

HR LIAISON NETWORK NEWS



Please make the following information available to employees in your department as appropriate.

December 5, 2016

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PAYROLL REMINDERS

December 7:

- Biweekly EPAs due at noon
- Biweekly PVDs available online

December 8:

- PPRs print

December 9:

- PPRs available online
- Biweekly Pay Day

December 12:

- Monthly EPAs due at noon

December 13:

- Supplements due at noon
- Uploads due at 1pm
- TimeTraq due at 4pm

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HUMAN RESOURCES

System-wide Pay Plan Implementation Update

System-wide Pay Plan titles and the unified title listing changes have been loaded successfully into SSO-related systems as well as the PATH online system. Please contact HR Classification and Compensation if you notice anything questionable about title data in these systems. We appreciated your cooperation in keeping PATH activity to a minimum last week while the changes were uploaded. We will continue to add information to the HR website and PATH as more information becomes available. HR Classification and Compensation can be reached via email at payplan@tamu.edu or by phone at 979-845-4170.

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Update on FLSA Injunction Status

On November 22, 2016, a federal judge granted a nationwide injunction to delay implementation of the revised overtime regulations. Last week employees and supervisors were provided email communications from Human Resources about the impact of the injunction. On December 1, the Department of Labor (DOL) filed an appeal and a motion for an expedited briefing on the matter. It is not known at this time whether the appeal hearing will be heard by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals before the January 20, 2017 Presidential inauguration. HR is proceeding with the plans communicated following the injunction, that many employees are remaining exempt (monthly-paid, not eligible for overtime) until the federal proceedings reach a conclusion. Other positions that were confirmed as non-exempt in the System-wide Pay Plan, and not impacted by the injunction, became non-exempt (hourly-paid, overtime-eligible) on December 1 as scheduled. We have resources on our website for those changing to non-exempt at <http://employees.tamu.edu/compensation/flsa/> online.

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Dates for Pay Plan and FLSA Overtime Informational Sessions

There are two remaining dates in December for Pay Plan and FLSA Overtime informational sessions. The first is December 6, from 2:30 to 4 p.m. in Rudder 601. Due to a scheduling conflict, the session originally scheduled for

December 14 has been moved to Thursday, December 15, from 10-11:30 a.m. in the Memorial Student Center, 2406-A. No registration is required to attend these sessions.

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Nominations Due Dec. 12 for the President's Meritorious Service Awards

The Annual President's Meritorious Service Awards Program nomination period is open and accepting nominations through the online process until Monday, December 12. To nominate an individual, supervisor, or team, please visit <http://employees.tamu.edu/pmsa>. Questions may be referred to the HR Recognition staff at emprecognition@tamu.edu or (979) 845-7995.

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Years of Service Pin Distribution

The years of service (YOS) verification process is complete and Human Resources would like to thank our HR Liaisons that assisted with this important task. The YOS pins are now available for HR Liaisons to pick-up in Human Resources (GSC 1201) during normal business hours. Contact Nikki Cavender at ncavender@tamu.edu if you need to make special arrangements. Departments are encouraged to celebrate these dedicated employees in their units. For award presentation ideas, please visit <http://employees.tamu.edu/employee-recognition/yos/>.

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End of Semester Employment Actions Impacting Benefits

The end of the semester usually means a heightened amount of employment changes within the departments which may have an impact on the employee's benefits. Therefore, Benefit Services would like to remind HR Liaisons of the following employment actions impacting benefits:

Terminations:

An EPA is needed to change an employee's status from active to terminated which triggers the cancelation of benefits. Please remember to process EPA's timely to ensure coverage is canceled appropriately. If you have an early-month termination, please continue to work with your designated benefits representative to ensure the insurance premiums can be taken out of the paycheck properly. The terminating employee's benefits will go through the last day of the month they are in an active status provided all premiums are paid accordingly.

Retirements:

Benefit Services will send a signed *Employee Retirement Acknowledgement Form* to the department HR Liaison for any employee who has been confirmed retirement-eligible and has completed the proper retirement process through our office. This form will be sent approximately two weeks prior to the retirement date or as quickly as possible after the retirement counseling, whichever is later. This should be the trigger for the department to process the EPA to retire the employee. Benefit Services cannot code the benefit coverage until the EPA is processed, so it is critical this is processed timely. An EPA should not be coded as a retirement without the signed acknowledgement form attached to the EPA.

