

LAYOFF RESOURCES

If you've been laid off, you likely have concerns and questions. To help you through the process, Harvard offers the following resources and support services.

LAYOFF RESOURCES

RESOURCES FOR ADMINISTRATION/PROFESSIONAL STAFF

RESOURCES FOR HUCTW STAFF

BENEFITS CONTINUATION

ADDITIONAL EXTERNAL RESOURCES

LAYOFF RESOURCES

Harvard provides a number of resources to employees facing layoff. Your [HR department](#) is available to answer any questions and to provide assistance during this process.

In addition, various departments within Harvard Human Resources are available to help you in your transition or to answer any questions you may have. For more information, contact any of the following departments:

- Labor Relations – 617-495-2786
- Benefits – 617-496-4001, benefits@harvard.edu
- Center for Workplace Development – 617-495-4895

Harvard's [Employee Assistance Program](#) provides confidential counseling and referrals to resources for employees facing layoff.

RESOURCES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE/ PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Notice period

You will be given notice of your layoff **at least 60 days** in advance to give you time to develop a transition plan and look for another job. In the case of **grant-funded positions**, you will be notified at least 30 days in advance.

Outplacement

You may receive individual outplacement counseling from ClearRock, Inc. To register for services, please review your layoff materials for more information or consult your HR Officer for assistance.

Skills improvement

The [Center for Workplace Development \(CWD\)](#) offers a variety of workshops that may help you improve job skills. CWD courses are available through your termination date.

Severance

You are eligible for severance based on your credited length of service, as follows:

- Zero up to seven years of service – one week per year of service
- Seven up to 15 years of service – one and a half weeks per year of service
- 15 or more years of service – two weeks per year of service

If you are eligible, you will receive severance pay in a lump sum in your final paycheck.

Employees who secure another position within Harvard, either before or after their layoff date, may not be eligible for full severance benefits and/or may be required to return a portion of the severance payment.

Financial counseling

Individual financial counseling, particularly around [retirement issues](#), is offered through [Harvard's investment vendor](#) TIAA.

Unemployment insurance

If you have any questions about unemployment compensation benefits, including issues of eligibility and filing a claim, contact the [State Unemployment Insurance Office](#) nearest you.

Vacation

You will be paid for any vacation time that you earned but did not use through your termination date. Prior to your termination date, you may elect to roll accumulated vacation time into your TDA account.

Rehiring by the University

If you are rehired by the University, you will receive prior service credit, provided you had completed more than three months of credited service at the time you left the University. In addition, you may be required to repay a portion of your severance payment.

Note: Employees who are not reappointed following the completion of a time-specific or term appointment are not generally eligible to receive the above benefits.

RESOURCES FOR HUCTW STAFF

Work Security Program

The Work Security Program sets forth contract language about hiring preference for HUCTW layoff candidates, calls for salary and benefit continuation, and designates a case manager to help the candidate find another job. Details are available here:

[Layoffs and Work Security, Personnel Manual](#)

[Work Security, Agreement](#)

[Work Security Candidate Activity Tracker](#)

Notice period

You will be given notice of your layoff at least 60 days in advance (or at least 30 days in the case of some grant-funded positions) to give you time to develop a transition plan and start looking for your next job.

Case manager

You will be assigned a case manager (to be paired with your union representative) who will assist you in finding employment. Your case manager can help you identify target jobs. They can also make inquiries and advocacy calls to Harvard tubs/departments on your behalf for positions for which you are qualified.

[Case Management Planner](#)

Skill building

The [Center for Workplace Development \(CWD\)](#) offers a variety of workshops to help you improve workplace and job search skills. It is recommended that you confer with your case manager and union rep to identify appropriate classes. CWD courses are free for HUCTW staff facing layoff.

[Skills Assessment](#)

[Are you ready for a job hunt?](#)

Work Security benefits

If you are unable to locate another position before the end of your notice paid period, you are eligible for Work Security salary and benefit continuation for up to three additional months. Access to these benefits is contingent on your active participation in all phases of the job search process, both during and after the notice period—making all reasonable efforts to apply for all relevant positions within the University, as well as maintaining an active job search outside of the University.

Joint Work Security Committee

The University and HUCTW Joint Work Security Committee may authorize the extension of wages and benefits for up to three months beyond the initial three months of Work Security period. Extensions are funded centrally through the Committee. To request an extension, you would apply toward the end of your Work Security time.

Severance pay

If you do not secure a job at the University by the end of your time on the payroll, you will be entitled to severance pay. This is calculated at the rate of one week per year of service, with a minimum of one week for those with up to 15 years of service. With 15 or more years of service, severance pay is calculated at the rate of two weeks per year of service.

Financial counseling

Individual financial counseling, particularly around [retirement issues](#), is offered through [Harvard's investment vendor](#) TIAA.

Unemployment insurance

If you have any questions about unemployment compensation benefits, including issues of eligibility and the procedure for filing a claim, contact the [State Unemployment Insurance Office](#) nearest you.

