

# VOLUNTARY SEPARATION PAYMENT PROGRAM

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### **(1) Who is eligible to participate in the Voluntary Separation Payment Program?**

You are **NOT** eligible to participate in the Voluntary Separation Payment Program if you are:

- (a) a member of Westchester County Department of Public Safety Police Benevolent Association, Inc. ("PBA") (Police Officers, Detectives & Sergeants Unit); Westchester County Department of Public Safety Police Benevolent Association, Inc. ("PBA") Superior Officers Unit (for Lieutenants, Captains, Inspectors, Chief Inspectors); Westchester County Correction Officers Benevolent Association, Inc. ("COBA"); Westchester County Superior Officers Association, Inc. ("SOA"); or District Attorney's Investigators PBA of Westchester County, Inc.; or
- (b) an elected official; or
- (c) an employee who is the subject of a pending disciplinary proceeding; or
- (d) an employee of the Westchester Community College; or
- (e) a part-time, seasonal or hourly employee.

You **ARE** eligible to participate in the voluntary separation payment program if you are:

- (a) an active, full-time annual employee of the County of Westchester as of the time you elect to participate in the program; **AND**
- (b) meet the eligibility requirements for retirement as provided by the New York State Employees' Retirement System **OR** have a minimum of ten years of continuous full-time service with the County of Westchester by June 30, 2010;

### **(2) When must an eligible employee submit a letter of resignation/retirement to his or her respective Commissioner or Department Head for the purpose of participating in this Voluntary Separation Payment Program?**

An eligible employee must submit a notarized letter of resignation/retirement to his/her respective Commissioner/ Department Head no later than **June 1, 2010**.

**(3) When must an eligible employee voluntarily separate from County service to receive the incentive?**

Eligible employees of the County of Westchester must voluntarily resign or retire from County service and be off the payroll on or before **July 1, 2010**.

**(4) What must an eligible employee do to participate in this Voluntary Separation Payment Program?**

An eligible employee who chooses to participate in this Voluntary Separation Payment Program must:

- (a) submit a letter of resignation/retirement to his or her respective Commissioner/ Department Head for the purpose of participating in this Voluntary Separation Payment Program no later than June 1, 2010; and
- (b) be off the County payroll by July 1, 2010.

Employees who wish to retire from the New York State and Local Retirement System must also complete and file the Application for Service Retirement (Form RS6037-I) with the New York State and Local Retirement System, at least thirty (30) days prior to the effective date of retirement. A copy of this Application for Service Retirement (Form RS6037-I) is attached.

**(5) What if an eligible employee submits a letter of resignation/retirement to participate in this Voluntary Separation Payment Program and then changes his or her mind?**

An eligible employee who submits a letter of resignation/retirement to participate in this Voluntary Separation Payment Program has until the effective date of his or her resignation or retirement but in no event later than **June 30, 2010**, to rescind the letter of resignation/retirement to participate in this Voluntary Separation Payment Program. On July 1, 2010, the letter of resignation/retirement becomes irrevocable.

In the event that an employee withdraws his or her letter of resignation/retirement prior to June 30, 2010, it is possible that the employee's paycheck will not immediately reflect the withdrawal and the return to full-time active duty. This temporary anomaly will be immediately rectified in the next paycheck of the employee.

**(6) How much money will an eligible employee receive?**

Eligible employees choosing to participate in this voluntary program shall receive a single lump sum payment of \$1,000.00 for every completed year of full-time annual service as a Westchester County employee up to a maximum of thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000.00).

Leaves without pay, and part-time or hourly service for eligible employees are **NOT** included in the computation of time for the purposes of calculating the amount of the incentive in the Voluntary Separation Payment Program.

To determine the number of completed years of service, eligible employees should contact the *personnel representative in their County department*. The number of completed years of service for the purposes of calculating the amount of the incentive is subject to verification from the Finance Department prior to payment.

**(7) Will eligible employees be required to pay taxes on the incentive payment?**

Yes, the amount of the incentive payment shall be subject to all usual and customary taxes and withholdings.

**(8) Will the incentive payment be eligible for inclusion as deferred compensation?**

No, the incentive payment will not be eligible for inclusion as deferred compensation.

**(9) Will the incentive payment for employees who retire be included in their final base salary as “pensionable credit”?**

No, the incentive payment for employees who retire will **NOT** be included in their final base salary as “pensionable credit.” The incentive payment cannot be used in the calculation of any retirement benefit provided by the New York State Employees’ Retirement System or other applicable retirement system.

**(10) When will the eligible employee receive their incentive payment?**

Employees who participate in the Voluntary Separation Payment Program will receive their incentive payment within sixty (60) days after their resignation/retirement from service with the County of Westchester. The incentive payment shall be sent to the direct deposit bank and account indicated on the employee’s payroll records, unless the Finance Department is provided with the proper notification otherwise.

**(11) After an employee participates in the Voluntary Separation Payment Program, can the employee get another job with the County without a penalty?**

Any employee who participates in the Voluntary Separation Payment Program will have to *repay the County the entire gross amount of the incentive payment* if the employee is rehired by the County as a full-time employee, a part-time employee or hourly employee receiving a salary greater than \$10,000 per year within five (5) years after separation from employment with the County.

**(12) Can eligible employees keep their health benefits if they resign from County service?**

Yes, eligible employees can keep their health benefits if they resign from County service. For more information regarding the cost of retaining such health benefits, please contact “Benefits” in the Finance Department at (914) 995-4715.