

HR LIAISON NETWORK NEWS



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

August 15, 2016

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PAYROLL REMINDERS

August 15:

- Biweekly EPAs due at noon
- PPRs available online

August 16:

- PPRs print

August 17:

- PPRs available online
- Supplements due at noon
- Uploads due at 1pm
- TimeTraQ due at 4pm

August 18:

- Monthly EPAs due at noon

August 19:

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

August 22:

- Biweekly PVDs available online
- Electronic BVDs available

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HUMAN RESOURCES

HR Liaison Advisory Resource Group

Human Resources would like to congratulate the new members of the *HR Liaison Advisory Resource Group* (HRLARG) for FY 2017-18: Sandra Church (Ved Med Teaching Hospital), Ludim Garcia (Economics) and Judith Miller (Facilities Coordination). They will be joining Kelley Ervin (Transportation Services), Jovana Guillen (Academic Affairs Business Services), Shauna Ramos (Architecture), Martha Tackett (Research), and Janie Williams (Athletics) in addition to Donna Lockless (Human Resources) and Danny Grimes (Payroll Services). The group will meet on a quarterly basis. We are excited about collaborating with HRLARG...congratulations!

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New Graduate Student Employee Benefits Orientation – Next Week, August 22

A special benefits orientation has been developed for newly hired Graduate Student employees working in benefits-eligible Graduate Assistant positions. The sessions on Monday, August 22, will provide a benefits overview, important information regarding the enrollment process and a presentation from a Graduate Student Health Plan representative. Please share the [orientation flyer](#) with your new Graduate Assistants and encourage them to attend. Questions can be directed to Benefit Services at benefits@tamu.edu or (979) 862-1718.

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Affordable Care Act (ACA) Benefit Eligibility Determination for Wage and Student Workers

When determining if a wage or student worker is considered "fulltime" and benefit-eligible according to ACA criteria, the hiring department must first consider – does the newly hired worker have a "reasonable expectation" to work on average 30 hours per week for 90 days? If the answer is affirmative, the individual meets the "fulltime" definition of

ACA and must be offered benefits. *NOTE:* These individuals are NOT considered benefit-eligible by State definition and should NOT be entered into iBenefits. Please notify Benefit Services directly for any wage or student worker “reasonably expected” to work the average of 30 hours for 90 days by providing the name, UIN, email, start date, duration of employment and average hours to be worked to benefits@tamu.edu. Benefit Services will notify the employee of their benefit eligibility (including the 60-day waiting period for the employer contribution) and provide instructions on enrollment through a manual paper process.

Newly hired wage or student workers not “reasonably expected” to work on average 30 hours for 90 days will have their actual hours measured through their initial measurement period (twelve month period starting the first of the month following hire date) to determine benefit-eligibility as a variable employee. More information on the Affordable Care Act including a detailed Q&A and flowchart is available [HERE](#). Contact Benefit Services at benefits@tamu.edu or (979) 862-1718 for additional information.

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Important! Returning from Leave Without Pay Process

As each new semester approaches there are typically employees who may have been in a leave without pay (LWOP) status who are returning to an active paid status. It is critical for departments to submit an Employee Payroll Action (EPA) so the employee’s benefits and the employer contribution can be reinstated. Benefit coverage that was suspended during the leave will be reinstated on the exact date the employee returns to active status as indicated on the EPA. Premiums are not prorated; therefore, if the employee is returned to an active status with an August effective date they (and the department) will be billed the entire premium for August. Timely EPA processing is always important, but especially for international students who need to provide verification of insurance coverage to International Student Services (ISS). Please contact Benefit Services at benefits@tamu.edu or (979) 862-1718 if you have questions.

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Postdoctoral or Graduate Student Fellows Benefit Process

Section 1601.1021 of the Texas Insurance Code provides certain postdoctoral fellows or graduate student fellows eligibility to participate in the group insurance program under the Texas A&M University System policies. These individuals may enroll in the health, dental or vision group insurance plans, but do not qualify for the employer contribution for premiums.

Departments with qualifying individuals are encouraged to review the [Postdoctoral and Graduate Student Fellow Benefit Eligibility & Enrollment Process](#) information on the Human Resources website and complete the applicable certification form to document benefit eligibility and the required offer of benefits.

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Benefit Enrollment and iBenefits – Newly Hired International Graduate Student Employees (GSEs)

International students are required to maintain health insurance. Important benefit information has been added to the Human Resources website to address benefit enrollment for international graduate student employees *newly* hired into a benefit-eligible position. For more information regarding the two recommended options for their benefit enrollment, please visit Benefit Information for International Employees available here: <http://employees.tamu.edu/benefits/insurance/>.

