

University System of New Hampshire
COVID-19 Severance Policy
June 2020

As one mechanism to address the financial challenges brought on by responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and declining enrollments, the University System of New Hampshire (USNH) is offering a severance policy to achieve permanent headcount reductions. The program provides more benefits based on service, which is prevalent in higher ed institutions. This policy will supersede the current USY Lay-off, Reduction-In-Force and new/temporary COVID-19 enhanced lay-off policies, will sunset on June 30, 2022 unless it is made permanent at that time with potential modifications, and is subject to negotiations with each respective collective bargaining group, as applicable.

Plan Details

- All participants will receive 4 weeks of base pay minimum plus 1 week for every year of status service, capped at 39 weeks. Base pay excludes all additional pay including longevity pay and overtime, etc. Payment will be processed via salary continuation.
- If currently enrolled at time of separation, participants will receive medical (CIGNA and prescription service) coverage continuation equal to 4 weeks minimum plus 1 week for every year of service, capped at 26 weeks, at the current employee rate. Medical coverage requires enrollment in COBRA and will be billed at subsidized COBRA rates. After completion of the subsidized years of service benefit, ongoing medical coverage will revert to COBRA rates. No other benefits are continued unless at full cost under COBRA.

Examples: An employee with 30 years of status service will receive 34 weeks salary and 26 weeks of continued medical benefits at current employee rates. An employee with 10 years of status service will receive 14 weeks of salary and medical coverage.

- Unless under extenuating circumstances, employees whose employment is terminated via this COVID-19 Severance Policy are not eligible to reapply or be rehired into a benefited status, term, temporary or adjunct position within USNH, either full-time or part-time.

To ensure ongoing financial stability, it is critically important to achieve headcount reductions as part of our structural changes, and the severance policy offers valuable and equitable benefits to achieve this goal. USNH will continue to implement restructuring plans to further reduce headcount to necessary levels as needed.