BENEFITS CONTINUATION

If you are laid off, you may contact Benefits (617-496-4001) to speak with a consultant who will go over your benefits options with you, reviewing your medical, dental and vision coverage, life insurance conversion and portability options and retirement program options.

If you are retirement-eligible, you may be eligible for continued medical, dental and other coverage through the University.

Below is a summary of benefits continuation options for laid-off employees.

Medical/dental/vision coverage

Active employee medical and dental coverage ends on your layoff date. You are eligible to continue with medical, dental and vision coverage under the provisions of [COBRA](#) for up to 18 months with rates as follows:

Medical and dental premiums for the first 12 months of coverage will be 1.5 times the rate that you pay as an active employee; this is called the layoff rate.

For the final 6 months you will be charged the regular COBRA rate, which includes both the employee and employer share of the premium, plus a 2 percent service charge. To view COBRA rates: Go to [Forms & Documents](#) > Total Rewards > Health Benefit Rates

Vision premiums for the first 12 months of coverage will be at the active rate. For the final 6 months you will be charged the COBRA rate, which includes a 2% service charge.

Once your layoff is effective in Harvard's PeopleSoft system, Benefit Strategies, LLC, will send you an application for continued medical, dental and vision coverage under the provisions of COBRA. To continue coverage, you must apply within the 60-day election period, and your coverage will be retroactive to your layoff date. Benefit Strategies, LLC, will bill you for premiums. After your benefits under COBRA end, conversion to non-group coverage may be available through your medical, dental or vision care provider (though HUGHP does not offer non-group coverage).

Life insurance

Life insurance coverage ends on your layoff date. You may convert or port all or part of your coverage to an individual policy with MetLife. MetLife will automatically notify you of your conversion and portability options. You will have 31 days from the date you lost coverage or 15 days from the date of notification, whichever is later, to sign up. You can contact MetLife directly at 866-291-5627.

Long Term Care (LTC) coverage

Long Term Care coverage will continue as long as you continue to make payments.

Disability coverage

Short Term Disability and Long Term Disability coverage end on your layoff date.

Flexible Spending Account (FSA)

Your enrollment in the Health and Dependent Care FSA ends on your layoff date. Eligible medical/dental expenses for the Health FSA must be incurred by the date of your layoff. Eligible dependent care expenses for the Dependent Care FSA may be incurred through the end of the calendar year in which you are laid off. [Benefit Strategies, LLC](#), can give you your current FSA balance. You have until March 31 of the following calendar year to file a claim for the prior year for both types of FSAs. You can elect COBRA to extend your FSA enrollment. If you elect COBRA, you will continue to make contributions on an after-tax basis and may submit for reimbursement of eligible expenses incurred after your layoff date (as long as you continue to make your COBRA payments).

Tax Deferred Accounts (TDA)

When you terminate your employment with the University, you are no longer eligible to contribute to your TDA. You may choose to:

- Leave your account at the investment vendor. Accounts remain tax deferred.
- Rollover your funds to an IRA or other qualified rollover account. Dollars remain tax deferred.
- Take a lump sum distribution. In most cases, you will incur taxation and penalties for early withdrawal under the age of 59 ½.

Please contact Harvard's retirement plan administrator, TIAA, at TIAA.org/harvard or 800-527-1398 for details on distributions. We suggest that you consult a tax advisor before you move or withdraw TDA funds.

Retirement plans

If you are pension-eligible, you may qualify for benefits under your retirement plan. If you are vested (you own the accumulations in your retirement plan), the University will automatically send a pension calculation to you six to eight weeks following your effective date of termination.

Along with the pension calculation, you will receive instructions and distribution paperwork, if applicable. You should also contact your investment account vendor as soon as possible to prepare your retirement funds for transition.

ADDITIONAL EXTERNAL RESOURCES

There are various external resources for job seekers. Case managers and outplacement counselors are available to discuss your external job search options. Here are several helpful places to look:

MassHire Career Centers

Massachusetts has [MassHire Career Centers](#) across the state. At these centers, job seekers can access experienced career counselors; workshops and short-term training; up-to-date local, state and national job listings; resume and cover letter assistance, and more. There is typically no cost for many of these services.

New England Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (NE-HERC)

The [New England Higher Education Recruitment Consortium](#) includes many academic and related institutions that collaborate on recruitment issues. HERC has a free web-based search engine that includes staff and faculty positions at a diverse group of public and independent colleges and universities. You can also create a job search agent that will continue to update you on recently posted positions.

Additional career websites

Career websites targeted to higher education include:

www.higheredjobs.com

www.insidehighered.com

www.chronicle.com

Social networking

Many job seekers find it helpful to use social networking sites to complement other networking activities. These also enable you to connect with colleagues and potential employers, and may lead to additional opportunities.

[This short article](#) summarizes the use of various social networking sites.

