

HR Forum
May 6, 2013

Michelle calls for questions.

- ERS Group Insurance
 - Annual Enrollment Schedule
 - ERS group insurance program's annual enrollment is coming up. The latest information is that the ERS Board of Trustees will meet May 21. They decided on plan changes and set premium rates for next year. We should know the results of that meeting within a couple of days after they post that information on their website. We're not expecting major plan changes and already have an estimated 7% increase in health premiums. Changes to other plans have not been made if any.
 - ERS sends out personal enrollment benefits statement to your homes in late June. If anyone needs to update their address, now is a good time to remind them to update their home address. They can do it through the Benefit Office or on line through SAP Self-Service, and that will automatically update ERS. If the change is made in Benefits, we make a point to notify Teacher Retirement System (TRS) and the Employees Retirement System (ERS) per routine.
 - Annual enrolment starts July 8, and it is a two-week period. For higher education, it starts July 22 through August 4. You can make changes outside of the window, especially if you are doing it on your own online any time 24/7 between July 8 and August 9. ERS is available to answer questions in the two-week period of July 22 and August 4. The Benefit's Office is available any time during the annual enrollment to answer questions.
 - The ERS Fair is scheduled for Tuesday morning, July 23 from 9-12 p.m. in JCK 1100 It is a short overview presentation, and vendors will be set up to talk one-on-one with employees. We will send out information again as it gets closer. There will be information on the Annual Enrollment website.
 - John Hancock Long-Term Care Policy

- This was a policy that was offered for a few years through ERS, and then they stopped offering it to new hires a year ago. The participants had a choice to lower their benefits to keep the same rate, or keep the same benefit at a higher rate. Now, they have gone from a group contract to an individual product. People are allowed to keep the product and pay John Hancock directly, NOT through a payroll deduction. They were allowed to increase because the rate on the contract was only good for five years, so there was no protection as far as rate increase. There wasn't anything our office could do to control the rates or the plan because it isn't a group product. ERS is looking into a new group long-term care policy. The cost and product are unknown, but they are looking to replace it with something else.
- Proposed Legislation Affecting TRS Benefits and ERS Retiree Insurance
 - Nothing has passed yet regarding TRS and ERS. There are two bills referred to as the omnibus bill. This is just because there are a lot of changes that go into pending Legislature.
 - Retiree Insurance Changes
 - The new legislation is charging the premiums, or employee contribution based on years of service. They are proposing three things:
 - If you have 20 or more years of service, you will continue to get the full contribution at 100%;
 - For those that retire between 15 and 20 years of service, you will receive 75% of the contribution; and
 - For those with 10-15 years, 10 being the minimum, you will receive 50% of the contribution.
 - This change was proposed in a survey conducted a year or so previously. It has not passed yet, but it is moving along and getting close.
 - What bill is this? House Bill 1882, Senate Bill 1459, ERS omnibus bill. There is a lot of other stuff having to do with the ERS Retirement Plan, but at the very end it is the retiree insurance program.
 - The way they are determining some grandfathering is, if you have your 10 years by August 31, 2014, you may be grandfathered. Not a lot of information was given, so further investigation is needed for specific scenarios.

- Do you know the status of the bills? Have they gone to committee? They are out of committee.
 - Do you know if they have passed in the house or the senate? I don't know; I have not seen that part. It just said it was substituted in committee and it is out of committee. Checked on the day prior.
 - Teacher Retirement System (TRS) omnibus bill
 - Looking at changing eligibility for retirement with a grandfather clause.
 - To be eligible for full service retirement, you must meet your Rule of 80 and be age 62. You may retire before that, but there is a penalty.
 - The grandfather clause says, that if by August 31, 2014 you are age 50 and have already meet the Rule of 70 or have 25 years' service, you are grandfathered and do not have to meet the age 62.
 - Changing the interest rate for TRS from 5% to 2%. ERS is doing the same thing.
 - Are they raising the contribution rate? I have not seen that they are raising the contribution rate.
 - Is this in a particular bill? This is Senate 1458 and has also already come out of committee.
- SAP Updates
 - For the department head role, access to banking details has been taken away. The reason for this, it wasn't necessary and had sensitive information. If information is needed, you can call the Payroll Office.
 - So as an employee, I can't go in and see that information? You can see yours, but you can't see anyone else's anymore.
 - The other change made was to take away viewing of the tax information. If you find you need that information, you can contact Michelle Moritz.
 - The new Director of Parking and Transportation is Ms. Jane Wilcox.
 - Implementing payroll deduction for a parking permit for new employees. Looking into it, but it is unknown when it might be implemented.
 - Also looking into the payroll deduction of twelve months instead of nine months. Do not know when this will happen.
- Work Life
 - Rose put together summer camps worksite. Email was sent out with information.

- Camps for kids
- HR MDC Reminders
 - For graduate students who have graduated, remember to terminate them.
 - Hourly student workers who are not returning to work Summer I or are graduating, make sure they are terminated after all of their time has been entered.
 - For student workers who graduated that you want to put in a salary position, remember you must wait until June 1 to do so. They cannot cross payroll areas within the same pay period.
 - If you have grad students that are no longer grad students after spring and you want to pick them up as a NSNR or a student worker, just remember you must wait until June 1 to do so.
 - For employees with a cell phone allowance who applied for another position on campus or were promoted or transferred within their division to another job: If we have an employee leave a position, we automatically end the wireless cell phone allowance because their duties have changed.
 - New I-9 form must be used by May 7.
 - Old forms will be rejected.
 - MDC website has the new form for new employees. Must be completed by the first day of employment. It can be prior, but cannot be past the first day of employment.
 - Three business days to complete the certification.
- Frequently Asked Questions to Michelle
 - Q: I am looking to retire soon and have received my retirement estimate packet from TRS. The information indicates I am not eligible for TRS-Care insurance. Why am I not eligible for insurance?
 - A: As public higher education employees of the State of Texas, we participate in the TRS retirement plan but not the TRS-Care insurance. TRS-Care is designed for local school district employees. As state employees, our insurance benefits are handled by ERS (Employees Retirement System of Texas). About a month before you are ready to retire, contact the Benefits Office and we will help you enroll for your retiree insurance benefits with ERS.
 - Q: Do we have a vision discount program?

