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# **HR Liaisons Network Meeting Minutes**

**March 7, 2019 – 2:45 p.m. – Auburn University Administrative Complex**

1. **Welcome and Announcements – Karla McCormick**
   * A moment of silence was observed for the tornado victims this past weekend. We have several employees that have been directly affected in numerous ways.

* **New staff:** Three new HR staff members were introduced – Suphia Safavi, Records Technician; Jenna Richards, Employment Specialist; and Marlee Johns, Receptionist.
* **HR Communications:** McCormick shared with the HRLs that we strive to send out communications to everyone and previously committed to send out Performance Management communications by a particular date. We are currently working with Samford Hall on approval for performance management communications and hope to share them in the next week or so. In the future, we will continue to work with Samford Hall on any major communications to ensure that the President and Cabinet are aware of impending communications that will be sent to campus.
* **Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Projection:** McCormick reported that while final information has not been shared by the Department of Labor, Bloomberg Law reports that approximately$35,000 will be the new salary threshold amount for exemption from overtime. There have not been any reports thus far that indicate that the duties tests will be changed. However, McCormick added that until the final regulations are communicated, we are not certain but will share information as soon as it becomes available.
* **Revolving Door Provision:** McCormick shared that there is a new executive director with the Alabama Ethics Commission, Tom Albritton. We are currently in discussions with our General Counsel’s office and the Ethics Commission regarding the interpretations of the Revolving Door Provision and retirees returning to work at Auburn being subject to the revolving door. We are navigating through the information and hope to share more information in the next few weeks.
* **Hardship Policy and Procedures:** McCormick shared that a Hardship Policy has been approved and is on the Policy database. She shared that HR had been working with the governance groups (Staff Council and Administrative-Professional Assembly) regarding the step-by-step process of the ability for employees to contribute to the hardship fund and for employees needing to apply for consideration of the hardship funds. Based on the recent, tragic events of the tornadoes this past weekend, a decision was made to delay the communication to all employees. Patrick Johnston has created a website that has detailed information regarding the program, procedures and application for submitting for consideration of the funds. There will be paper and online application forms available for use. She further stated that HR will continue to collaborate with the governance groups on sending out a communication soon.
* **Statement of Economic Interests:** McCormick stated that the Office of Audit, Compliance and Privacy sent out an email today to all employees that meet the requirements of the completion of the Statement of Economic Interests form. Employees that earn a base salary of $75,000 or more or are in a Supervisor role (regardless of the salary) are required. If the form is not completed and submitted to the state by the deadline, the employee will be subject to fines ($10 per day). The Office of Audit, Compliance, and Privacy (OACP) will be monitoring the completions and will be following-up with employees according to the HRL in OACP, Lindsey Elkins.
* **Benefits Update – Teresa Coker**
* **End dates for Employees less than One Year:** Coker shared that she has been working on an important report to submit to the Teachers Retirement System that is required. In the past, we were only reporting employees in certain classifications. Now, we are required to report all active employees to the retirement system. Coker stated that she had been working with TRS to ensure that information is correct and has been responding to discrepancies as determined by the retirement system for employees that should be contributing to the system. Finally, the report has been certified which is great accomplishment to avoid manual entry of more than 7,500 records. This report has resulted in the need to review our current practices regarding appointment length for temporary and part-time employees. The system recommended that we look at some of our internal processes regarding active appointments that are not currently being paid.
  + Impacted type of employees:Employee classes of Part time monthly (PM), Part-time faculty (PF), Part-time 9 month (P9), Part-time biweekly (PB)

**Not required to participate:**

* + Part-time employees who are hired with a finite begin date and a finite end date of less than one year, an employee group of L1YR (less than one year) are considered a Temporary employee and is not eligible to contribute.
  + Graduate Students, Student nor Adjuncts will be impacted by these processes.

**Required to participate:**

* + Part-time employees who are appointed at 50% FTE or more, will be required to contribute as of date of hire or if currently at a lower FTE—if FTE increases to 50% or more, contributions will commence upon effective date of new FTE.

