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- New Year, New Challenges

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**PAYROLL REMINDERS**

January 14:
- PVDs available online

January 15:
- Monthly EPAs due by noon

January 16:
- Biweekly payday
- EPAs due at noon
- Electronic monthly payroll available

**Processing Schedules**
- Payroll Reports

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**HUMAN RESOURCES**

*Please share the following article with employees within your department.*

**Brown Bag Lunch & Learn Series**
Join us tomorrow for our first Brown Bag Lunch & Learn series event for 2015 focusing on healthy eating habits for the new year:

- **JANUARY 13** - Healthy Eating Tips for the New Year
  - 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. | General Services Complex (GSC)
  - Room 101 | 750 Agronomy Road

Getting fit and staying healthy is often the #1 new year’s resolutions for Americans. Dietitian Meghan Windham can help you ring in the new year by learning about new tips for eating healthy and delicious meals. This Lunch & Learn series is part of the HR Wellness Works program, designed to encourage employees to live healthier lifestyles, to support a healthy workplace and to create a culture of wellness. No registration needed. Bring your lunch and learn with us! View this and other Wellness Works events at employees.tamu.edu/benefits/wellness.

**Registration Open - HR/Payroll Software Demonstration**
The demonstrations for a new HR/Payroll software system from our two vendor finalists – Oracle (PeopleSoft) and Workday – are just around the corner here on our College Station campus.

The new software is proposed to replace applications such as HRConnect, LeaveTraq, TimeTraq, Time & Effort,
TrainTraq, Monthly Payroll and iBenefits, and will impact many related processes along with new functionality for security, workflow and reporting. More information on this effort can be found on the project website.

HR Liaisons have been kept apprised of this project because each of you on a regular basis use the various systems and facilitate numerous processes that could potentially be replaced or modified by a new software system. Your voice is valuable to the project’s success and the demonstrations are another opportunity for you to provide feedback. Registration for the demonstrations is available here.

We encourage departments with multiple HR Liaisons to select a representative to attend onsite at the sessions most pertinent to your work. Additionally, departments may want to consider broadcasting all or some of the online web sessions to a group of employees, e.g., an entire payroll office or a committee of principle investigators, in order to simultaneously maximize participation while keeping an eye on space availability. One person could register on behalf of the group and schedule a larger meeting room for attendees to come and go as needed.

The HR Payroll Software Selection website will be updated regularly as we move through various phases towards implementation. Contact DeAnna White, deanna@tamu.edu, if you have questions or would like to provide feedback at any time.

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Offer Letter Templates Updated
The sample offer letter templates on the HR website at http://employees.tamu.edu/managers/ have been updated. Several suggestions regarding more welcoming language and training were provided to HR and these suggestions have been incorporated in the updated letters. Should you have questions, please contact the Recruitment and Workforce Planning office at jobpath@tamu.edu or (979) 845-5154.

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Reminder: Procedures When University Closes Due to Inclement Weather
Winter is upon us! The Bryan/College Station area avoided the winter/icy weather conditions last week, but Mother Nature could still deal us a blast of wintery weather before the season is over. Do you know how to handle leave related to inclement weather and any potential closures/delays? Please remind employees of the procedures in place for a campus closure or delay for unsafe travel due to inclement weather. Updates, information and resources can be found online at 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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New Semester Means New Employees for iBenefits
At the beginning of each new semester there is an increase in newly hired benefit-eligible employees. Please remember all newly benefit-eligible employees should be entered into iBenefits for their benefit enrollment and they must complete the enrollment process within 60 days of their benefit-eligibility date. If you need a refresher on how to enter an employee in iBenefits or edit the employee information after the document is created, please review the Processor Topics section available at https://it.tamus.edu/ibenefits/ online. Contact your designated Benefits Representative if you have questions on benefit eligibility or need additional assistance.

Suggested Tip: When you provide the new employee with the iBenefits instruction sheet, also stress that they have 60 days to make their benefits selections. Additionally, if the employee is a graduate student employee, please reiterate that the default plan is not the Graduate Student Plan. They will incur a significant out-of-pocket premium should they get defaulted into the A&M Care Plan, including being charged a tobacco user premium of $30.00 per month.

