

**Business Administrator Services**

**Forum Minutes**

**June 8, 2016 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.**

**Kent Student Center**

**Room 310**

**Larry McWilliams-Asst. Manager, Procurement**

**Introduction of GBEX, New Office Supplies Supplier**

Larry introduced Chris Ellington, owner of GBEX (Going Beyond EXpectations) as the new office supplies supplier for Kent State University. GBEX is a woman-owned, minority office supply vendor located in Cincinnati, Ohio.

GBEX is accessed using the punchout in FlashCart. (Office Max/Office Depot is the wholesale company for GBEX.) When ordering products, look for the yellow “best value” notation under the product description.

You will see substantial savings on many items used every day. If you do not see an item that you use regularly contact Larry McWilliams in Procurement.

Payments are charged to the department pcards when the items are shipped. If the items come from different warehouses you will receive separate pcard charges.

**Mike Pfahl-Associate University Counsel**

**Contracting, Contract Management, Public Requests and Inquiries**

Mike referred to policy 5-04.1 Administrative Policy for Contract Administration. This policy pertains to the delegation of authority and the need for legal review of all contracts.

The university has pre-approved contracts on file and these contracts are not subject to legal review each time unless there have been changes to the original contract. These contracts generally have a pre-approved template and have a sign off on the bottom of the contract. An example of a pre-approved contract would be the KSU Hotel and Conference Center.

If an amendment or change to a contract is received, a copy of both the original and the amended contracts should be sent to General Counsel for approval.

Automatic contract renewals should be watched. Many contracts are written for 1 year and may contain a 30-60 day to cancel clause.

A Contract Management workflow is in process and they are looking at the capability of accepting electronic signatures.

General Counsel completes all public records requests and inquiries. If your department receives a request it should immediately be sent to General Counsel. There is a limited statutory window to acknowledge the request so be sure to forward e-mails and phone calls immediately. Any items received via US Postal Service should be scanned and emailed and the original sent to General Counsel via interdepartmental mail.

When talking to someone on the phone (this does not pertain strictly to public records requests) it is important to know that Ohio is a one consent state. This means that only one party has to consent to recording the conversation and that party does not have to notify the other that the conversation is being recorded.

University policies are part of the Ohio administrative code and should be adhered to as such. If you find that a policy may need revision, contact your supervisor so that you can begin to review the policy for possible amendment or replacement.

**Lin Danes-Director, Web Services and Interactive Media**

**Website Redesign**

Lin discussed the website redesign project that is underway. This is a much smaller project than the last redesign. Websites will still be using Drupal so there is not a need to rebuild entire sites. All departments whether institutional, regional campus, colleges, academic or administrative will be redesigned and launched at the same time.

IS and UCM did concept testing and were provided feedback by the users. The methods for testing were focus groups, usability tests and online surveys at wireframes and template stages. The participants were comprised of faculty, staff, current students, members of East Liverpool and Geauga campus, prospective students from both Kent Roosevelt and Aurora high schools and parents.

Clients will select home page design and rebuilds will begin for university community website owners. Guidance and tweaks to university websites will be based on owner feedback and performance and stability testing will be completed.

University community website owners and contributors need to watch the listserv for updates and milestone dates for making the home page variation/element selection and reviewing your websites after new themes are applied and rebuilt.

There will be a 2-3 week content freeze (likely Oct 1 – Oct 22) where changes made to the current website will have to be made again to the newly designed site. Changes should be minimal to prevent the need for duplication.

During the summer and fall clients will pick their departmental home page selections (June-Sept). The web team will rebuild departmental home pages and interior page content as necessary and will offer training updates to the university community webmasters. The web team will continue to test the website environment for performance and stability.

The review of websites by the client will take place between September and October (watch for dates). The goal for launching institutional and departmental websites with the new look is October 23, 2016.

Departments with nonstandard sites will meet with members of the web team to determine approach. These departments will have the option to transition to the new brand look and feel and forego custom design for the earlier launch in October or work with IS/UCM to determine a winter/spring timeline and roles if opting to remain in a custom look and feel.

Drupal training sessions and weekly labs will be offered after the implementation of the new sites.

**Anne Brown-Assoc. Vice President Business and Administration Services**

**Fiscal Year End Reminders**

The BAS group was reminded to refer to the various communications regarding fiscal year end deadlines. Departments should be reviewing their transactions monthly. Any discrepancies should be directed to the applicable person/department for correction.

Unreconciled and unallocated pcard transactions will be charged to the departments main index and expensed to the office supply account code. It is to be noted that each unallocated transaction must be manually allocated by the Accounts Payable department. Failure by the purchasing department to allocate funds will result in the suspension of the department pcard and the need for the cardholder and reconciler to attend pcard training before the card will be reactivated.

