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**HUMAN RESOURCES**

**New Year, New Outlook!**

Human Resources is excited to welcome the new fiscal year and the opportunity for a fresh start. Thanks to your feedback throughout the past year, you can expect to see many improvements to the upcoming HR Liaison Network Meetings. Beginning with the September 30 HR Liaison Network fall meeting, we will adjust the start time and overall length of the meeting to allow you more work time in the office. We will also address the sound quality during the
meetings by utilizing a hand-help microphone. We hope that these small changes will make for a more productive use of the network meeting time. It is important to HR that we provide an opportunity to network and convey timely information while being cognizant of your workload. Watch for more changes to be announced in upcoming editions of HR Liaison Network News and keep sending us your feedback!

**Working Together for the HR Liaison Network**
The HR Liaison Advisory Resource Group suggested a great way to highlight campus departments while rewarding members of the HR Liaison Network – issue a call for donations. Does your department have items that could be used as door prizes or speaker gifts at the HR Liaison Network Meetings? If so, we invite you to contribute to the HR Liaison Network recognition efforts. In exchange, Human Resources will recognize sponsoring departments in the meeting program, Ad marquee slides and on the Human Resources website. Contact Laura Dohnalik at ldohnalik@tamu.edu if your department would like to participate in the donation program.

**NetID Accounts, Employees and HR Identity Agents (that’s you!)**
Has your department migrated to the CIS Exchange service? Is your department planning to use NetIDs for workstation logins? If so, you may have some questions about how employee NetID accounts are created and removed. At the HR Network Liaison fall meeting, you’ll have the opportunity to obtain the answers!

You will also learn about an exciting new initiative that the CIS Identity Management Office has developed in collaboration with Texas A&M Human Resources—the HR Identity Agent program. This program is designed to provide you with the information and resources you need to get your employees up and working on day one. Become an agent of change—an HR Identity Agent!

**Funding of the Employer Contribution**
As announced recently, beginning September 1, 2014, employees are eligible to receive the employer contribution for benefits once they satisfy the 60-day required waiting period. This change, from the previous 90-day waiting period, is in response to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) requirements. This additional employer contribution will be centrally funded for FY2015 and coordinated by the Budget Office using accounting analysis tables through the payroll process.

**Annual Enrollment Initialization Complete**
Annual Enrollment Initialization has completed and employees may now see their FY2015 benefit selections under the My Benefits section in HRConnect. An email will be sent to all benefits-eligible employees in the next few days to provide details on checking their current benefit coverage including the wellness exam completion status, payroll deduction reminders, resources for benefits plan, information about deductibles and insurance ID cards.

It is critical that benefits-eligible employees are active in the FY2015 budget. If they are not in the budget, their insurance information will not be activated. Therefore, please process EPA budget actions as quickly as possible so that their benefit coverages will be updated accordingly.

**New Graduate Student Employee Benefits Resource Document**
The New Graduate Student Employee Benefit Orientation was well attended last week, but we know there are still many other newly hired Graduate Assistants that may have questions on their benefits. The attached document was provided as a handout during the benefits orientation and is being shared as a resource for departments. New hires with questions on benefits are encouraged to contact Benefit Services at 979-862-1718 or benefits@tamu.edu.

**New COBRA Form Posted**
The new COBRA form with the FY2015 premium rates has been uploaded to the Human Resources website and is available in the forms section. As a reminder, the departments are responsible for the COBRA notification process for any employment-related COBRA event excluding terminations. Therefore, the department should provide the COBRA form in the event of leave without pay, reduction in effort, and moving to student or wage positions. Please make sure that you are using the most recent version of the COBRA form. More information is available in the COBRA Guide located at http://employees.tamu.edu/benefits/insurance/cobra/.

**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.

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 Quick Links available at https://apps4.system.tamus.edu/help/ibenefits/ online. Contact your designated Benefits Representative if you have questions 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 and they will incur a significant out-of-pocket premium should they get defaulted. Please contact Benefit Services at benefits@tamu.edu or (979) 862-1718 if you have questions.

Save the Date – Retirement & Financial Planning Fair
Please share the following information with all employees in your department.
October is Financial Planning Month; plan now to get your finances in order! Texas A&M Human Resources invites employees to attend the 2014 Retirement & Financial Planning Fair on Tuesday, October 16 in the Memorial Student Center. The fair will include several free informational sessions and a vendor exhibit hall. These sessions may help you prepare for your retirement whether you are just starting a savings plan or are approaching retirement age. Details about advance registration and a session schedule will be posted soon on the HR website, but Save the Date for Tuesday, October 16 now and plan to join us at the fair!

