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

February 17, 2014

HUMAN RESOURCES
Register Now for the Special HR Liaison Network Spring Meeting – A Silver Celebration!
Breaking News – Affordable Care Act Provisions Delayed
Changes in Employment that Impact Benefits Eligibility
Annual Term Month Appointments & the Impact on Insurance Premiums
HR EXPRESS Newsletter Readership Survey
Staff Appreciation Week, March 3-7 Department Events

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT
Performance Evaluation Starts April 1
PATHways Performance Plan Status Report
PATHways Demos Added

PAYROLL SERVICES
Use Current Online Forms

EMPLOYEE & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
Coffee Conversations – Friday, February 21

TIP OF THE WEEK
Employee Awards Have a Place in the Personnel File

PAYROLL REMINDERS
February 17:
- Electronic monthly payroll available online
- EPAs due at noon
February 18:
- Electronic monthly payroll due at 4pm
- PPRs print
February 19:
- PPRs available online
February 21:
- Supplements due at noon
- Uploads due at 1pm
- TimeTraq due at 4pm
- Monthly PVDs available online

Processing Schedules
Payroll Reports

HUMAN RESOURCES

Register Now for the Special HR Liaison Network Spring Meeting – A Silver Celebration!
Human Resources is pleased to announce that registration is now open for this special event on Tuesday, March 4 at the Memorial Student Center (MSC). The day kicks off at 9:00 a.m. with registration, networking and informational booths followed by the general session at 10:00 a.m. with special guest Dr. Ben Welch.

For your convenience, a “lunch & learn” session has been added to the HR Liaison Network meeting. A box lunch will be available for $6.00; registration and account number is required to attend. An afternoon break will feature a special Silver Celebration dessert bar in honor of you, the HR Liaison Network!

The afternoon offers numerous educational opportunities beginning at 1:00 p.m. with presentations by HR and Payroll Services staff, fellow HR Liaison Network members and subject-matter experts from across the university. Seating and materials are limited for each session; please register early to attend the sessions of your choice. Registration will close at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 27. Don’t miss this special meeting celebrating the 25 year partnership between Human Resources and the HR Liaison Network!

Top

Breaking News – Affordable Care Act Provisions Delayed
The Obama administration recently announced a delay in the implementation of the requirement that employers provide health insurance for their employees under the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The mandate, which requires employers to provide affordable minimal essential benefit coverage for employees working 30 hours or more by the 90th day of employment regardless of student status, is delayed one year.
What does that mean for Texas A&M University?

- The State Group Insurance Premium (SGIP), also known as the employer contribution, will continue to be paid at the 1st of the month following the 90th day of employment and NOT move to the 1st of the month following the 60th day of employment as covered in the FY2015 budget guidelines.
- The measurement period has been delayed to 9/1/2014 through 8/31/15. This period will determine benefit eligibility for variable employees for FY2016.
- Employees meeting benefit eligibility under the ACA rules will be eligible beginning in FY2016 NOT FY2015.

Significant progress has already been made to understand the ACA implications and the A&M Care insurance plan currently meets the ACA standards for the vast majority of employees. The delay in the implementation allows time to request the State Legislature to reconcile some of the differences in the State and Federal definition of benefit eligibility, along with making appropriate adjustments in the rules for SGIP. Additionally, the extra time will allow for reports to be fine-tuned and for administrative processes to be worked out.

We will continue to keep you posted as we receive information. In the meantime, we will provide new reports over the next few months to help you identify employees who may be benefit-eligible under the ACA rules and the impact on your department.

**Changes in Employment that Impact Benefits Eligibility**

If you process changes to an employee's employment status making them eligible for the benefits programs, please remember to enter their information into iBenefits. This will allow the employee to make their important insurance selections or waive coverage. Examples of employment actions that can potentially make an individual benefits eligible include: extending an appointment, transfer from wages or student positions, or increases in percent effort. If you have a question as to if a particular action makes an employee benefits eligible, just call your designated benefits representative and they will guide you through the process. We want to ensure those who are eligible are given the opportunity to enroll.

Also, remember that any new hires for the Spring semester should have been entered into iBenefits. They will soon be approaching the close of their 60-day enrollment window so please help encourage these individuals to take action and submit their benefit selections to avoid the default benefit coverage.

**Annual Term Month Appointments & the Impact on Insurance Premiums**

Employees who work less than a 12-month appointment will receive a summer insurance premium notification in mid-April. This notification will explain how their summer insurance premiums will be handled. HR Liaisons should prepare now to ensure that the annual term month for the employee is properly reflected and any extensions or changes to appointments are processed prior to the summer premium notifications. Starting this work now will help make things easier during that busy time period when you are processing appointment changes, leave without pay (LWOP) and preparing for the end of the semester.

