



RONDOUT VALLEY FEDERATION OF TEACHERS & SCHOOL-RELATED PROFESSIONALS

RETIREMENT INFORMATION

In general, **all** retirement questions should be brought to TRS (Teachers Retirement System) or ERS (Employees Retirement System) in Albany, NY, to find out which options best suit your retirement needs. This is because of the enormous liability our local union can bear for giving out inaccurate information on retirement that could affect the rest of a member's life. However, the RVF recognizes the stress that retirement decisions place on our members, so we have developed this pamphlet and annual workshop to help get you started. You can find information on **TRS** [here](#). You can find information on **ERS** [here](#). Our teachers, teaching assistants, guidance counselors, and related service providers are in TRS, while our behavior specialists, nurses, aides, and secretaries are in ERS.

Making the Decision

This is often the toughest part of the process; making the decision to retire. Tiers 2-4 members must have at least 5 years of vested service in order to be eligible for a pension, and Tiers 5-6 members must have 10 years. If you are in Tiers 2-4, you must have 30 years of service AND be at least 55 years old to retire and receive a pension. No penalty applies to tier 2-4 members who retire at age 62 or older, or who have 30 years of credited service. No penalty applies to Tier 5 members who retire either at age 62 or later, or at age 57 or later with at least 30 years of service credit. No age reduction applies to Tier 6 members who retire at age 63 or later. Learn more specific information in the NYSTRS manual [here](#).

The RVF has three contracts. In order to receive the retirement incentive listed in the contracts you must be in your ***first year of eligibility***. In the Teachers' Contract, you must submit your irrevocable letter of retirement by February 1 to be eligible for the incentive. In both the Paraprofessional and Secretarial Contracts, you must submit your irrevocable letter of retirement "five months prior" to retirement. The retirement incentive is \$20,000 in the [Teachers Contract](#) (Article 12.9), \$7,500 in the [Paraprofessional Contract](#) (Article 15.3), and \$15,000 in the [Secretarial Contract](#) (Article 9.3). For those members not in their first year of eligibility (and thus not receiving the retirement incentive), letters of retirement must be submitted at least 30 days prior to retirement date. The payment of sick days upon retirement is in Article 12.8 of the Teachers Contract, Article 15.3B of the Paraprofessional Contract, and Article 9.3B of the Secretarial Contract.

It is suggested that you personally bring two copies of your letter of retirement (one for the District and one for your records) to the Superintendent's Office. The receptionist will date/time stamp the District's copy, but be sure and get your personal copy for your records date/time stamped as well. If you are eligible for District incentive, attach your benefit profile from TRS or ERS proving that you meet the required eligibility. You should see an RVF Officer and/or attend the annual RVF Retirement Workshop to ask about health care and sick day language to include. A sample letter template follows:

Sample Letter

Dear (Superintendent's name):

Please accept this irrevocable letter of resignation for the purpose of retirement from my position as a _____ (position), effective _____ (date of retirement). This is contingent on my eligibility for the retirement incentive as stated in Article Number _____ of the (Teacher/Secretary/Paraprofessional) contract on page ____.

(You can add other contract language here regarding retiree health insurance, payment of sick days, etc. as per each of the individual unit contracts).

If the District elects to participate in a State-wide incentive, I respectfully retain my right to be eligible for the incentive should it be in my best interest.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)

Health Insurance

Every member that has been in the District for at least 10 consecutive years (15 consecutive years in the Paraprofessional Contract) is entitled to *individual* health insurance. If you need family coverage, you will have the option of paying the difference between individual and family at an out of pocket expense to you. Once you select the health insurance you desire, you might not be able to change it, depending on the insurance company's bylaws. Make sure you ask the employer about your health insurance options and limitations upon retiring. For those of you who retire at age 65 or higher, be sure that you (and your spouse if he/she is covered under your health insurance policy) to enroll in Medicare Part A and B *before* retirement to avoid a penalty.

Dental Insurance

Retirees do not get free dental care with *Delta Dental*. However, you can purchase *COBRA* insurance at reasonable prices. You will receive a letter in the mail from *WolfPack* (3rd party administrator for *Delta Dental*) asking if you want to remain enrolled at an out of pocket cost to you. You can find more information [here](#).

Vision Insurance

Retirees do not get free vision care with *Davis Vision*. However, you will receive a letter in the mail from the RVF Benefit Trust shortly upon your retirement to ask if you would like to remain enrolled at an out of pocket cost to you. You can find out more information on vision insurance [here](#).

Keeping Busy

For many people, keeping busy in retirement is essential to mental and physical health. Stay connected with your work friends during evening and weekend hours or through text and social media. Go for daily walks and get some exercise and fresh air. Join a book club, a community organization, a political campaign, or sit on a board of directors. Visit family, babysit your grandchildren, and travel often. Run for public office or the Board of Education where you live. Take a class at the Lifetime Learning Institute at SUNY New Paltz, which offers 4-week and 8-week courses for people 55 and over. Whatever you choose to do, it is important to keep moving, keep busy, and to continue to always speak out on the things that matter.

Staying Connected

For many of us, our work friends are a huge part of our social life. Rest assured that there are still ways to connect with RVF friends after retirement.

There is an RVF tradition of retirees meeting once per month for lunch at a rotating schedule of restaurants. They meet every month except for the deep winter months of January and February. Stay connected with the RVF on our website rvfederation.com which also has a [retiree page](#) and [calendar](#) of events. Follow our RVF [Facebook page](#) and read [The Union Sound](#). Another way to stay connected to your RVF friends is to show up to RVF events, such as our bi-annual highway cleanup, and/or the annual RVF picnic.

Post-Retirement Employment

Public employment -- May not earn more than \$35,000 annually without penalties.

Private sector employment -- No limit to annual salary.

The Daytime Army

[NYSUT](#) calls retirees our “Daytime Army” or “Daytime Warriors” because of their unique ability to engage in political action during the day while the rest of the RVF and NYSUT are working. Retirees have the ability to be very powerful politically, as they lobby and march for unions, workers’ rights, and education.