**Lisa Heilman-Payroll Manager**

**Employment Verifications**

Beginning in September 2016 (date changed from July 2016), Kent State University will begin using uConfirm for employment verifications. It is common for companies and universities to use an outside vendor for these requests. In Ohio, The University of Cincinnati, Ohio State and Miami University all use an outside vendor for employment verifications.

Companies that Human Resources and Payroll regularly verify information for will be notified of the change.

There will be a page on the KSU website where uConfirm information will be housed. This will give employees the ability to pass uConfirm information on to those needing it. Once the system goes live all outside verifiers and employees (including student employees) will be directed to the wbsite for verification assistance. There is not a fee associated with the employment verifications.

Employees will be able to request their own employment verifications for mortgage loans, car loans, etc. and take the printed copy with them to the bank or place of business.

Kent State currently processes over 4,000 verification requests annually. Once the system is live HR Records, Payroll and Academic Personnel will no longer handle these requests saving the offices hundreds of hours that can be spent on other tasks.

**Donna Sansonetti-Executive Director of Compensation, Talent Acquisition and HR Records**

**Fair Labor Standards Act Update**

The Department of Labor released new regulations regarding overtime exemptions under the Fair Labor Standards Act.  The new rules will increase the salary threshold for which employees must be paid overtime.

A cross-divisional work group has been formed that includes employees from Business and Finance, Human Resources, Academic Affairs, Government Relations and General Counsel to determine what impact the Fair Labor Standards Act will have on the university.

* The salary threshold to determine overtime eligibility will increase from $23,660 to $47,476 per year ($455 to $913 per week).
* Threshold will be adjusted every 3 years
* No change in the duties test for exemption
* Effective date for the change is December 1, 2016

Over the next several months the group will be collaborating with divisions and departments and discuss the options.

As more information becomes available it will be communicated.

It is to be noted that there may be efforts in Congress to stop or delay the implementation of the new regulations. However, KSU will proceed with plans to ensure all campuses are in compliance.

Questions can be directed to Donna Sansonetti at dsansone@kent.edu or at extension 2-8333 or to Anne Brown at abrow116@kent.edu or at extension 2-6364.

**Vanessa Vesely – Manager, Compensation**

**Reclassification Information**

The reclassification process applies to **classified** unrepresented positions at the university. If the request is for an unclassified position, then that follows a different process than outlined here.

A reclassification of a position can be requested by either the employee in the position or by a department head/supervisor and can be submitted when substantial changes have occurred to the position’s assigned responsibilities. If an employee takes on new responsibilities, then he/she can initiate the request, but they must keep in mind that if the responsibilities were not assigned to them by their supervisor, then the duties may be revoked as an outcome of the audit. The audit cannot be conducted on employees in a probationary status. This would be employees new in their position within 120 days or roughly 4 months. In addition, requests cannot be submitted more than once every twelve months for the same position (this is a rolling 12-month period not a calendar year or fiscal year).

Requests for reclassification should be submitted on the Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ). Proposed duties are not to be included in a reclassification request; the audit review is based on current responsibilities.

The PDQ must be signed by both the employee and the employee’s supervisor certifying the content of the PDQ. If the employee’s supervisor disagrees with any part of the PDQ, he/she can provide comments on the PDQ, or separately through an attached document. It is the supervisor’s responsibility to uphold the PDQ process by completing the supervisor section of the PDQ, signing it, and sending it on for the next level of approval. A supervisor should not hold up the process or refuse to sign the PDQ. Once the PDQ has been completed and signed, it is routed for review and signature by other administrative employees in the reporting channel including the vice president/provost before being forwarded to Compensation.

Once the completed and signed PDQ is received by Compensation, an analyst conducts an audit of the position by gathering information about the position’s current responsibilities through an audit interview with the employee. Usually these audit interviews are conducted in person or if it’s more convenient, by telephone. In addition, conversations with the employee’s supervisor will also take place to gather information on the position’s responsibilities. The analyst will evaluate the position and determine the classification that best fits the responsibilities.

Once the audit has been completed, the compensation analyst will distribute written notification of the results to the employee, executive officer, department head and employee’s supervisor. If it is determined that the responsibilities are within the current classification, then no changes will be made. If the audit indicates a need to reclassify the position, the effective date will be the first day of the pay period following the written notification.

Employees receiving a reclassification to a higher pay grade than their current pay grade, will receive either a 5% increase or the minimum pay of the new pay grade.

If an employee does not agree with the outcome, they can file an appeal to the classification appeals committee. The classification appeals committee is comprised of classified and unclassified staff representing multiple divisions of the university. The members of the committee must be approved by the Vice President of Human Resources.

Questions regarding the reclassification process can be directed to Vanessa at extension 2-8325 or via e-mail to vvesely@kent.edu.