- A: Yes. Vision benefits are handled through your medical plan and the in-network copay is \$40. You should search the provider directory to find an eye doctor on the plan. More information can be found at:
<http://healthselectoftexas.welcometouhc.com/physicians-facilities.html>.
- To receive a discount on frames, lenses, and contacts you will need to take your prescription to one of the discount providers listed at:
<https://www.uhcvision.com/uhcVision.html>. Sam's Club and Wal-Mart are listed as discount providers because they offer their everyday low price, but do not accept the discount program. There are many other providers on the list that accept the discount. You will need your member number on your UHC medical card to login.
- In addition, as a member of the Employees Retirement System of Texas in the Group Benefits Program, you have access to Beneplace. Beneplace offers a 15% discount off contact lenses through AC Lens. Simply enter coupon code BENE15 in the special instructions box at the online checkout page or call toll-free 888-248-LENS. For more information log on to: <http://www.aclens.com>.
- Q: I was just wondering if the HR department offered any "Life Coaching" services for faculty and staff?
- A: Yes. Life Coaching is available through our Employee Assistance Program called Bobcat Balance. A faculty or staff member can contact Bobcat Balance toll-free at 1-855-884-7224 to schedule five free visits with a counselor to talk about life issues. For example, stress, family planning, relationships, finances, health, etc. Also, scroll the website at www.worklife.txstate.edu to view various topics, or listen to webinars on different life-related topics from the webinar library.
- In addition, the HealthSelect medical plan has a variety of wellness resources at:
<http://healthselectoftexas.welcometouhc.com/wellness-resources.html>.
- Q: We have a 75% FTE employee who we need to bring up to 100% (full-time) and increase their salary. Can I prepare both on the Change in FTE PCR or do I prepare a Change in FTE and then a separate Change in Pay PCR?
- A: Change in FTE is the only PCR needed to complete both actions. Always start a new FTE at the beginning of the work week (Sunday) with one exception--if the first of the month falls on a Saturday, the change in FTE begins on the first.

- Q: My department submitted a PCR to establish a wireless allowance for an employee at the start of this year. For some reason, the recurring wireless allowance now reflects an end date. We had requested the allowance to continue until the end of the fiscal year. Why was it changed?
- A: The wireless cell phone allowance is awarded based on the fact the employee needs cell phone service to perform the job duties in the position they currently hold. An employee's authorization for the wireless cell phone allowance ends if he or she transfers to a new position, whether in the same department or in another department. The department head may submit a request for Personal Cellular Services Allowance Form to reinstate the employee's allowance if the duties in the new position also require the use of a cell phone.
- New I-9 Updates
 - Shows new I-9 form
 - Handbook of Department of Labor
 - The Employer Guide is now two pages.
 - It gave more space to be more thorough and added optional areas where a candidate can add their e-mail address.
 - It expanded alien information part. There is more space for employee to explain their documents for eligibility.
 - On the second page, all fields have been expanded, especially the employee information, which has much more space. They added a barcode that for now is just there.
 - If more information is needed, you can contact LynnAnn Brewer in Human Resources, or refer to the guide. The guide is step-by-step and goes into detail on all of the forms and how they can be completed.
 - On the Department of Labor website, there is a list of training for the I-9 Form. You can sign up for a webinar with a specialist. There is a webinar almost every day of the week.
 - You click attend session, sign in, and attended session again.
 - Search- USCIS webinar. Make sure it is a ".gov" website.
- [Compensation Presentation Link](#)

- Frequently Asked Questions
 - Q: Do I need to allow time off if an employee requests it?
 - A: No, it has to correspond with business needs. A manager can require that an employee use their accrued FLSA overtime to cover the time off.
 - Q: What constitutes “Job Abandonment”?
 - A: After three days unapproved days off. You must try to contact them; it is policy. It is a resignation on their part. There are some scenarios that do not make this cut-and-dry, such as, police actions or other unavoidable circumstances.
 - Q: When is conference or training attendance considered work time?
 - A: The FLSA provides guidance related to attendance at conferences and training events. This guidance is summarized below. Time need not be counted as hours worked if all of the criteria listed here are met:
 - Attendance is outside the employee’s regular work hours.
 - Attendance is voluntary.
 - The course, lecture, meeting is not directly related to the employee’s job.
 - The employee does no productive work while in attendance.
 - If these criteria are not met, the time spent in attendance at a training event, conference, or workshop is considered compensable time.
 - Remember, training that is
 - Involuntary,
 - Related to the employee’s job, and
 - Approved by the manager is considered compensable work time.
 - Q: If my employee doesn’t show up for work for two days in a row and doesn’t call, I can consider it “Job Abandonment,” correct?
 - A: No, your employee must be absent for three consecutive workdays without notifying his or her supervisor. Contact HR prior to initiating any action related to job abandonment.
- Michelle invites questions.

- Any Questions?
- No Forum next month, June.
- The next Forum will be July 1st.