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Sick Leave Pool Reminders

Sick Leave Pool (SLP) is an important benefit program for our employees who experience a catastrophic illness or injury and who have exhausted all of their current leave balances. Sick Leave Pool is administered according to [System Regulation 31.06.01](#) which states in section 6.2, "sick leave pool hours must be requested before the hours are needed or as soon as possible." Therefore, it is critical that SLP requests are submitted timely to Benefit Services during the pay period in which the hours apply taking into consideration SLP approval processing time and the applicable payroll processing deadlines. Please submit the SLP request along with the supporting documentation to Benefit Services at benefits@tamu.edu or fax 979-862-3128. More information on the sick leave pool program is available on our website at <http://employees.tamu.edu/benefits/leave/sick-pool/> online.

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Please share the following information with employees in your department.

Benefits While Traveling

As the semester winds down and the holidays approach, many employees may travel to far-off places, or to see family and friends. This is a great time to remind individuals of the resource document "[Guide to Using Your Benefits While Traveling](#)". We recommend employees print this document to keep on hand while traveling just in case they experience problems. More information on employee benefits packages are at <http://employees.tamu.edu/benefits/general/> online.

Whether you are traveling to far off lands or just traveling around town, it is important to know which facilities,

providers and doctors are considered “in-network” to get the most benefit out of your health plan. BlueCross BlueShield (BCBS) has a downloadable app to help locate network providers or you may use the provider finder on their online website www.bcbstx.com. Just because a facility or provider states that they accept most major insurance plans – including BlueCross – they might not be a contracted or network provider. Always ask if they are part of the BCBS network to ensure you will receive in-network benefits.

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Benefit Briefs Newsletter

System Benefits Administration recently published their latest edition of Benefits Briefs with the following articles: Dependent Social Security Reminder, Electronic 1095-C Option, Injectable Drugs and Prior Authorization, TDA/DCP Contribution Limits for 2017, Vision Benefits Explained, Medicare Part A and B Increases for 2017, Decoding Monthly Premiums, What Does the Election Outcome Mean for Employee Benefits? and FY16 Flexible Spending Account Deadline. You may view this newsletter [online](#).

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PAYROLL SERVICES

Tax Withholding on Non-Salary Compensation Forms

Please submit a *Tax Withholding on Non-Salary Compensation Items* form (<http://payroll.tamu.edu/media/17699/332empgift.pdf>) for gift certificates, cash, use of credit or charge cards, travel advance > 60 days outstanding, etc. given to employees during calendar year 2016. The taxable value of the items should be part of the employees W-2 income in the year in which it is received. For additional information, visit [SAP 31.01.99.M0.01](#) and [Guidelines for the Disbursement of Funds](#).

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December 2016 Biweekly Pay Date

The biweekly pay day of Friday, December 23, 2016 has been moved to Thursday, December 22, 2016 due to the University Winter Break.

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Office Closed

Payroll Services will be closed on Monday, December 12 from 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. for a department holiday lunch.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Human Resources Recognition

Several Texas A&M University HR professionals were recognized at the Brazos Valley Society for Human Resource Management ([BV-SHRM](#)) meeting on December 1, 2016.

HRCI Certifications:

- Kimberly Williamson (HR Liaison for Division of Research) – Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR)
- Darla Guerra (HR Liaison for Transportation Services) – Professional in Human Resources (PHR)

Krystal Broussard HR Excellence Award Nominees:

- Elizabeth Schwartz – Director, Human Resources Workforce Management
- Wanda Boyd – HR Specialist III, Human Resources Policy and Practice Review
- Darla Guerra – Assistant Manager, Transportation Services

Congratulations to these outstanding HR professionals for their dedication and hard work!

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TIP OF THE WEEK

Procedures Related to Inclement Weather

Winter is upon us and in Texas you never know what Mother Nature has in store for weather! Do you know where to

seek information related to what to do if weather causes hazardous travel or any potential closures/delays? Updates, information and resources can be found on the Human Resources website <<http://employees.tamu.edu/benefits/leave/closure/>>, the Texas A&M homepage <<http://www.tamu.edu/>>, the campus emergency page <<http://emergency.tamu.edu/>> or alerts from Code Maroon <http://codemaroon.tamu.edu/>>. Be safe and happy winter!

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HR LIAISON

NETWORK MEETINGS:

- May 16, 2017
- June 26, 2017

HR Liaison Network News (LNN) is distributed weekly to departmental HR Liaisons at Texas A&M University. If you have questions about LNN contact:

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