



Employee Separation Booklet

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

June 30, 2015

HR Service Center*
P.O. Box 824
Harrisburg, PA 17108-0824

Call: 866.377.2672
PA Relay: 711
Interpreter services available by request

Important Notice: This booklet is a summary of benefits available to Commonwealth of Pennsylvania employees. It is not an agreement between the commonwealth and any employee. Benefits details are contained in state statutes, collective bargaining agreements, management directives, and contracts with various benefit providers and plan documents. If information in this booklet differs from those documents, the official documents govern.

*Employees of the Liquor Control Board, Office of the Attorney General, Gaming Control Board, Public Utility Commission, Auditor General and all other agencies **not** under the Governor's jurisdiction should contact their local Human Resource office for assistance.

Separating from Service with the Commonwealth

Whether it is taking the next step in a career or entering retirement, there are a number of things that employees need to take care of before the last day on the job.

Please refer to the [Separation Checklist](#) for an overview of the items you must do before separating. Details and frequently asked questions are provided within this booklet.

General Information

1. How do I determine the date of my separation?

Ideally, you should give a minimum of two weeks notice, and the date should be as of the close of business on the last day of a pay period. If you do not provide advance notice or select the end of a pay period, your final pay could be delayed.

2. Who do I need to notify of my separation?

You should address a letter to your agency head, provide the letter to your human resource director, and provide a copy to your supervisor. The letter should be dated and include at least your name, personnel number, job classification and date of separation. You should also sign the letter.

3. Can I do anything to minimize a delay in receiving my last pay or pension?

Make sure that all leave and final time is entered to SAP and approved by your supervisor on the last day you work. If you have an outstanding debt and the amount exceeds the amount you expect to receive in your final pay, please contact the Bureau of Commonwealth Payroll Operations (BCPO) Accounts Receivable at 717.783.9129 to make arrangements to satisfy the debt. Debts may occur as a result of travel/salary overpayments, unreturned property, negative leave balances, money owed for damages and/or negligence, balances on corporate credit cards and other reasons. There are two options for repayment: You may remit payment to BCPO or the debt will be recovered from available retirement money. You may authorize repayment of a debt with retirement money by signing a [Retirement Authorization Release Form](#) and submitting it to BCPO.

4. To whom do I return any assigned commonwealth property?

Most property, including but not limited to keys, cell phones, laptops, uniforms, credit cards and equipment should be returned to your supervisor. Follow any additional agency procedures.

5. Do I need to file a Financial Disclosure under the Ethics Act after separation?

If your job has required you to file, you will need to file as a former employee/public official by May 1 of the year following the date of separation. Further, no former "public official or public employee" as defined under the Ethics Act, may represent a person or organization, for actual or promised compensation, on any matter before an agency for one year after leaving the agency. Specific questions and clarification regarding the Ethics Act and its requirements and prohibitions can be directed to: State Ethics Commission, Finance Building, Room 309, PO Box 11470, Harrisburg PA 17108-1470, Phone: 717.783.1610 or 800.932.0936.

6. What if I change my address after I separate?

If your address changes, notify the HR Service Center* at 866.377.2672. In addition, if the address you provided to the State Employees' Retirement System (SERS) has changed, you must also notify SERS so payments and other importation information can be mailed to you.

*Employees of the Liquor Control Board, Office of the Attorney General, Gaming Control Board, Public Utility Commission, Auditor General and all other agencies **not** under the Governor's jurisdiction should contact their local Human Resource office for assistance.

Leave Information

7. Will I be paid for any of my leave?

Earned, unused leave is paid upon separation, including annual, personal, and combined leave types. Union covered employees are also eligible for payout of accrued holiday and compensatory leave. And, employees who meet the conditions of a qualifying retirement are eligible to be paid for sick leave, as long as the retirement occurs within 90 days of separation. Check your union contract for the provisions for sick leave payout.

Generally, you must be of superannuation retirement age or have 25 years of service, but it does vary by union contract. If eligible for a sick leave payment, the sick leave will be paid based on a percentage of days available at retirement. The schedule below applies to all employees except State Troopers, Capitol Police Officers and Correctional Officers.

Sick Days Accrued at Retirement	Percentage Buy-Out	Maximum Days Paid
0 – 100	30%	30
101 – 200	40%	80
201 – 300	50%	150
300+ (in last year of employment)	100% of days over 300	11*

*Managers have a maximum of 13 days paid.

8. What will happen if my leave balance is negative?

If you have a negative leave balance when you separate, the value of the negative leave plus accrual lost will be withheld from your final pay. If your final pay does not cover the amount of negative leave, you will have two options to repay the debt as described in 3 above. A debt may cause a delay in the processing of your pension.

9. If I have leave extension quota from the previous year, will it be paid?

You will be paid for all earned, unused leave carried over from the previous leave calendar year, if you separate on or before the seventh pay period of the next leave calendar year.

10. What tax deductions are taken out of the final leave payout?

The final leave payout is subject to all federal, state and local taxes. Federal wage tax is calculated at the supplemental earnings tax rate of 25%.

11. Who do I contact if I have questions about my leave or the payout?

Questions about leave payouts should be referred to your agency Human Resource office.