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Benefit Enrollment and iBenefits for Newly Hired International Students
International students are required as a condition of their visa requirements to maintain health insurance. International Student Services (ISS) is responsible for verifying that all international students satisfy this requirement. Because of the requirement for international students and the importance of compliance, the below is provided specifically to address benefits enrollment for international students newly hired into a benefits eligible position.

International students are automatically charged for the system student health insurance plan in the amount of $812.50 on their student fee statement which covers premiums 1/1/15-8/31/15. Below are the recommended steps for new benefit-eligible international student employees:
Recommended Option – department will enter the employee into iBenefits and instruct the employee to sign up for coverage selecting the option to begin their employer coverage in iBenefits "on my employer contribution eligibility date" (in this case, it will be April 1, 2015). The employee will continue to have the $812.50 premium included on their student fee statement.

Employee will pay $812.50 through the fee statement for coverage January through August 31, 2015.

Employer coverage will begin on April 1, 2015 and the employer contribution will cover the monthly premium of $125.00 for employee only coverage.

Employee will receive a refund of premiums for any dual coverage processed by Academic Health Plans at the end of the original policy term (August 2015).

Note: The department has the ability to enter an employee into iBenefits without the EPA being fully approved once the UIN has been recorded in the payroll database. The Graduate Student Health plan is the exact same coverage whether enrolled as a student or enrolled as an employee.

HR Liaison Network Meeting Enhancement
Human Resources is pleased to announce that our regional HR Liaison partners will be able to view and receive credit for the HR Liaison Network Meetings. As a value-added service to those HR Liaisons serving our university outside the Bryan/College Station area, we will record either the morning or afternoon session at this year’s remaining meetings. Feel free to say “Howdy” if you pass the camera! While we wish everyone could join us in person and network, we hope that this enhancement will help our regional partners feel more in tune with the entire HR Liaison Network. Please watch for an announcement regarding registration next week and join us for the February 5th meeting!

Upcoming Retirement of Claudia Pine
Claudia Pine has decided to retire at the end of January with 37 years of service, 27 of those within Human Resources. Claudia has served with dedication, excellence and the highest level of service to our customers. She has been recognized over the years for her quality service and contributions to the University as a recipient of the Division’s Keys to Excellence Award and the prestigious President’s Meritorious Service Award. She will be missed without question in Human Resources not only for her exemplary service, job knowledge and dedication, but just because she is a wonderful and caring individual.

A reception to celebrate Claudia’s 37 years of service will be held on January 26, 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. in the Memorial Student Center, Room 2404, with remarks at 3:00 pm. Please join us at the reception to congratulate Claudia on her dedicated service and to wish her well in her future endeavors.

Revised HR Web Forms/Docs
- Spring Fitness Session Poster
- Sample Offer Letters (revised)
- Training Poster (new)
- Background Check Instructions (new)
- Network News Archive – last week’s issue posted

PAYROLL SERVICES

Inactive Wage Employee Report
The December Inactive Wage Employee Report is now available on the Payroll Services imaging system (http://imgweb.tamu.edu/finance_dept/). The report gives you the opportunity to delete inactive employees from your accounts. Refer to the attached letter for further instructions.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...

Changes to University Standard Administrative Procedure
University Risk and Compliance announced today changes to a payroll related SAP.

- University SAP 25.99.09.M0.01, Communication Allowances – REVISED to clarify who is eligible to receive a
communication allowance.

For details, see http://rules-saps.tamu.edu/PDFs/25.99.09.M0.01.pdf.

TIP OF THE WEEK

New Year, New Challenges
Employees looking to enhance their skills in the new year have an easy, cost effective option available through HR Employee & Organizational Development. EOD offers a wide variety of professional development and technology-based courses to meet the needs of employees and departments. For more information or to view the course schedule, visit http://EODinfo.tamu.edu/ online.