIONS**

The TFVSIP is not an entitlement of benefit. It is intended to be a tool for UND and assist with planning for the 2022-2023 budget.

All tenured faculty employees who meet the minimum eligibility requirements are invited to apply; however, not every individual meeting the minimum requirements and submitting an application will be approved. Certain schools/colleges may determine that they cannot recommend an applicant for approval based on budgetary and programmatic demands. The Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs or Vice President for Health affairs, as appropriate, will consult with the respective school/college dean and the Vice President for Finance and Operations, in making a recommendation to the President. The President retains sole discretion over the eligibility and approval of any TFVSIP application.

**The decision to apply for participation in the program by any eligible employee is strictly voluntary on the part of the employee.**

1. **Eligibility Requirements and Limitations**

Individuals meeting the following criteria are eligible to apply for the TFVSIP:

1. The individual must be a tenured faculty member currently employed at UND, as defined by the North Dakota State Board of Higher Education (Policy 605.1)
2. The individual meets the Rule of 65, which is calculated as the sum of the employee’s age and total years of benefited employment in the North Dakota University system ( e.g. 55 years old with 10 years of benefited employment)
3. The individual must meet these eligibility criteria as of November 2, 2020.
4. The individual must review and acknowledge the TFVSIP Program Guidelines and Application for participation prior to January 15, 2021.
5. **Exclusions**

The following individuals are NOT eligible for participation, even if they meet the criteria in Section A above:

1. Employees who have given written or verbal notice of their intent to retire or resign prior to December 8 , 2020;
2. Employees who have participated or are participating in a Phased Retirement Program;
3. Employees who are rehired retirees;
4. Part-time or adjunct faculty;
5. Non-tenured faculty hired on a year to year contract (special appointments);
6. Employees who have previously entered into an agreement with a predetermined employment end date;
7. Employees who have accepted other employment in a tenured or tenure track position at another institution of higher education or any other employment;
8. Employees who have resigned prior to the program implementation and whose resignations have been accepted;
9. Any employee who has received notice of termination, notice of non-renewal or cancellation of employment contract.

1. **Application Procedure and Review**
2. Review TFVSIP criteria for eligibility. If you have questions regarding your eligibility, please contact the UND Office of Human Resources by email at und.hr.VSI@und.edu. **Please note**: the UND Office of Human Resources is the only official source of information/interpretation for this program. Any questions received will be responded to in writing by a representative of the UND Office of Human Resources or the appropriate official in either Academic Affairs or the School of Medicine and Health Sciences.
3. Applications can also be found online at http://und.edu/finance-operations/human-resources-payroll/tfvsi-page.cfm.
4. Eligible employees must submit completed applications for consideration in the TFVSIP to the UND Office of Human Resources. Applications are encouraged as early as possible with the **final deadline for consideration being no later than 4:30 p.m. CST on January 15, 2021**. Applications can be submitted to the following email:
	1. Sent via email to: und.hr.VSI@und.edu.

**It is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure that their application was received by the application deadline. UND encourages applicants to contact the Office of Human Resources to confirm receipt of their application.**

1. The Office of Human Resources will assure accuracy, completeness and verify eligibility for each application. Deans of the Schools/Colleges, in consultation with the Division of Finance & Operations and other UND staff, will evaluate the applications received in relation to the objectives of the TFVSIP and specifically document those discussions prior to consideration by the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs or Vice President for Health Affairs. The appropriate Vice President and Vice President of Finance and Operations, or designee, will then review the application in detail, before it is submitted to the President for conditional approval or denial. Final approval of an applicant is conditioned on execution of an unmodified separation agreement and only the President may approve a Tenured Faculty Voluntary Separation Incentive Program separation agreement.
2. The President’s decision on each application will be communicated to the applicants as soon as practicable. **There is no expectation that all TFVSIP applications will be approved.**
3. Conditionally approved applicants will be provided with a separation agreement for their review. Conditionally approved applicants will have forty-five (45) days, from the date the separation agreement is made available to the approved applicant, to review and consider the separation agreement. Conditionally approved applicants will also have a period of seven (7) days to revoke their acceptance of the separation agreement after it is submitted. During this time, approved applicants are encouraged to seek advice from their financial, legal and/or tax counselors and to contact the office of Human Resources with their questions about the TFVSIP or separation agreement.
4. Employees who separate from UND under the TFVSIP waive all tenure or other rights to continued employment..
5. **Incentives**
6. Approved applicants will receive a payment equal to 100% of the individual’s annual base salary, less all required federal and state taxes and deductions as required by law. The approved applicant will have a choice of:
7. One lump sum payment on July 15, 2021;
8. Two equal payments made on July 15, 2021 and January 14, 2022.
9. No change in base salary within the ninety (90) days prior to January 15, 2021 will be taken into account in determining the employee’s base salary for use in the incentive calculations.
10. UND health insurance coverage for approved applicants will terminate on July 31, 2020. Any pay and benefits received as a result of employment with UND will terminate or cease in accordance with the terms of those established laws, policies, plans and procedures.
11. **Tax and Financial Consequences of Participation in the TFVSIP**
12. Eligibility to participate in the TFVSIP does not automatically make the employee eligible for retirement benefits under the North Dakota Public Employees Retirement System (NDPERS) or the Defined Contribution Retirement Plan (TIAA/CREF) or any other institutional, state or federal retirement program. The employee is solely responsible for consulting with his/her retirement program to determine eligibility for and the amount of any annuity, if any, and applying for such benefits, if any, in accordance with state and federal law. It is the employee’s responsibility to submit the required application and information to NDPERS or TIAA/CREF or any other retirement program financial provider, whichever is applicable, for processing within the required timelines of the program.
13. In all cases, each individual participating employee is responsible for consulting with his/her personal tax advisor as to the potential tax consequences of the employee’s participation in the TFVSIP.
14. No employee of UND is authorized by UND or the North Dakota University System to provide tax and/or financial advice to employees. Information sessions and material are for general information only and should not replace the advice of a competent financial and/or tax advisor.
15. **Conditions**
16. Not every individual application will be approved. The President has sole discretion over the determination of eligibility and approval or denial of any individual application to the TFVSIP in order to achieve specific institutional objectives. Nothing in this program shall be construed to create a right or entitlement to any employee.
17. Approved participants in the TFVSIP shall be restricted from being rehired by the University for one year from the date of separation, unless authorized by the President because of exigent circumstances.
18. The approved applicant will separate from all employment at UND on June 30, 2021.
19. In consideration for participation in the TFVSIP and the receipt of incentives described herein, accepted applicants must voluntarily accept and sign a separation agreement that contains a release of tenure, all continuing employment rights and any and all claims against the University of North Dakota and/or North Dakota University System, including but not limited to any claim against their officers, employees, agents, attorneys, insurers and/or their assignees.

III**. Schedule for the Incentive Program.**

1. The TFVSIP will be announced on December 2, 2020 UND will begin accepting applications on December 7, 2020.
2. The final deadline for submitting applications is 4:30 p.m. CST on January 15, 2021. UND will not accept or consider any applications submitted after the final deadline.
3. The date of separation for applicants approved for participation is June 30, 2021.
4. The incentive payout date will be determined by the accepted applicant as described in Section II. D. above.