1. Can a department deny the RIO program to an eligible employee?

No. If an employee qualifies for the RIO program, the department cannot deny participation. However, the department can negotiate the final retirement date with the eligible employee, as the retirement date is determined through mutual agreement between the employee and the department, as long as the retirement date is on or before January 15, 2021.

2. What is the cost to the department or unit?

The cost of HCSP contribution will be charged directly to the department’s or unit’s budget.

3. Who benefits from the salary and fringe savings on vacated positions?

Any salary and fringe savings are retained by the department, college or unit that bears the cost of the HCSP contribution. No program savings revert to a central account.

4. Why do I need to provide an EFS account number on the Agreement?

The EFS number provided on the Agreement is the account that central OHR will charge for the HCSP deposits. It is vital that this account be a correct, active account, or the deposit will not be processed. You should work with your fiscal officer to determine the correct account to charge, keeping in mind that sponsored accounts may NOT be used for this purpose. Central OHR cannot accept more than one EFS account number.

5. Can I augment other employees to cover the work previously completed by individuals who take RIO?

Colleges and Units are encouraged to examine the positions vacated and restructure or eliminate the work involved. If the work from the vacated position is at a higher level than the regular duties of the person performing it, an augmentation may be appropriate and used.

6. Are there any restrictions on returning to the University?

Yes. An employee may not resume employment at the University of Minnesota in any capacity for a minimum of 6 months following the date of retirement. Any employee who participates in the RIO Program may only return to University employment in a position of no more than 19.5 hours per week (49% work effort). These positions are compensation-only positions; that is, they are not eligible for University benefits. No other reemployment is permitted. Any RIO participant who returns to University employment prior to July 16, 2021 will forfeit all rights to the second HCSP payment of $19,000.

7. Can I backfill positions vacated by RIO participants?

Yes, subject to the restrictions enacted by the March 23, 2020 hiring freeze.

8. One of my employees doesn’t meet the eligibility requirements until after the close of the window period, but will before the end of the calendar year. Are they still eligible?
No. Eligibility requirements for the program must be met by the end of the window period, October 19, 2020, to be eligible for the RIO program.

9. **What is the appeal process for exceptions to the policy?**

Because the benefit of the program is non-taxable, and because the Health Care Savings Plan (HCSP) is not a University-sponsored plan, but a plan sponsored by the State of Minnesota, there are no exceptions permitted to the policy. Subsequently, there will be no appeal process.

10. **One of my employees signed up for RIO, worked to the last day of employment, but refuses to sign the release. What happens now?**

Without a signed release, the employee will receive no benefits through the RIO program. The Agreement, however, specifies that the University will hold them to their retirement date, so they are still required to leave the University and surrender tenure, if applicable. The University has no obligation to rehire this individual; if a college or unit wishes to rehire them, there will be no restrictions on the rehired appointment, as the individual had no benefit from the program.

11. **One of my employees signed up for RIO, worked through the last day of employment, signed the release, but rescinded it within the 15-day recission period. What happens now?**

If the employee rescinds the release, they will receive no benefits through the RIO program. The Agreement, however, specifies that the University will hold them to their retirement date, so they are still required to leave the University and surrender tenure, if applicable. The University has no obligation to rehire this individual; if a college or unit wishes to rehire them, there will be no restrictions on the rehired appointment, as the individual had no benefit from the program.