

Management Update - February 2009

Volume 5, Issue 7

Update on Reporting Time Due to University Closing

Please note the following correction to the special edition *Management Update* sent on Jan. 29, as it relates to reporting time for student employees due to a university closing:

Student Employees scheduled to work but did not because of the closing

Student employees who did not work should not be paid for scheduled hours; therefore, supervisors should not record scheduled hours into either Kronos or TMX as University Business.

Student Employees who worked during the closing

Student employees who worked during the closing should be paid for hours worked at their regular rate of pay.

Supervisors have until today (**Feb. 3**) at midnight to make adjustments and approve time records for the period when the university was closed. If you have any questions, please contact **Ami Hollis**, associate director, Career Services at 330-672-8380 or ahollis@kent.edu.

AFSCME Update: Fact Finding Takes Place

Fact-finding took place last week between Kent State University and Local 153 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). The selection of a fact-finder was agreed upon by both sides late last year, and the fact-finding session took place on Jan. 26. The fact-finder has 14 days to render a recommendation. The recommendation is nonbinding and must be submitted to both sides to accept or reject.

The Kent State AFSCME chapter voted down the university's final, three-year package in October. Since that time, Kent State has honored all elements of the old contract, which expired on Sept. 30. Further updates will be communicated to managers through regular or special editions of *Management Update*.

Reminder About Using Traveline

Please make sure your staff is aware that Kent State employees are no longer **required** to use Traveline for their travel needs. Traveline will remain a preferred vendor, and the Procurement department encourages employees to continue to use the travel service to book university travel. Keep in mind that while employees can now make airline reservations through other providers, they are still required to take advantage of the lowest airfare and adhere to the [university travel policy](#). This means the traveler must retain written documentation of having chosen the lowest available fare; this can be accomplished by printing the list of all available fares as offered by the chosen travel provider, highlighting the lowest fare chosen and saving that document for future reference.

Employees who do use a different travel source will need to charge the travel costs to a personal credit card and

submit an expense reimbursement request. The on-campus Traveline office has closed, but employees can contact Traveline at 888-733-8747; [the online booking tool, TravelPort](#), is also still available. For questions, contact **Larry McWilliams**, assistant manager, Procurement, at 330-672-9196 or lmcwilli@kent.edu.

More Training Opportunities for Faculty and Staff

There are numerous training opportunities available for Kent State faculty and staff, some online and others led by an instructor. A summary of current training is listed below. Registration is required for all training and can be done [online](#).

Free, Online Microsoft Office Learning

Managers and supervisors have a new tool to help their staff learn key software in the Microsoft Office suite of programs. Information Services' Technology Training is coordinating a series of free, online courses, hosted by Microsoft and Element K. The courses provide flexibility for participants to complete them at their own pace from any computer with Internet access.

Instruction is tailored for beginners to advanced users. Core training is offered for Office 2003 programs, including Word, Excel, Access, PowerPoint and Outlook, while additional training is available for departments that have upgraded or intend to upgrade to Office 2007. A [complete list of courses](#) is available online.

Those interested in the online learning options are required to attend a 30-minute orientation session. Orientation sign-up is underway at the Kent Campus, and sign-up events will be held at Kent State's Regional Campuses in February and March. Sign-up events for third shift employees are in development.

For more information, contact **Julie Kennedy** at 330-672-1911 or jkkenne2@kent.edu, or visit the [Web site](#).

Dealing with Conflict in the Workplace

HR Training and Development will introduce two new workshops this semester that address conflict management. *The Principles of Conflict Management* will be offered on **Feb. 24**. The half-day workshop is designed to give participants the insight and tools needed to manage conflict effectively in the workplace. *Dealing with Difficult Behaviors*, scheduled for **March 24**, is a three-hour workshop that focuses on identifying and addressing the seven most common difficult behaviors. Both workshops will be offered again throughout the year.

While these courses are open to managers and supervisors, they are designed for classified and unclassified employees who do not have supervisory duties. Please consider making time in your unit's work schedule for nonsupervisory staff to attend one or both workshops. Registration is required. For more information, contact **Renee Romine** at 330-672-2100.

How to Select the Best Job Candidate

HR continues its interactive *Candidate Recruitment Series* with a two-hour session on *Understanding the Rules of the Search Process*. The session will be held on **Feb. 11** and focuses on the laws and university policies that search committee members need to be aware of when conducting a job search. Without this important knowledge, well-intentioned individuals put themselves and the university in a dangerous position. For additional information or questions, contact **Bob Hall** at rhall4@kent.edu.

FMLA

The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) contains a great deal of information that managers and supervisors need to know and understand. In this online module, participants will learn what is required to be in FMLA compliance when an employee requests an extended leave. All university supervisors, managers, executives and their support staff will be expected to complete the online training, and then

attend a one-hour, in-person session that will review relevant Kent State policies and the proper procedure to follow. If you are part of this target audience, Human Resources will contact you later this month to let you know when and how to access the online training. For more information contact **Bob Hall** at rhall4@kent.edu.

HR Simplifies Employment Processes

Human Resources has introduced a new form and a new electronic workflow, both designed to simplify the process when an employee has a change in job status or voluntarily leaves the university.

