



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
1-800-851-2201

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
bishopr@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 kit with instructions on the online retirement benefit process. You may access your Wespath account at www.benefitsaccess.org/login.aspx

The Wespath website at www.wespath.org has many Retirement resources including a Retirement Navigation Guide, Videos on the Application process, benefit decision guidance and list of upcoming events and webinars.

5. All retiring clergy are invited to attend the **Financial Planning and Retirement Seminar** to be held at University United Methodist Church, 5084 DeZavala Rd., San Antonio TX 78249 on **March 2-3, 2020**. Mark your calendar! (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 10, 2020. 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 10** will not be accepted for presentation at Annual Conference. Contact Sylvia Trevino at 210-408-4500 or strevino@riotexas.org for additional information.

7. You will also receive additional Clergy transition information via email from the Conference Office. This information will include:

- Annual Conference
- Moving Policy
- Parsonage Hints
- Financial Planning & Retirement Seminar Registration
- Transition Policy
- Saying Goodbye to the departing pastor and family
- Welcoming the incoming pastor and family

8. For clergy enrolled on Healthflex, Retiree health plan options and the HealthFlex exit/termination processes will be discussed at the Retirement Seminar. 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 10-13, 2020.**

Retiree Luncheon – Each year at Annual Conference, the Board of Pensions hosts a retiree luncheon for all retired clergy/spouses and surviving spouses of deceased clergy. All 2020 retirees and their spouse are invited to attend. Additional details and invitations will be sent in May 2020.

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 shared at the Financial Planning & Retirement Seminar.

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 Financial Planning & Retirement Seminar

The Rio Texas Conference offers a Financial Planning and Retirement Seminar to clergy and their spouses. Registration will open in late January 2020.



This seminar will feature presentations from Wespath and EY Financial. 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 Website & 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 1-800-851-2201, Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Central time. Visit www.wespath.org for additional information.

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.

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

