



Steps to Retirement

Clergy Retirement Eligibility

Under ¶ 357 of the *2016 Book of Discipline*, eligibility for clergy retirement can be based *either* on age or years of service. Clergy need only meet *one* of the following criteria for their retirement classification – they do not need to meet both. (Please refer to the *Discipline* for complete details.)

Mandatory Retirement - Age 72 on or before July 1st

Full Retirement - Age 65 or 40 years of service

Early Retirement - Age 62 or 30 years of service

(Under Early Retirement, clergy are eligible for retirement benefits at the time of retirement, but benefits may be subject to a reduction since they will be paid over a longer period of time).

Twenty Year Rule - 20 years of service

Clergy who retire under the Twenty Year Rule must wait until age 62 to begin receiving retirement benefits. Also, clergy who retire under the Twenty Year Rule will not be eligible for Retiree Death Benefits under the Comprehensive Protection Plan (CPP).

If you are considering Retirement, a good first step is to contact Isabel Munoz, Associate Director of Human Resources for retirement questions, eligibility, process, pension projections and other considerations such as health benefit options at retirement/Medicare.

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RESOURCES

- riotexas.org
- wespath.org/retirement/services/ey/
- benefitsaccess.org/login.aspx
- Wespath
1-800-883-4078

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Isabel Munoz
 16400 Huebner Road
 San Antonio TX 78248
 210 408-4526
 888-349-4191 X526
imunoz@riotexas.org



Retirement Process

Requests for retirement shall be stated in writing at least one hundred twenty days prior to the date on which retirement is to be effective.

1. Submit your retirement request in writing to Bishop Schnase at least 120 days in advance to allow sufficient time for the Cabinet/BOM approval and for processing of your retirement benefits with the

Wespath. (Retirement requests can be approved with less than 120 days notice at the discretion of the Bishop and Cabinet; however, there may be a delay in receiving retirement benefits).

Your retirement letter should include:

Your requested retirement date (*this should be the first day of the month in which you retire*). For example, if your last day worked is December 31, your retirement effective date would be January 1. If you are retiring at Annual Conference, your retirement date will be *July 1*.

Mail or email your retirement letter to:

Bishop Robert Schnase
16400 Huebner Road
San Antonio TX 78248
bishoprs@riotexas.org

Include an email copy of your retirement request letter to:

Rev. Adam Knight, Chair Board of Ordained Ministry, pastoradam@coker.org
Your District Superintendent
Isabel Munoz, imunoz@riotexas.org

2. You will receive notification once the Cabinet and Board of Ordained Ministry have voted on your request.
3. Once retirement eligibility has been verified and the requirement request approved by the Cabinet, the Rio Texas Benefits Office will submit the retirement request to Wespath (formerly the General Board of Pensions), pending final approval by the Board of Ordained Ministry.
4. If eligible for pension benefits from Wespath, you will receive a prospective retirement letter with instructions on the online retirement benefit process. You may access your Wespath account at www.benefitsaccess.org/login.aspx
5. All retiring clergy are invited to attend the **Retirement Seminar** to be held at University United Methodist Church, 5084 DeZavala Rd., San Antonio TX 78249 on **March 25-26, 2019**. Mark your calendar! Invitations and additional information will be sent in January. (If you make an appointment, retirement videos may be recorded at this event.)

6. Consider preparing a retiree video – The video is a special opportunity to offer your parting words and reflections to clergy, lay delegates and guests of the Annual Conference. Retiree Videos – The Conference Communications department is excited to help you prepare your video including filming at the conference office or recommendations for video file transfer.

The deadline for all retirement videos is noon on April 12, 2019. All videos should be received by the Communications Department or appointments made with the Communication Department for recording retirement videos. Any videos received after noon on April 12 will not be accepted for presentation at Annual Conference. Contact Austin Newton at 210-408-4527 or anewton@riotexas.org for additional information.

