

FAQ on Tenure Clock Extensions
April 2021
Office of the Provost

I. In March 2020, an automatic tenure-clock extension due to COVID-19 was automatically granted to all pre-tenure tenure-track faculty, but I want to go up on my regular schedule.

What is the process to opt out of the COVID-19 tenure-clock extension?

Please complete the [May 2020 Automatic COVID Opt-Out Form](#) (links below). This fillable form must be signed by you, your chair/director, dean, and vice chancellor (if applicable) and submitted to Kristina Peterson-Wilson in the Provost's Office (kpeterson2@wsu.edu). It can be signed electronically.

- Website: <https://provost.wsu.edu/guidelines-and-forms/>
- Direct link to form: <https://provost.wsu.edu/documents/2021/04/2021-automatic-covid-opt-out-form.pdf/>

What is the deadline for opting out of the automatic COVID-19 tenure-clock extension?

Faculty may opt out of the COVID tenure-clock extension through April 15 of the spring before the academic year they would ordinarily be scheduled to be considered for tenure, as specified in the offer letter.

For example, if a faculty member is in the fifth year of appointment and due to be considered for tenure and promotion in AY2021-2022, with tenure effective in July or August of 2022, they should declare their intention to opt out by April 15, 2021.

- Please see the attached [Tenure-Clock Schedule](#) to help determine your final deadline to opt out. (Also online at <https://provost.wsu.edu/guidelines-and-forms/>)

Do faculty who started in August 2020 receive the automatic tenure-clock extension?

No, faculty who started in August (or July) 2020 do not receive the automatic tenure-clock extension, but they are eligible to apply for a COVID-19 tenure-clock extension (see below).

II. In November 2020, WSU announced that there would not be an additional automatic COVID-19 tenure-clock extension, but that faculty may request a COVID-19 extension.

Who is eligible to request the COVID-19 tenure-clock extension announced in November 2020?

This extension is intended for new faculty who arrived this academic year (Summer/Fall 2020-Spring 2021) and were unable to set up a program of research, had to spend unexpected time to learn to teach remotely, or could not attract graduate students for this next year. It could also be for someone who received an automatic extension but can demonstrate the need for a second one.

In other words, all pre-tenure tenure-track faculty are eligible, including those who started in academic year 2020-2021, and those who were already here in March 2020 and received an automatic tenure extension

I was already at WSU in spring 2020 and received an automatic tenure-clock extension. Am I eligible to request this second extension?

Yes, you may request a second extension if COVID-19 circumstances have continued to disrupt your work activities this academic year. As with conventional tenure-clock extension requests, cases will be evaluated on an individual basis. Please document the disruptions to your work carefully.

We strongly encourage faculty to talk first with their mentoring committees and chair/director if considering a request for another tenure-clock extension.

What is the process to request a COVID-19-related tenure-clock extension?

Please complete the [COVID-19 Tenure Clock Extension – Request Form](#) (links below). This fillable form must be signed by you, your chair/director, dean, and vice chancellor (if applicable) and submitted to Kristina Peterson-Wilson in the Provost's Office (kpeterson2@wsu.edu). It can be signed electronically.

- Website: <https://provost.wsu.edu/guidelines-and-forms/>
- Direct link to form: <https://provost.wsu.edu/documents/2021/03/covid-19-tenure-clock-extension-request-form.pdf>

What is the deadline to request a COVID-19 tenure-clock extension?

Faculty may request a COVID tenure-clock extension through April 30 of the spring before the academic year they would ordinarily be scheduled to be considered for tenure, as specified in the offer letter.

For example, if a faculty member is in the fifth year of appointment and due to be considered for tenure and promotion in AY2021-2022, with tenure effective in July or August of 2022, they should make their request by April 30, 2021.

- Please see the attached [Tenure-Clock Schedule](#) to help determine your final deadline to make the request. (Also online at <https://provost.wsu.edu/guidelines-and-forms/>)

Should I request an extension now, even if I'm not sure I'll need it?

If you are not sure you will need it, you do not need to request it now; as noted above, you have through April 30 of the year you need to submit your packet to make that request.

However, if you don't make the request now, please carefully document any COVID-related barriers in your annual reviews, in the form of a COVID statement and/or on Activity Insight, to help evaluate requests in the future.

What if I request an extension, but then it turns out I don't need it after all?

You may request to revoke the extension through April 15 of the year you need to submit your packet. Please request this through a memo to your chair/director, and it must be approved by that person, your dean, and your vice chancellor (if applicable). The provost will make a final decision.

III. Other questions

Why aren't additional COVID-19 extensions automatic?

Delaying the tenure clock also delays career advancement. Thus, an automatic extension for those whose work has not been affected might be harmful. For this reason, we want to move from an automatic extension to an individualized determination.

What about faculty who already had a tenure-clock extension, unrelated to COVID-19?

The COVID-19 tenure clock extensions (automatic or by request) are in addition to previously granted leaves.

What about faculty who may need an additional extension in the future for medical reasons or parental leave?

Any future leaves granted for medical reasons or parental leave will be added to the COVID-19 leaves.

Will I be penalized for taking an extension when people are reviewing my tenure case?

No. All chairs and directors have been informed that for all tenure and promotion cases, evaluation should be focused on whether the candidate has met the criteria, not on how much time it took. (This is true regardless of the type of extension or number of extensions granted.) We are providing chairs and directors language to include in their letters to external reviewers emphasizing that as well.