Because of the time constraints for international students to enroll in coverage to be included in the ISS waiver process, departments should enter these individuals as a priority into iBenefits, ensure the EPA is completed before September 05, 2016 and encourage employees to make their benefit selections as quickly as possible (preferably no later than 7 days from date of hire). Please share this information with your new international student hires. Contact Benefit Services at benefits@tamu.edu or (979) 862-1718 if you have questions.

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Please forward the following article to employees in your department.

Naturally Slim Program Now Available to Employees/Spouses Enrolled in A&M Care Plan

Another offering of Naturally Slim, a 10 week online weight management program is being made available to for employees and their covered spouses in the A&M Care. The application period for this popular program is August 8 through August 19 (program starts September 5). Visit the Naturally Slim [webpage](#) for more information.

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FY2017 EPAs for Budgeted Positions

EPAs can now be created for FY2017 budgeted positions only. Canopy will default to FY2016; entry of budgeted EPA's for FY 2017 will require you to use the drop down menu and select FY 2017. The fiscal year default will be changed to FY2017 after FY2017 has been completed early September 2016.

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Roll to New FY Canopy Feature

The Roll to New FY feature in Canopy is available for budgeted positions only. It allows FY2016 EPAs to automatically roll to FY2017 without creating an additional EPA in FY2017. The feature can be activated by selecting the "Roll to New FY" box when creating a FY2016 EPA. Make sure the annual term for the employee is reflected as either 9 or 12 in order for the feature to work.

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Using a PIN Created During FY2017 Prep Budget

To use a PIN created in Prep Budget FY2017, two EPA fields are critical. The first field is the *PIN* field. Enter the PIN created in FY2017. The second critical field is the *Position Action*. Select the position action "re-activate" for this field.

Create Type: New Budgeted Position PIN: FY2017 PIN
 Fiscal Year: 2016 Workstation: M
Document Type: Create or Re-activate Position.
Recommended Occupant Action: New Hire.
Current Occupant Action: Already Vacant.
Position Action: Re-activate Position.

For assistance, contact Payroll Services at payrollprocessing@tamu.edu or your processing team members.

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Wage Positions

Wage positions are tentatively scheduled to be rolled over from FY2016 Active Budget to FY2017 during the weekend of August 20, 2016.

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Estimated Time

The arrival of the new fiscal year creates early deadlines in regards to the bi-weekly payroll for the pay date of August 26 (period covered – August 4 thru August 17) and the pay date of September 09 (period covered – August 18 thru August 31). Payroll Services does not recommend that estimated time be submitted for employees unless they have sufficient leave accumulated to cover the estimated days; nor should student workers submit estimated time.

If an employee has an adjustment to his/her estimated time which results in additional pay or work time which was not estimated, the department should adjust the hours on the next bi-weekly payroll. Then the payment for this time will be included on the next scheduled bi-weekly payday. If an employee does not work all the time estimated, leave should be recorded or an adjustment should be made to decrease the hours on the next bi-weekly payroll. Be sure to document any adjustments made in your records.

Payroll Services will not process an emergency check due to changes in estimated time. If you have any questions or concerns about this matter, please email payrollprocessing@tamu.edu or call the Payroll Processing Team that services your department.

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Graduate Student List

A list of Graduate Students in the FY2016 Active budget will be distributed during this week. The list should be used in processing EPA's to re-appoint, terminate and make other changes to those listed as required. This year you also have the option to upload a spreadsheet directly through the budget office. Details will be sent via your processing team.

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New Hire Documents

Remember to submit new hire documents for employees hired September 1, 2016 and processed during the Prep Budget Process. All paperwork needs to be received by Payroll Services on September 2nd at noon to avoid payment delays.

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TIP OF THE WEEK

Effective Interviewing

An effective interview is one of the most important steps in the hiring process. When preparing to interview, hiring managers should take time to develop job-related questions that help identify the best candidate for the vacant position. To assist hiring managers, HR has completely revised and updated the interview resources online with a new Sample Interview Question Guide, found at <http://employees.tamu.edu/managers/interview/>. The guide contains information about types of interview questions and examples of best practice questions. We have also included a section of questions that should never be asked. If you have questions or feedback, please contact Rita Bowden at rbowden@tamu.edu.

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Next Network Meeting:
November 16, 2016

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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