

December 2015: Important Topics for DOM Staff

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Date: November 30, 2015
To: All DOM Staff

To provide better customer service and to keep staff informed of important and upcoming HR issues, you will be receiving a monthly notice of these topics. For October 2015, I have listed for your review.

2016 Holiday Calendar: The 2016 Holiday Calendar is available on our web site at <http://www.hr.virginia.edu/calendars/university-holiday-schedule-2016/>

Reminder - Upcoming Holidays:

The December, 2015 holidays are:

Wednesday, December 23

Thursday, December 24

Friday, December 25

Thursday, December 31

The January, 2016 holidays are:

Friday, January 1st

Monday, January 18th (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)

UHR Service Center Holiday Coverage: Employees who need emergency assistance from UHR during the holidays can call our UHR Service Center at 434-982-0123 where a recording will give them the phone number for the “manager on duty” for that day.

Off-Cycle Payroll Requests: If a department wants to request an off-cycle payroll payment, the department/employee will need to complete a form and send to University Payroll. **The fee for this processing is \$50 per request.**

Timecard Submission Deadline: Currently, the deadline to submit timecards in SSTL is 5:00 p.m. on the Monday after the pay period end date. As of Monday, January 11, 2016 the deadline will change to 12:00 p.m. on the Monday after the pay period end date. Departments will encourage employees to submit their time on Friday, assuming they are not working on the week-end.

Limited Deduction Pay Period: The bi-weekly pay period November 16 – 29 paid on Friday, December 4, 2015, is a limited deduction pay period with no benefit deductions with the exception of tax deferred saving plans withheld. Third-party deductions such as garnishments, child support, Cavalier Computers, and charitable campaign are also withheld.

FICA Processing: The process that will switch student assignments for those enrolled in the Spring, 2015 semester to be exempt from FICA withholding will be run on Friday, January 22, 2016 so that students enrolled for the semester that begins on Monday, January 20, 2016 will be FICA exempt for the Bi-weekly payroll #2 (01/11 – 01/24).

Note: *A student working for the University during the Christmas break is eligible for the FICA exemption as long as the student qualifies for the FICA exemption on the last day of the semester preceding the break and is eligible to enroll in classes in the first semester following the break.*

If users encounter a situation where the FICA eligibility has not been properly handled, please contact the UHR Service Center at 434-982-0123 or via email at askhr@virginia.edu.

Reminder - Social Security Wage Base for 2016: The Social Security Administration (SSA) has announced that the 2016 social security wage base will be \$118,500, which is the same wage base as 2015. As in prior years, there is no limit to the wages subject to the Medicare tax; therefore, all covered wages are still subject to the 1.45% tax. As in 2015, wages paid in excess of \$200,000 in 2016 will be subject to an extra 0.9% Medicare tax that will only be withheld from employees' wages. Employers will not pay the extra tax. The FICA tax rate, which is the combined social security tax rate of 6.2% and the Medicare tax rate of 1.45%, will be 7.65% for 2016 up to the social security wage base. The maximum social security tax employees and employers will each pay in 2016 is \$7,347.

Reminder - Limits for 2016: The limits for Tax Deferred Savings Plans for 2016 are:

Standard Limit	\$18,000
Age = or >50	\$24,000

Reminder - Exempt Tax Status: Persons claiming “exempt” for their 2016 W-4 or VA-4 forms must file new tax forms no later than Monday, February 15, 2016 to continue this status during 2016. This is an IRS regulation. If the employee neglects to file new tax forms, the employee will be switched to have taxes withheld with a status of Single and zero exemptions.

Reminder - 2015 W-2's: Get your W-2 sooner! The online W-2 will be available mid-January, 2016, two weeks earlier than the paper version. If you don't elect to get your W-2 online, your paper W-2 will not be mailed until January 31, 2016.

Check Address for Year End: Please have your employees take a look at their home address information in Employee Self-Service. Per audit compliance, no employee should have the department's address as their Home Address. Also, employees with University Payroll as a Home Address must have a corresponding entry in Foreign Home Address.

2015 Educational Benefit Funding Deadlines: Employees who are seeking 2015 Educational Benefit Funding, need to submit the request in time for their bi-weekly, or monthly, 2015 final payroll deadline for it to be considered a 2015 benefit. Otherwise, if submitting after the payroll deadline it becomes a 2016 request.

Bi-weekly payroll deadline is Sunday, 12/27/15
Monthly payroll deadline is Thursday, 12/24/15

Reminder - Review Emergency Event Status: The winter inclement season will be here all too soon. It is important that managers convey to employees their “designated” or “non-designated” status as it applies to an Emergency Event. An employee may view their status via Employee Self-Service under “My Information”.

Reminder - University Leave Cash-Out: The University Staff leave program has a cash-out option for employees who have “use-or-lose” hours at the end of the leave year. These are the hours in excess of the maximum hours allowed for carry forward. Employees will be paid 50 percent of the value of the University Staff leave that they lose, provided they have used a minimum of 10 days (80 hours) during the leave year ending December 27, 2015 (pro-rated for part-time University Staff). This minimum usage requirement is intended to encourage employees to take some time off to relax and rejuvenate. The cash-out payment may be received as taxable income or it may be deposited into a tax-deferred savings plan. After the processing for the final leave period of the year (December 27, 2015) is completed, a process is run for the carry forward of leave which identifies any amount above the carry forward limit for the employee. Any University Staff employee with an amount above the carry forward limit and who met the 80-hour threshold of usage will have a “payout” automatically created for half of the hours. This payout will be processed in the first pay period of the new leave year with pay period ending January 10, 2016 for check date of January 15, 2016.

Happy holidays to all!