PATHWAYS PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

2013-2014 Performance Management Program Closed in PATH
The Performance Management Program for 2013-2014 has closed. If employees have outstanding 2013-2014 evaluations, they must be placed in the employees’ personnel file. The 2013-2014 performance evaluations can be accessed in PATH by clicking “My Reviews” or “My Employees’ Reviews” on the left navigation pane, selecting “Completed” in the Open/Closed drop down box, selecting “View Review,” and clicking on “Supervisor Evaluation.”

Required PATH Activities for the 2014-2015 Performance Management Period
If they have not yet done so, please encourage your supervisors to Review the PD and Create the Performance Plan for each of their employees. For your convenience, reminders for each activity appear below. Please share with your supervisors.

- **Review Position Descriptions – first step**
  The 2014/2015 PATHways process formally begins with a review of the Position Description. This is particularly important since the employee’s job duty performance will be evaluated at the end of the review period. Detailed step-by-step instructions and videos on reviewing position descriptions can be found at http://employees.tamu.edu/compensation/path-help/#positionmanagement

- **Creating the Performance Plan – due October 15**
  The supervisor creates the Performance Plan in the PATH Performance Management module, which is then acknowledged in PATH by the employee. Best practice suggests that the supervisor and employee work collaboratively to create and discuss the employee’s performance goals before the supervisor completes the Performance Plan in PATH. Step-by-step instructions, video demos, and a Guide to SMART Goals can be
You may view and print a "PATHways Roadmap" that provides a one-page overview of the 2014/2015 performance management process with important dates at http://EODinfo.tamu.edu/media/345941/PATHways-2015_roadmap.pdf.

PATHways Workshops for Supervisors and Staff – September 4 and October 21

- Supervisors – PATHways to Success: Supervisory Best Practices for Managing Employee Performance is scheduled September 4 from 1:30 to 4:30 and October 21 from 8:30 to 11:30. Register at http://training.tamu.edu/Courses/Detail/1590.

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

PAYROLL SERVICES

National Payroll Week: September 1-5, 2014

National Payroll Week celebrates the hard work by America’s 156 million wage earners and the payroll professionals who pay them. Together, through the payroll withholding system they contribute, collect, report and deposit approximately $1.97 trillion, or 68.9%, of the annual revenue of the U.S. Treasury.

Reminder: Monthly Pay Date Change

Due to the Labor Day holiday on Monday, September 1, 2014, the monthly pay day will be September 2, 2014.

Annual Term Modifier

The annual term modifier in the position information of an EPA needs to be ‘D’ for employees who have less than 12 month annual term. This will allow the payroll system to consider them as continuing employees and leave their status in the payroll personnel area as active.

New Hire Documents

Remember to submit new hire documents for employees hired September 1, 2014 and processed during the Prep Budget Process. All paperwork needs to be received by Payroll Services on September 5, 2014 by noon to avoid payment delays.

EPA Processing

Due to the beginning of the new fiscal year, Payroll Services is receiving a large number of EPAs every day. Payroll Services prioritizes EPA processing according to the biweekly or monthly payroll deadlines. If you have any questions, email your payroll processing team members.

Please remember the following EPA points:

- Payroll’s internal procedure is to process EPAs on a first come, first serve basis.
- EPAs need to have all backup documents attached when received in Payroll to avoid delays in adding employees to TimeTraq and/or Monthly Payroll.
- Due to the large number of EPAs received, an EPA is placed on hold or rejected if not complete, accurate or does not have all backup documents.
- Last minute EPA approval may not be possible on TimeTraq and/or Monthly Payroll due dates.

Reminder: Pay Periods and Dates for Biweekly Paid Employees to be Adjusted

Employees who are paid biweekly should be aware that their pay periods and pay dates will be adjusted in September 2014 due to the university’s fiscal year end and the new insurance rates which are effective September
The schedule shown below will allow employees to have their new out-of-pocket insurance premiums deducted over two pay periods in September; which distributes the insurance costs throughout the month rather than subtracting it from a single pay period. This should help employees make adjustments to their personal monthly budgets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pay Date</th>
<th>Pay Period</th>
<th>Number of Days</th>
<th>Deduction/Pay</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>August 29, 2014</td>
<td>August 7 – 20</td>
<td>10 working days</td>
<td>No Insurance deducted No longevity paid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 12, 2014</td>
<td>August 21 – 31</td>
<td>7 working days</td>
<td>No insurance deducted No longevity paid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 19, 2014</td>
<td>September 1 – 10</td>
<td>8 working days</td>
<td>Insurance deducted (new FY 2015 rates) Longevity paid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 26, 2014</td>
<td>September 11 – 17</td>
<td>5 working days</td>
<td>Insurance deducted (new FY 2015 rates) No longevity paid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 10, 2014</td>
<td>September 18 - October 1</td>
<td>10 working days</td>
<td>No changes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please contact Payroll Services at payroll@tamu.edu should you have questions about this schedule.

