1. **[Why is NAIT offering a Voluntary Departure Program?](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest%22%20%5Cl%20%22Q1)**
2. [**How do I apply for the program?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q2)
3. [**Who is eligible?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q3)
4. [**Can I apply even if I'm on a medical leave or receiving a medical benefit?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q4)
5. [**What criteria will be used to determine whether a request is approved?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q5)
6. [**What are the timelines?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q6)
7. [**Are volunteers automatically accepted?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q7)
8. [**If I'm accepted, when do I need to leave?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q8)
9. [**Can I withdraw my request if I change my mind?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q9)
10. [**How will I know what severance I would be offered?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q10)
11. [**If I've already put in my resignation or retirement notice, am I excluded from applying?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q11)
12. [**How does the Voluntary Departure Program differ from the voluntary redundancy processes for AUPE and NASA?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q12)
13. [**What happens to my accrued vacation?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q13)
14. [**Is my severance taxable?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q14)
15. [**Is there any impact to my pension?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q15)
16. [**Is there an advantage for me to apply for the Voluntary Departure Program rather than wait to receive severance through a potential position abolishment or redundancy?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q16)
17. [**If I decide to volunteer, can I negotiate my severance?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q17)
18. [**If I voluntarily resign and can't find new employment, am I eligible for employment insurance?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q18)
19. [**If I voluntarily resign, does that impact my ability to work at NAIT in the future?**](https://staff.nait.ca/departments-schools/human-resources/transforming-our-workforce/voluntary-departure-program/voluntary-departure-program-frequently-asked-quest#Q19)

**Why is NAIT offering a Voluntary Departure Program?**

In an effort to help us reduce staffing costs voluntarily, NAIT is offering staff the opportunity to apply to resign from NAIT and receive a severance. For any resignation to receive approval, it must result in reasonable, long-term cost savings to the polytechnic.

**How do I apply for the program?**

Staff who are interested in volunteering to resign can send an email expressing their interest to **VDP2020@nait.ca** **on or before 4:30 p.m. on March 18, 2020**. Your manager or department head must be copied on your request.

Staff may wish to include a brief explanation as to why they want to voluntarily resign. The information applicants submit will be held in confidence and only shared with those required to make decisions.

**Who is eligible?**

All full- or part-time salaried staff are eligible, with the exception of those who are currently on an approved phased-in retirement program or those who have already submitted their resignation or retirement notice.

**Can I apply even if I’m on a medical leave or receiving a medical benefit?**

Employees on WCB, long-term disability, general illness or any other kind of leave are welcome to apply. Their situation will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

**What criteria will be used to determine whether a request is approved?**

The primary consideration will be the cost-savings incurred through the departure of the volunteer. Leaders will assess whether the departure will result in a direct (position won’t be filled) or indirect (position can be filled by another employee, and that position won’t be filled) reduction in staffing. The second is whether it’s operationally feasible.

**What are the timelines?**

* Applications will be accepted between Monday, March 2 until 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 18.
* Managers and department heads will review applications and do an assessment of the operational feasibility and financial calculations for each applicant and make a recommendation to their vice-president between March 19-25.
* Executive will review all applications and recommendations, and the vice-president of the portfolio will make the final approval between March 26-31.
* All employees who applied will be notified of the outcome by March 31. The decision of the vice-president is final.

**Are volunteers automatically accepted?**

No. The manager or department head will be required to review the application, determine whether the departure of the employee will result in long-term cost-savings and/or is operationally feasible, and will submit a recommendation to their vice-president. Only cases that meet the intent of the program and are operationally feasible will be approved.

**If I’m accepted, when do I need to leave?**

Staff who are approved under the Voluntary Departure Program will be asked to leave within 2 weeks of the approval, unless operational requirements require the employee to work longer or leave sooner. The resignation date will be determined as soon as operationally possible.

Instructional staff may be asked to remain at work until the end of the academic term so as to not negatively impact students.

**Can I withdraw my request if I change my mind?**

No, all applications submitted will be considered and reviewed, unless unforeseen or unexpected circumstances arise. Please only apply if you’re prepared to resign and take a severance if your request is approved.

**How will I know what severance I would be offered?**

Severance will be calculated by whichever agreement or procedure guides your compensation:

* AUPE: Article 23.12 of the [**2017-2020 Collective Agreement**](https://naitca.sharepoint.com/sites/pd/Published%20Documents/Human%20Resources/Agreements/Collective%20Agreements/AUPE%20Collective%20Agreement.pdf?utm_source=Intranet&utm_medium=FAQ&utm_campaign=VDP2020)
* NASA: Section 46.13 of the [**2016-2019 Collective Agreement**](https://naitca.sharepoint.com/sites/pd/Published%20Documents/Human%20Resources/Agreements/Collective%20Agreements/NASA%20Collective%20Agreement.pdf?utm_source=Intranet&utm_medium=FAQ&utm_campaign=VDP2020)
* MAE: Section 4.2 of procedure [**HR 1.16: Redundancy – MAE**](https://naitca.sharepoint.com/sites/pd/Published%20Documents/Policies%20and%20Procedures/Administrative%20Policies/Human%20Resources/1.%20Employment%20Relationship/HR%201.16%20Management%20and%20Excluded%20Redundancy.pdf?utm_source=Intranet&utm_medium=FAQ&utm_campaign=VDP2020)

Staff who volunteer under the Voluntary Departure Program are not eligible for the notice period outlined in their respective agreement. Staff who have an employment contract should refer to their contract terms for severance information.

