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- Biweekly pay day

HUMAN RESOURCES

Postdoctoral or Graduate Student Fellows Benefit Process

The benefit enrollment information for eligible Fellows has been updated to reflect FY2016 premium rates. As a reminder, 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.

Eligible individuals include:

- Graduate Student Fellows - To qualify for Texas A&M University group insurance, you must hold one or more graduate student fellowships, awarded on a competitive basis that either singly or in combination provide a stipend valued at $10,000 or more per year. Your eligibility will continue as long as you hold the fellowship(s) and remain in good standing with a degree granting program.

- Postdoctoral Fellows - To qualify for Texas A&M University group insurance, you must hold a postdoctoral fellowship(s) and currently receive a stipend from an applicable fellowship. Your eligibility will continue as long as you hold the fellowship(s).

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.

New Graduate Student Employee Benefits Orientation

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 24 and Tuesday, August 25, 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.

Please forward the following benefits-related messages to employees in your department.

Amended University Holidays for 2015-2016
The University’s FY2016 holiday schedule that was announced earlier this month has been amended in order to provide Memorial Day as an approved holiday. The revised schedule is posted on the Human Resources website here. NOTE: other campuses, agencies, and universities within The Texas A&M University System may have different schedules; view here.

Annual Benefit Enrollment Closing Soon
The annual benefit enrollment period will close on July 31; benefit selections in iBenefits as of that date will represent your benefit coverage for Fiscal Year 2016. It is important that employees review their iBenefits selections and ensure that their annual enrollment document is listed in a “valid and submitted” status in order for their benefit changes to be recorded in the system. Documents in a non-submitted status will expire and cancel at the close of annual enrollment on July 31, 2015.

Individuals enrolling new dependents requiring dependent eligibility verification should upload the dependent verification documentation in iBenefits as soon as possible. Dependents that have not been verified prior to the start of the benefit plan year on September 1 will not be enrolled in coverage.

Annual Benefit Enrollment information, including carrier presentations, can be found at http://employees.tamu.edu/benefits/annual-enrollment/ online.

Flexible Spending Account Reminders for Annual Enrollment
As required by IRS regulations, enrollment in a flexible spending account must be reelected each benefit year as this spending account will not automatically continue. If you wish to participate in a flexible spending account (either the healthcare or dependent care account), please make sure that you enroll through iBenefits during annual enrollment.

A few reminders related to the flexible spending account:
- The maximum contribution amount under the healthcare account is $2,550.
- If you want a debit card for the healthcare account, make sure you check the debit card option in iBenefits.
- Contributions for the FY2016 benefit plan year cannot be used for services incurred prior to the September 1, 2015 effective date.

Your deduction term for contributions should be selected based on the FY2016 budget information effective September 1, 2015 not considering any future summer appointments that are not portrayed in the budget.

Revised HR Web Forms/Docs
- Fiscal Year 2016 Calendar
- Fellow Insurance Enrollment Process
- Fellow Certification Form
- Fellow Benefit Information Sheet
- Fellow Benefit Enrollment Form
- ACA Hours Worked Template – Measurement Period Percent Effort Calculation Tool
- Graduate Student Orientation Flyer
- Network News Archive – last week’s issue posted

Please share with department supervisors.
Coaching Tips for Supervisors

The Coaching phase of the PCER (Plan, Coach, Evaluate, Reward) model of Performance Management begins after the completion of the Performance Plan. During this phase, supervisors hold periodic performance discussions with their employees, and they provide necessary training, feedback and support in order to help ensure successful completion of goals. Here are some helpful tips to keep in mind as this phase begins.

*Keep Performance Plans Visible* – It is important that supervisors review performance plans throughout the year and make any necessary changes to goals to help ensure that the plans remain current.

*Document Progress Notes* – All supervisors need some type of documentation system to record notes on employee progress. These notes serve as "memory joggers" when having performance discussions with the employee and can be vital when reviewing the year’s progress at the annual performance evaluation. PATH provides progress notes that can be utilized for performance documentation; however, this feature is optional and supervisors can choose whatever method of documentation best suits their needs. These notes, while private, can be subject to the open records act, so it’s important to practice good documentation standards. Information on documenting progress notes in PATH can be found in the Steps to the Performance Management Process section at [http://EODinfo.tamu.edu/PATHways/](http://EODinfo.tamu.edu/PATHways/).

*Hold Performance Discussions* – Supervisors need to provide their employees with feedback during the year on progress they are making toward their performance plan. Some supervisors conduct mid-year performance discussions at the six-month mark or on a quarterly, or even monthly, basis. It is important to note that these discussions should not be documented under the Supervisor Evaluation tab in the PATH system. PATH only allows one evaluation, per employee, per review period. In order to help accommodate the documentation of these performance discussions, supervisors can use the Performance Feedback Form found in the Resources section at [http://EODinfo.tamu.edu/PATHways/](http://EODinfo.tamu.edu/PATHways/).

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

**PAYROLL SERVICES**

Guardian I-9 Re-Verification Notices
Guardian will send an email to Location Managers to remind them about I-9s expiring due to an employee’s document expiring. Payroll Services will not notify Location Managers (department administrators) via email anymore. Departments are responsible for notifying employees as soon as Guardian notifies them about a document expiring and the need for an I-9 re-verification if the employee will continue to work past the current I-9 expiration date.

**IN CASE YOU MISSED IT...**

New University Risk and Compliance Website
University Risk and Compliance recently launched a new website that contains comprehensive information on compliance obligations and ethical behavior important to faculty, staff and students. Visit [http://urc.tamu.edu/](http://urc.tamu.edu/) to learn more about Title IX – Sexual Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault & Violence; University Rules and Standard Administrative Procedures (SAPs); the Risk, Fraud & Misconduct Hotline; Americans with Disabilities Act; Notice of Nondiscrimination and Abuse; Clery Act; Drug-Free Schools & Communities Act; and Fraud Prevention.

**TIP OF THE WEEK**

HR Liaison Network News – It's Not Always Just for Liaisons
Are employees getting the latest news about their benefits, pay, training or other HR-related information? HR Liaisons can easily help distribute valuable information each week through the HR Liaison Network News. Although the weekly news is targeted for liaisons, bits and pieces, or sometimes the entire content, can be forwarded to employees for reminders, deadlines, new news or simply as an FYI. Of course, crucial decision-making information,
such as annual enrollment, deserves the broadest communication methods possible and HR Liaisons can be our partner in that endeavor by sharing the HR Liaison Network News or pointing employees to http://employees.tamu.edu/liaisons/news-archive/ online.

Next Network Meeting:

September 22, 2015

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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