EMPLOYEE & ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

New Employee Welcome (TAMU NEW) – Registration Required by Noon Wednesday
Please forward this information to all hiring supervisors and encourage them to register their new employees. The next session of New Employee Welcome (TAMU NEW) will be held Wednesday, September 10 from noon to 4:30 p.m. (lunch included) in the General Services Complex. All employees welcome. Registration is required by this Wednesday, September 3 at noon. Employees can register on EOD’s registration site: https://training.tamu.edu/Schedule#EmployeeOrientations. If you would like to hold a seat for an incoming employee who is not yet on TrainTraq, please call EOD at 845-4153.

Coffee Conversations – Fall 2014 Schedule
The fall session of the "Coffee Conversations: Hot Topics in Higher Education" series includes the following presentations:

September 19: Who are These People and How Did They Get Here?
Presenter: Scott McDonald, Assistant Vice President for Academic Services and Director of Admissions, Division of Academic Affairs

October 10: Texas A&M University School of Law: The Past, Present & Future
Presenter: Andrew P. Morriss, Dean, Texas A&M University School of Law

November 14: Beam Me Up Scotty!
Presenters: Cheryl Cato, Director, IT Infrastructure & Operations, Computing Information Services and Willis Marti, Director, Networking & Chief Information Security Officer, Networking and Information Security

Free conversation! Free coffee! For information including full descriptions, times and location, please access: https://EODInfo.tamu.edu/coffee online. Questions can be directed to EODInfo@tamu.edu or (979) 845-4153. Registration is required: https://training.tamu.edu/Schedule#SeminarSeries. Please download a flyer for your break room.

Training Compliance Reports for September – As of September 1, 2014
Attached are the monthly compliance reports for System-required employee training: 1) Required Employee Training Assignments Report, and 2) Required Employee Training Departmental Progress Report. The latter report lists, by
ADLOC/Departments (M Workstation), the completion and past due percentages on all five required courses.

Summary
- 86 (51%) of the 167 M Workstation ADLOCs have 100% of employees up-to-date or current on training assignments.
- The total number of past due assignments increased 15.0% from 1230 to 1415.
- The total number of past due employees increased 13.1% from 878 to 993.
- The total number of past due Faculty employees increased 54.0% from 50 to 77.
- The total number of past due Budgeted Staff employees increased 28.6% from 98 to 126.
- The total number of past due Wage Staff employees increased 8.6% from 604 to 656.
- The total number of past due Graduate Assistant employees increased 250.0% from 8 to 28.
- The total number of past due Student Worker employees decreased 10.2% from 118 to 106.

Required Employee Training Compliance Key Performance Measure
- Percentage of employees in M Workstation ADLOCs up-to-date or current on five required courses:
  - Creating a Discrimination-Free Workplace, EEO – 98.8%
  - Ethics – 98.8%
  - Information Security Awareness – 98.2%
  - Orientation to the A&M System – 99.4%
  - Reporting Fraud, Waste and Abuse – 99.3%
  - Required Training for Athletics Task Workers – 52.7%

REVISED HR WEB FORMS/DOCS

Updates to HR Web Forms & Documents
Your HR Liaison Advisory Resource Group (HRLARG) team recently made a suggestion that we add a new section to the Network News to inform HR Liaisons when HR forms and documents on the HR website are revised. HR agreed this would be helpful information so starting this week, you'll see this information in the Network News messages. If no updates were for that week then the section will not appear. Let us know if this is beneficial to you! If you have ideas or suggestion for the HR website, please contact us at HR-feedback@tamu.edu anytime.

For this first week's update we are listing all updated HR web forms & documents made to the HR web since July.

REVISED HR WEB FORMS/DOCS:
- Sick Leave Pool Withdrawal Form
- Sick Leave Pool Administration Manual
- Fiscal Year 2014-15 Calendar
- Fellow Benefit Enrollment Information
- Job Path Campus HR Contacts
- Step-by-Step Instructions – How to Review a Position Description
- COBRA Continuation Form
- Sample Job Offer Letters
- State Group Insurance Premium (SGIP) Eligibility Chart FY 2015 – bottom of page
- Network News Archive – last week’s issue posted

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Student Employee Pay Scale – Effective Sept. 1, 2014
The title codes and pay scale for student employees effective September 1, 2014 was released through Distribution A last week. For a complete list, please visit the For On-campus Employers link at http://jobsforaggies.tamu.edu.

TIP OF THE WEEK

Setting Up New Employees in Single Sign-On
As various orientation processes are completed to get a new employee onboard, be sure to establish the employee to manager relationship in Single Sign-On (SSO) Department Admin. This is accomplished with just a few simple steps: select the employee, click on the "Employee’s Managers" tab and then “Add Manager” to assign the manager by UIN. These data are used for LeaveTraq, TimeTraq and TrainTraq for notifications and approvals. More information on adding managers and the SSO department admin role can be found at SSO Help - Adding a Manager and SSO Help - Dept Admin Role online.

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