12. Can I defer my leave payout to my deferred compensation account?

Yes, but it is very important to contact Empower at 866.737.7457 or www.sers457.com at least 45 days in advance of your separation date if you wish to defer some or all of your leave payout to deferred compensation. Obtain a leave payout estimate from your agency Human Resource office, then contact Empower Retirement to determine how much you are permitted to defer and to set-up the deferral. Be careful not to overestimate your leave payout amount. If you overestimate it, the amount you designate will be taken, even if it includes additional pay from your final pay.

*Employees of the Liquor Control Board, Office of the Attorney General, Gaming Control Board, Public Utility Commission, Auditor General and all other agencies **not** under the Governor's jurisdiction should contact their local Human Resource office for assistance.

Benefits Information

13. How does separation affect my health benefits?

If you are enrolled in health benefits administered by the Pennsylvania Employees Benefit Trust Fund (PEBTF), active state-paid coverage and State Employee Assistance Program (SEAP) benefits will cease at 11:59 p.m. on the date of your separation.

You may continue your coverage through the federal COBRA program but you are responsible for paying the premium. The PEBTF will send you information and enrollment forms.

If you choose to retire, you may be eligible for coverage under the commonwealth's Retired Employees Health Program. Contact the State Employees' Retirement Counseling Center at 800.633.5461 or visit www.SERS.pa.gov for details of eligibility for coverage. If you elect coverage, you will remain eligible for SEAP.

14. How does separation affect the Family Care Account Program (FCAP)?

If you are a participant, you can continue to submit for reimbursement for eligible employment-related day care expenses. Documentation required for reimbursement must be attached to the reimbursement form.

Requests for reimbursement of your deductions must be submitted to the HR Service Center by March 31 of next year. After that, funds remaining in the account for which you have not requested reimbursement are forfeited.

15. How does separation affect a NowU 529 College Savings (formerly TAP)?

Contact the Treasury Department at 800.440.4000 regarding continuation of payment.

16. How does separation affect Savings Bonds participation?

Contact the Treasury Department at 800.553.2663 regarding continuation of payment.

17. How does separation affect my state-paid group life insurance?

Your coverage will terminate 31 calendar days after separation if you were in an active pay status or on leave without pay with benefits at the time of separation. You are eligible to continue coverage at your own expense by converting your term insurance to whole life insurance by applying to MetLife within 31 days of the date of separation.

If you are permanently and totally disabled, you may apply for disability life insurance at no cost; the application should be submitted immediately. If the application is not submitted within 12 months following the separation, the application will not be processed.

Contact MetLife at 855.972.5433 for more information.

18. How does separation affect my Long-Term Disability, Optional Life and Long Term Care insurance?

Long-Term Disability policies will end at 11:59 p.m. on the date before the separation is effective. Employees enrolled in Optional Life Insurance and Long-Term Care Insurance will receive information from Prudential for continuation of these policies via direct payment. Contact Prudential at 800.893.7316 for more information. For Long Term Care, contact Prudential at 800.732.0416.

19. How does separation affect my MetLife Auto and Home Insurance?

If you currently have payroll deductions for auto or home insurance, contact MetLife at 800.438.6388 to arrange for alternative payment options.

*Employees of the Liquor Control Board, Office of the Attorney General, Gaming Control Board, Public Utility Commission, Auditor General and all other agencies **not** under the Governor's jurisdiction should contact their local Human Resource office for assistance.

20. How does separation affect my SECA contributions?

Any SECA deductions will automatically cease effective your last pay date.

21. How does separation affect my deferred compensation (Empower Retirement) account?

If you are enrolled in the deferred compensation program through payroll deduction, deductions will automatically cease effective with your last pay date. It is important that you contact your deferred compensation representative at least 45 days before your retirement date to complete necessary paperwork.

Retirement Information

22. Who should I contact regarding retirement information?

If you are retiring, you must contact SERS in order to meet with a retirement counselor to learn about your retirement options. It is important that you talk with your retirement counselor two to three months before your actual retirement date to ensure optimum service.

Important: If you have non-state or state service that is not credited to your retirement account, you may purchase it at any time while you are an active contributing member. If you are planning to retire, contact your retirement counselor as soon as possible so your request can be processed and added to your retirement account prior to you receiving retirement benefit estimates.

The Department of Education is unique in that employees may be enrolled in either the State Employees’ Retirement System (SERS) or the Pennsylvania Public School Employees’ Retirement System (PSERS), or in the Teachers’ Insurance Annuity Association/College Retirement Equities Fund (TIAA-CREF).

SERS	717.783.9065 or 800.633.5461
PSERS	717.787.8540 or 888.773.7748
TIAA-CREF	800.845.2776

23. How long does it take until I receive my first pension check?

Expect it to take 8 to 10 weeks before you receive your first check. However, this can vary depending on the work demands placed on the retirement system provider and also can be influenced by the lead time you provide in submitting all necessary paperwork and if you have any debts to the commonwealth.

24. What is the cost of my health benefits after I retire?

This is different depending on your circumstances. Discuss your health benefits options with your SERS retirement counselor at 800.633.5461.

*Employees of the Liquor Control Board, Office of the Attorney General, Gaming Control Board, Public Utility Commission, Auditor General and all other agencies **not** under the Governor's jurisdiction should contact their local Human Resource office for assistance.