7. You will also receive a Clergy Transition Packet from the Conference Office. This thumb drive will include information on:

- Annual Conference
- Retirement Seminar
- Moving Policy
- Transition Policy
- Parsonage Hints
- Saying Good-Bye to the Departing Pastor and Family
- Welcoming the Incoming Pastor and Family

8. For clergy enrolled on Healthflex, you will receive information from the Rio Texas Conference Benefits Office regarding Retiree health plan options. Medicare eligible retirees and spouses are not eligible for Healthflex and will need to consider enrolling Medicare Supplement/Advantage plan or other plan such as from a former employer or spouse's plan. 65+ Medicare Supplement and Advantage plans require enrollment in Medicare Part A & B, therefore your Part B effective date should be no later than the date of your retirement. To enroll in Medicare Part B, contact your local Social Security office or visit www.medicare.gov for additional information.

9. All retirees will also receive information regarding **Annual Conference which will be held in Corpus Christi TX on June 5-8, 2019.**

Retiree Luncheon – Each year at Annual Conference, the Board of Pensions hosts a retiree luncheon for all retired clergy and spouses and surviving spouses of deceased clergy. All 2019 retirees and their spouse are invited to attend. Invitations and notices will be sent in the Spring.

Retiree Worship Celebration – Each year at Annual Conference, retirees are honored at a Worship Celebration. The Bishop will present each retiree with a pin and certificate to acknowledge the years of service in the Methodist Church. Spouses are encouraged to attend and stand with the retiree. More details will be sent in May.

10. All retired clergy members who are not appointed as pastors of a charge shall have a seat in the charge conference and all the privileges of membership in the church where they elect to hold such membership. They shall report to the charge conference and to the pastor all marriages performed, baptism administered, and other pastoral functions. If the retired clergy resides outside the bounds of the annual conference where membership is held, they shall forward annually to the charge conference where membership is held.



Retirement Planning Resources

There are a variety of resources to assist Rio Texas clergy and conference employees with planning for retirement:

Rio Texas Conference Pre-Retirement Seminar

The Rio Texas Conference offers a Pre-Retirement Seminar to clergy ages 50+ and their spouses. Invitations will be sent to eligible clergy.



This seminar will feature presentations from Wespath, Social Security, and other retirement experts. Topics include:

- Retirement planning and individual retirement projections
- Investments in retirement
- Social Security
- Spiritual and social aspects of retirement planning
- Clergy tax issues

The following resources can be accessed at any time:

1. Wespath Retirement Team

Wespath has a Retirement Team which can run retirement projections for prospective retirees and answer questions regarding the retirement process. The Retirement Team can be reached at 1-800-883-4078, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Central time.

2. Ernst & Young (EY) Financial Planning Services

Wespath provides Ernst & Young (now EY) Financial Planning Services *at no charge* to active participants and surviving spouses with an account balance in a Wespath plan and to retired participants with an account balance of at least \$10,000. EY's financial planners can provide confidential, professional assistance on a wide range of financial issues such as:

- Making investment decisions
- Managing credit card and other debt
- Evaluating insurance needs and options
- Estate planning
- Saving for your children's college education
- Retirement planning and projection
- Understanding tax issues
- Buying a home or car
- Clergy Housing Allowance

EY does not sell any investment or insurance products. Call EY directly at **1-800-360-2539**, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Central time. For further information, go to <http://www.gbophb.org/retirement/services/ey/>.

3. **Benefits Access Online Account Services**

Benefits Access is your online access to your Wespath retirement accounts. Go to <https://www.benefitsaccess.org/login.aspx> to register. You will need your Social Security number and the PIN number which was provided to you in your initial enrollment packet. If you do not know your PIN, you can request a new one.

Benefits Access gives you access to:

Your Wespath retirement plan account balances, transactions, investment returns and allocations;

Retirement Projections – you can get estimates of your retirement funds available at projected retirement dates;

Articles on a variety of retirement and financial planning issues under “Learn More;”
Electronic delivery of statements and the Wespath publication *Hark*.

4. **Social Security & Medicare**

To determine eligibility for benefits, benefit amounts and when to start benefits contact your local Social Security office or visit www.ssa.gov. For Medicare eligibility, plan coverage, and Medicare costs visit www.medicare.gov