**If I’ve already put in my resignation or retirement notice, am I excluded from applying?**

Yes, employees who have already given resignation or retirement notice are not eligible.

**How does the Voluntary Departure Program differ from the voluntary redundancy processes for AUPE and NASA?**

The intent of Voluntary Departure Program is to find long-term cost savings through voluntary staff departures, while also reducing the number of potential involuntary departures across NAIT. The limited-time program is open to all eligible employees.

The existing voluntary separation processes outlined in the AUPE and NASA collective agreements are about finding a person to volunteer when a redundancy is identified within the work unit or within a certain classification, depending on the collective agreement.

* Under Article 23 of the [**AUPE collective agreement**](https://naitca.sharepoint.com/sites/pd/_layouts/15/DocIdRedir.aspx?ID=4NUSZQ57DJN7-208515216-1072), there is a requirement for NAIT to issue notices of redundancies or position abolishments to all staff with the same classification, so they have an opportunity to volunteer to leave. This process allows someone with the same classification to volunteer to take severance, allowing the person whose position is being made redundant or abolished to transfer into the volunteer’s position and continue to be employed (if skills, knowledge, abilities, etc. are transferrable).
* Our practice with [**NASA**](https://naitca.sharepoint.com/sites/pd/_layouts/15/DocIdRedir.aspx?ID=4NUSZQ57DJN7-208515216-1062) employees when a position is abolished or made redundant is to offer voluntary separation within the affected work unit.

**What happens to my accrued vacation?**

Any unused vacation will be paid as a lump sum payment at date of termination.

**Is my severance taxable?**

Yes, severance is considered taxable income. Staff are encouraged to speak to a financial advisor about their specific financial situation and options available to them (e.g. investing a portion of the severance into an RRSP) before making any decisions.

**Is there any impact to my pension?**

Service dates for pension purposes will be calculated up to the date of separation (departure) from NAIT. There are no other pension implications.

**Is there an advantage for me to apply for the Voluntary Departure Program rather than wait to receive severance through a potential position abolishment or redundancy?**

In both cases, severance will be guided by our obligations under our collective agreements, our compensation procedure, employment contracts, and labour legislation—whichever applies to an individual. Staff who volunteer through this program aren’t eligible for any notice periods.

The Voluntary Departure Program is an opportunity for staff who are prepared to leave NAIT on their own accord—perhaps to pursue other life or work opportunities—to volunteer to resign.

**If I decide to volunteer, can I negotiate my severance?**

No. Severance will be calculated by whichever agreement or procedure guides your compensation, or the terms of your employment contract (if you have one):

* AUPE:  Article 23.12 of the [**2017-2020 Collective Agreement**](https://naitca.sharepoint.com/sites/pd/Published%20Documents/Human%20Resources/Agreements/Collective%20Agreements/AUPE%20Collective%20Agreement.pdf?utm_source=Intranet&utm_medium=FAQ&utm_campaign=VDP2020)
* NASA: Section 46.13 of the [**2016-2019 Collective Agreement**](https://naitca.sharepoint.com/sites/pd/Published%20Documents/Human%20Resources/Agreements/Collective%20Agreements/NASA%20Collective%20Agreement.pdf?utm_source=Intranet&utm_medium=FAQ&utm_campaign=VDP2020)
* MAE: Section 4.2 of procedure [**HR 1.16: Redundancy – MAE**](https://naitca.sharepoint.com/sites/pd/Published%20Documents/Policies%20and%20Procedures/Administrative%20Policies/Human%20Resources/1.%20Employment%20Relationship/HR%201.16%20Management%20and%20Excluded%20Redundancy.pdf?utm_source=Intranet&utm_medium=FAQ&utm_campaign=VDP2020)

**​****If I voluntarily resign and can’t find new employment, am I eligible for employment insurance?**

Employment Insurance is a coordinated through Service Canada. You can find [**eligibility information on their website**](https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-regular-benefit/eligibility.html). We encourage you to contact them directly to understand what you may be entitled to.

**If I voluntarily resign, does that impact my ability to work at NAIT in the future?**

If an employee is re-hired or awarded contract work (credit or non-credit) by NAIT during their severance period, they will be required to repay NAIT the amount equal to the remaining number of weeks of the severance they received under the voluntary departure program, or the value of the contract. This will be a condition of re-employment and/or the contract.

Exceptions may be considered at the approval of the portfolio vice-president. If an employee is mid-contract and accepted under the program, they will be allowed to finish the contract term.