Change in Job Status

The Change in Status/Term Assignment Renewal form is available now and can be used for current classified and unclassified employees in the following situations:

- Job reclassification for a classified or unclassified employee (when a review by Compensation results in a status change);
- Promotion for an unclassified employee (when an employee's current position is changed to a higher classification, resulting in a promotion);
- Demotion of a classified or unclassified employee (a change to a lower pay grade);
- Temporary change in job classification for an unclassified employee (change in status for a specific period, such as an interim chair or interim dean);
- Return to a faculty position from a chair, director or dean position; and
- Renewal of an unclassified, term job assignment (such as a grant-funded reappointment).

This form replaces the need for completing the Position Request Authorization (PRA) and will be used in place of the Personnel Action Form (PAF) in the instances mentioned above. Please note that it does not replace the need to complete a PRA when filling a newly created vacancy that will be posted or waived for posting.

The [Change in Status/Term Assignment Renewal](#) form is available in the [HR Forms Library](#). Once there, look at the Employment Forms section, where you will find the form and instructions on how to complete it. For questions, contact Human Resources at 330-672-2100.

Voluntary Separation Workflow

The Notice of Voluntary Separation (NOVS) electronic workflow is scheduled to go live **Feb. 26**. The NOVS will be completed by the department when an employee voluntarily leaves the university (i.e., retirement, resignation). Once the supervisor receives the resignation letter, he or she will initiate the workflow and submit it for processing. This will expedite the separation process and eliminate the need for separate notices to multiple departments.

The NOVS workflow will be located in the *My Action Items* tab of FlashLine with the other workflows. Training sessions on how to use the NOVS workflow are scheduled at Moulton Hall on **March 10 and 18** at 8 and 11 a.m. Training will also be available on **March 11 and 17** at 1:15 and 4 p.m. Registration is required and can be done [online](#). Instructions on how to use the new workflow will also be available in FlashLine; click the *Help* tab, then *Banner Training and Support*, and then click the link for *Tutorials and Job Aids*.

For workflow questions, contact **Barb Casher** at 330-672-8316 or bcasher@kent.edu. For training and technical questions, contact **Julie Kennedy** at 330-672-1911 or jkenne2@kent.edu.

Time Reporting Changes in Flashline

In January, the *Leave Request* option (the process to request future leave) was removed from the Time Reporting channel in FlashLine. *Leave Report* (the process to report hours taken) remains active and is the

official process for unclassified and faculty employees to report leave taken (sick, vacation and personal). With the removal of the *Leave Request* option, units and departments are encouraged to develop an internal process (e.g., e-mail request, etc.) for employees to request future leave.

Other changes related to reporting and approving time for faculty and unclassified staff include:

- Leave Reports/Approval – *Leave Report* pay periods in the *Time Report* and *Time Approval* channels will remain available for three months (six pay periods). In order to increase the accuracy and timeliness of employees' leave balances, the HR records manager will approve any outstanding *Leave Reports* (reports with no action taken by the approver) after one month.
- In-Process Leave Reports – The HR records manager will attempt to notify employees who have *Leave Reports* "in process." This means the employee has not yet selected the "submit" button, and the approver has not received the report.

Human Resources is in the process of developing training videos for *Leave Reporting* and *Leave Approval*, to assist employees in using the electronic leave system. Watch for these in your FlashLine *My Action Items* page in the near future.

Policy Updates

The Board of Trustees at its Jan. 30 meeting approved a new university policy. Employment at Kent State University, policy 3342-6-01, provides the foundation for the university's personnel policies and also implements a new employee code of conduct to ensure a more efficient and orderly workplace.

Several policies were also presented to the Board for their information. This includes [policy 3342-6-11.11, administrative policy regarding leave under the FMLA](#). The policy ensures that the university is in compliance with new FMLA regulations and establishes a standardized notification and approval process for family medical and military family leave.

[Policy 3342-6-11.2, administrative policy regarding conversion of sick leave](#), has been amended to allow eligible employees to convert sick leave to a new personal leave category designated as "community service." Currently, sick leave can only be converted to personal leave to cover absences due to mandatory court appearances, legal or business matters, family emergencies, unusual family obligations, weddings, religious holidays or any other personal matter. The new category provides a workplace-friendly alternative for eligible employees who prefer to use personal leave instead of vacation leave for community service activities.

The new policy and the updates will be published in the [online university policy register](#) in the next few weeks.

Dates to Remember:

- **Feb. 10-12** Celebration of Scholarship, various events and locations. For more information, visit www.kent.edu/rags.
- **Feb. 14** Valentine's Day

Cultural Dates:

February is African American History Month

- **Feb. 8-9** T'u B'Shvat: Jewish observance
- **Feb. 15-16** Arbaeen: Islamic observance
- **Feb. 16** President's Day (University open; holiday observed on Dec. 24)

. **Feb. 25** Ash Wednesday

Tell Us What You Think

This newsletter is designed to keep you, the managers and supervisors, informed. Please take a few minutes to let us know what you think of the publication, along with any comments or suggestions. You may contact us at managersfeedback@kent.edu. We look forward to hearing from you.

For information about events sponsored by Human Resources, please check out the [HR e-calendar](#) and share the information with your staff.

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