

Mandatory Furloughs - Faculty HR Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

These FAQs have been developed to help address the questions around mandatory furloughs. Please note the HR team will address and publish new questions as they are received.

Why is MSU Denver mandating furlough days?

As anticipated in the [July 20 email from Larry Sampler, COO](#), Metropolitan State University of Denver will be adopting mandatory furloughs effective August 2020. With fall enrollment still approximately 10% down, these cost-reduction measures are the most effective tool to help address the University's budget shortfall for the 2020-21 fiscal year.

Why is the University instituting furloughs instead of across-the-board pay cuts?

Opting for furlough days rather than temporary reductions in pay will at least allow faculty and staff a day off from work. Across-the-board pay cuts would have reduced employee pay, meaning the employee would be working the same number of hours for less pay. University leadership felt furlough days would at least allow the employee to take time away from work without an expectation to check in for that day.

How much will this save MSU Denver?

Furloughs will provide \$1.1 million in additional savings and get us closer to bridging our budget gap.

What if I am already participating in voluntary furloughs?

Faculty and Chairs that are already participating in voluntary furloughs or leaves of absence will not be asked to increase their number of days unless the original request was less than the required five days of furloughs.

Is there a salary threshold for Cat I faculty where furloughs are not required?

Yes, Cat I faculty making less than \$50,000 will not be required to take 5 furlough days.

Has a decision been made about faculty furloughs, and when will the pay reductions show up in a faculty member's paycheck?

Pay reductions will be distributed evenly across paychecks over the course of 10 months. Since all faculty have a factor of 10 pays setup in our payroll system, this is the only option available to deduct pay evenly. Depending on your contract cycle, your deduction will either be August – May or September – June.

Will department chairs be treated as faculty or professional staff for the purposes of the furlough pay reductions?

Chairs will be treated as faculty since they are in faculty lines.

Will Category II faculty be required to furlough?

Yes, Cat II faculty will be required to take five furlough days unless they earn less than \$50,000 annually. Cat II faculty that make less than \$50,000 annually will not be required to take furlough days.

Will affiliate faculty be required to furlough?

Affiliates or Cat III faculty will not be required to furlough since they make less than \$50,000 annually.

Are there set days faculty will be required to take furloughs?

We are not setting specific days for furloughs. Faculty can request the days that work best with their schedules with Chair approval.

How do I manage increased workload from the current situation and reduction in workforce, and still take furlough days?

Now more than ever it's very important that faculty and chairs work together on goals and expectations. Given the changes due to the budget crisis, we encourage faculty and chairs to have collaborative conversations on priorities, goal setting and expectations given the new environment, and to reprioritize if needed. The Provost has indicated that meeting the needs of our students will be the first priority for all faculty this year. If faculty need to find ways to shift or redistribute service or scholarship activities in order

to maintain their commitment to their students, they should work with their Chairs and Deans to do so.

How many days will full-time faculty be mandated to furlough?

Faculty will be furloughed at a set five days for the 2020-21 academic year. Faculty members who are already participating in voluntary pay reductions, course release or leaves of absence will not be asked to take additional pay cuts unless their original voluntary reduction was less than the equivalent of five days.

Do faculty have flexibility to schedule their five furlough days?

Faculty will need to work with their department Chairs in consultation with Deans to schedule furlough days that have the least impact to instruction and student support. The university wants to offer flexibility in scheduling furlough days. Please refer to email sent on Aug. 3, 2020.

Am I required to get approval from my Chair prior to scheduling my furlough days?

Yes, faculty should work with their Chairs to select appropriate days. Your Chair will be reviewing other requests for time off and will be ensuring essential department business continues. Chairs should work with their Deans when scheduling furlough days.

By what date do employees need to complete mandatory furlough days?

By the end of this fiscal year, June 30, 2021.

What guidance can HR give about unemployment eligibility due to reduced hours?

Please refer to Human Resources' FAQ on [unemployment](#) for more information.

What if I am being paid on a grant? Will I need to furlough?

Furloughs do apply to faculty paid under grants. Federal guidance requires us to apply all salary actions evenly to grant funded positions. Normally, this means that when salaries increase at the institution, they also increase for the grants. We apply this guidance to all grants and cash funded programs, to ensure that all faculty and staff are treated equitably.

I am leaving MSU Denver and I have not taken my allotted furlough days. Will you deduct those days from my last paycheck?

HR will prorate what the employee should have taken in furlough days and these days will be deducted in the employees' final paycheck.

I am on a H1B visa. Will taking furloughs effect my visa status?

The guidance we have received from our immigration attorney is, yes, it could affect the employee's current visa. Because of this concern, employees on a visa will not be required to take mandatory furloughs.

I am on Family Medical Leave (FML). Will I be required to take the furlough days?

Please contact Amanda Berry at aberry11@msudenver.edu and she will work with you on the furlough days and your medical leave.

When will you reassess the budget situation to determine if further furloughs are needed or if the financial situation has improved?

We will continue to monitor the budget situation and will update employees as we have more information.

How will mandatory furloughs affect employee benefits and retirement?

Furloughs will not impact health, dental or vision benefits. Employee will need to call their individual retirement vendor to understand how furloughs may impact their overall retirement planning.

Can you please provide a formula so that we can calculate the financial impact the furlough will have on our salary?

Please refer to the online salary calculator tool on the HR Benefits [webpage](#).

Will there be any additional furloughs for fiscal year 2020-21?

Unfortunately, we are not able to say if this will be the only round of furloughs. However, this process will continue to be transparent, and employees can expect timely communications should the University's situation change.