**Human Resources Division, University Benefits**

**Laura Kenney-Coordinator of Leave and Disability**

**Sheba Marshall-Asst. Manager, University Benefits**

 **Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)**

Please note that this presentation was for informational purposes only and does not represent an all-inclusiveness of the Family and Medical Leave Act, university process and procedures.

In 1993 a federal law known as the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) was passed providing job protected leave and the ability of employees to balance work and family responsibilities. This act allows the continuation of medical benefits during an approved leave of absence from work. The FMLA act was amended in 2008, 2009 and again in 2013.

This law permits 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per designated 12-month period and guarantees the continuation of medical benefits during an approved FMLA leave.

Medical certification is required to substantiate the need for FMLA leave.

Employees applying for FMLA must meet the following eligibility requirements:

* Must have been an employee of Kent State University at least 12 months in the last 7 years (12 months do not need to be consecutive)
* Employee must have worked 1,250 hours during the 12-month period immediately preceding the date when the requested leave would begin (part-time, seasonal, intermittent, temporary employees and students may qualify)
* Only hours actually worked may qualify to be counted towards meeting the 1,250 hours of eligibility
* Employees returning from fulfilling his/her National Guard or reserve military obligation must be credited with the hours of service that would have been worked during the period of military service

Employee must also meet the qualifying reasons for FMLA leave

* Employees serious health condition that renders employee unable to perform essential function of his/her position
* Incapacity due to employee’s pregnancy, prenatal care or childbirth
* Birth of a son or daughter and to care for the newborn child (bonding leave)
* For the adoption or foster care of a son or daughter to be placed with the employee
* To care for a family member (spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee) with a serious health condition. (FMLA does not cover the care of in-laws)
* Military Leave – Care for a Covered Service member eligible employees are entitled to take up to 26 weeks of Military FMLA during a “single 12-month period” if the employee is the spouse, son, daughter, parent or next of kin caring for a covered military service member recovering from a serious injury or illness
* Military Family Leave – Qualifying Exigency Leave may be used if the spouse, son, daughter or parent of the employee is on covered active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty) in the armed forces. Employees are entitled to take up to 12 weeks of FMLA during a “rolling 12-month period).

Notes pertaining to military leave requests: Although leave does not generally cover in-laws, an exception is made if the spouse is deployed. Also, military family leave can be used for pre and post deployment.

There are three different options for family medical leave:

1. Continuous – continuous uninterrupted block of time with a beginning and ending date
2. Intermittent – taken in block of time permitting the employee to come and go as needed
3. Reduced Schedule Leave – the employee’s normal work week or work day is reduced

Regardless of the type of medical leave requested or the reason for the leave; a certification process is required. Employees have 15 business days to return all required documents to request the leave. Kent State University averages 600 FMLA cases per year.

In some cases an employee may use all three options or types of FMLA. For example, if an employee has surgery they may be off for an extended period of continuous time then be released by the doctor with a reduced work schedule and then require intermittent time for doctor appointments.

Although short-term conditions do not normally qualify under FMLA, there could be complications that could result in the need for FMLA. Examples of short term conditions would include the flu, common cold, earaches, upset stomach, headaches other than migraines and routine dental, orthodontic or periodontal treatments, etc.

Once an employee is released from doctor’s care and is able to return from FMLA he/she has a right to return to his/her original job or equivalent job with equivalent status, pay, benefits and other employment terms and conditions. The position must be the same or one which entails substantially equivalent skill, effort, responsibility and authority. Job restoration rights assume that the employee would have still been employed with KSU. If licensing or training is required, employees must be given a reasonable amount of time to fulfill changed job requirements.

Supervisors are encouraged to watch for patterns of absences and the need for employees to take unpaid sick and vacation time. If you notice a pattern, contact either Laura or Sheba as the employee may be eligible for FMLA. Supervisors receive FMLA training and must comply with the regulations.

It should also be noted that sick time is how FMLA is paid but FMLA is what protects an employee’s job.

It is up to the employee requesting FMLA to file the required paperwork. It is also up to the employee to renew paperwork if needed after a 12 month rolling period. FMLA time replenishes upon recertification.

It is suggested that if you know that time will be needed that you contact HR 30 days prior to the requested time off.

Employees must send FMLA documents directly to Laura or Sheba in HR and should not leave them with a supervisor for forwarding. Documents can also be dropped off in HR Heer Hall for Laura or Sheba. These documents contain personal and health related information and strict confidentiality guidelines must be followed.

As a reminder this presentation was for informational purposes only and does not represent an all-inclusiveness of the Family and Medical Leave Act, university process and procedures.

Questions regarding FMLA can be sent to benefits@kent.edu.

*As always, if you have a topic you would like to have discussed at an upcoming BAS Forum please email Vicki Ladd at* *vladd@kent.edu**.*

**NEXT BAS FORUM**

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2016**

**KENT STUDENT CENTER**

**GOVERNANCE CHAMBERS**