**HR EXPRESS Newsletter Readership Survey**

Have you read the HR EXPRESS newsletter [http://employees.tamu.edu/resources/hr-express] for information about “Your Elected SEBAC Rep Dr. Peter McIntyre”, the “Affordable Care Act”, or “Performance Evaluations Best Practices”? Read it today so you can be informed!

Remember to complete our online readership survey by February 28 for a chance to win a Roku streaming player! This entertainment device connects your home internet with your TV for over 1,000 entertainment channels instantly, with no fees! This contest is open to employees only.

**Staff Appreciation Week, March 3-7 Department Events**

What’s your department planning to do to celebrate Staff Appreciation Week, March 3-7? A campus-wide email was sent Friday to all employees to make them aware of Staff Appreciation Week at Texas A&M, sponsored by the University Staff Council (USC) and Human Resources (HR).

The USC recently conducted a survey where they asked employees, “What type of Staff Appreciation events would
be most meaningful to you?" Employees overwhelmingly selected “Appreciation event held within my own department” as the number one answer. Please encourage your department head and leadership to go the extra mile for staff during Staff Appreciation Week March 3-7. Recognize the valuable contributions of your staff. Ideas include: send an official letter of thanks to all staff, hold an appreciation reception (have a cake or host a breakfast), personally thank a staff employee for his or her contribution, or give certificates of appreciation. Also, please encourage and support your staff to participate in the Staff Appreciation come-and-go event “Celebrating Staff!” at Rudder Plaza on March 5 & 6. For other resources about employee recognition ideas, and certificate templates, visit the HR website at http://employees.tamu.edu/recognition/resources online.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance Evaluation Starts April 1
Performance evaluations should be completed between April 1 and May 31. The evaluation is intended to review employees on their performance from April 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014. Special note for departments using the PATH Performance Management module: Please let your supervisors know that after their employee acknowledges the Performance Plan, they will receive an email notifying them that the evaluation task is available. While they may wish to start and save a draft evaluation, they should not complete the evaluation until after the review year is concluded, or April 1, 2014.

PATHways Performance Plan Status Report
HR Liaisons who would like to receive a Performance Plan Status Report can send a request to hrbusinessservices@tamu.edu. This report will show the completion status of performance plans for each employee in their department by ADLOC. As a reminder, performance plans must be completed and acknowledged before the performance evaluation is started; therefore, this report will be especially helpful to HR Liaisons in April and May.

PATHways Demos Added
Two additional PATHways demos have been added: February 20 from 8:30 to 10:00 and March 18 from 10:00 to 11:30. Employees can register for either session of “PATHways to Success: Performance Management Process Overview and PATH Demo” at http://training.tamu.edu/Courses/Detail/1726. We will continue to monitor enrollment and schedule additional demos as interest indicates.

For assistance with PATHways and the online PATH Performance Management system, visit the website at http://eodinfo.tamu.edu/PATHways or contact the PATHways support team at HRPATHways@tamu.edu or (979) 845-4153.

PAYROLL SERVICES

Use Current Online Forms
The use of current online forms is necessary to comply with current policies and procedures. Old versions of forms used will be returned to departments and a new form with the most current version will be required before processing any action or payment. For the most current version of forms, please visit the Payroll Services website at http://payroll.tamu.edu online. For questions, contact payrollprocessing@tamu.edu or your payroll processing team.

EMPLOYEE & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Coffee Conversations – Friday, February 21
All employees are invited to join us for coffee on Friday, February 21 from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m. in the GSC 101A.

Offices of the Dean of Student Life – Supporting [YOU]
Presenter: Dr. Ann Reber, Dean of Student Life, Division of Student Affairs
Description: College isn’t just about “books and tests.” The life of a college student can present many first-time challenges, such as how to live independently, manage finances, work in a diverse environment, balance priorities, and make responsible decisions. Come learn how the Offices of the Dean of Student Life can assist you in helping students participate fully in the university experience so that they are successful at
school and graduate with skills that will impact their lifelong success.

“Coffee Conversations: Hot Topics in Higher Education” is a no-cost series sponsored by Employee & Organizational Development to foster community among all Texas A&M system employees, helping them gain a deeper appreciation of how we are all working together toward a common goal and mission. Free conversation! Free coffee! For information including full descriptions, times and location, please access: http://eodinfo.tamu.edu/programs/coffee/ online. Questions can be directed to EODinfo@tamu.edu or (979) 845-4153.

Registration is required: http://training.tamu.edu/schedule#SeminarSeries. Please download a flyer of the spring series for your break room.

TIP OF THE WEEK

Employee Awards Have a Place in the Personnel File
Congratulations! An employee in your department has received a prestigious University award. Be sure to include a copy of the official award, commendation or honor in the Official Personnel File (OPF). HR has developed a Quick Reference that shows examples of awards and other documents relevant to the employment relationship that should be filed in the OPF. For additional examples, go to http://employees.tamu.edu/relations/official-records/reference/ online.

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Next Network Meeting: March 4, 2014