As a result, in the past several weeks, she has been in discussions with employees to inform them that they are required to contribute. We are currently waiting on clarification of how the retirement system defines recurring appointments. The answer may result in a change of the way these appointments are managed as well. Coker added that the increase in employees required to contribute results in a greater financial impact on Auburn from an employer’s financial portion.

Coker further shared that in the past a full-time employee was given the option of contributing to the retirement system if they were employed for a one-year period only. In the future, this will not be the case; the employee will be required to contribute from date of hire.

The information discussed can be found in the Retirement Systems of Alabama manual at www.rsa.al.gov on Page 6 of the manual. There is a communication being developed from Human Resources that will be sent out to campus soon.

* **FMLA Clarifications – Debra Walters**

The HRL Network Advisory Council requested that there be a discussion regarding some FMLA questions that had come up in their respective areas. A list of questions were provided to Debra Walters, FMLA Coordinator, two weeks ago to enable a presentation of the material at the HRL meeting. Walters provided a PowerPoint presentation that includes answers to the questions which were presented by the council. Eligibility for FMLA is one year of employment plus 1,250 work hours or more during the one-year period. Upon approval, Walters sends the designation form to the employee and the HRL. The employee will also receive a letter regarding their benefits. The FMLA time will need to be entered into Kronos using the proper code: FML-Sick, FML-VAC, FML-SCP and FML-LWOP. Walters indicated that she works with Sonya Dixon in Employee Relations to discuss the option of designating FMLA for an employee without documentation. Walters encouraged HRLs to call her if they had questions.

1. **HRL Updates – Leanne Fuller**

* **Next scheduled meeting** – April 4, 2019
* **HR Connect Newsletter:** Fuller indicated that the HRL Newsletter, HR Connection, was sent on Monday. Fuller explained that the newsletter is sent when there are multiple items of information to share that needs to be/can be shared instead of waiting for the monthly HRL meetings. She encouraged HRLs to read the information and share as needed. This week’s newsletter included the new employees that were introduced today and notice of an edited Bi-weekly Paid Authorization form. She shared that the form will be used for the Graduate Student Worker (bi-weekly) hire as well; it will allow one form to be used for all bi-weekly paid hires. The newsletter is available on the HRL website along with previous publications.
* **HRL Advisory Council meeting:** The last council meeting occurred on February 12th. During that meeting the following items were discussed:
  + Internal Job Posting Length – Chris Thompson will share information later.
  + HRL Administrative Network Procedure – The procedure established a more formalized HRL Network on campus. It has been briefly discussed in the past and was partly developed in response to feedback from previous discussions in 2015 with HRLs. A copy will be shared with all HRLs and will be placed on the HRL website. Fuller encouraged HRLs to reach out with questions after it is received.
  + FMLA Clarifications – Fuller thanked Walters for presenting the information earlier.
* **Upcoming Projects:** Fuller shared with the HRLs that she will be collaborating with others to work on two items, 1) Transfer and New Hire Paperwork requirements – this will be a collaboration with Records and HR Communications for development of information to provide as a resource to campus. She asked for volunteers from the HRL group to give a campus perspective and to collaborate on the project; 2) Remote Work Policy and Guidelines – Fuller stated that we are continuing to receive more requests for guidance regarding remote work arrangements. It is critical that we provide the resources for departments to make decisions regarding these arrangements, if operationally needed. Fuller added that she will seek volunteers for this as well. She will follow-up via email to seek volunteers for both projects.
* **HR Interns:** Lastly, Fuller shared that ACES had inquired the opportunity for its current HR intern to share/present to the next HRL Meeting on what she has been working on. Fuller encouraged that if other units have HR interns and are interested in a great opportunity for presenting to a captive audience of their current HR activities to let her know.

1. **Records Updates – Brittany Saliba**

* **Zjob EPAFs:** Saliba shared with the HRLs that she had developed two illustrations of instructions for EPAF completions. The handouts were made available to the HRLs. Saliba is working to create EPAF illustrations for a variety of EPAF types; she asked for time to get all of them created. A discussion of Zjobs continued with defining what Zjobs are: Secondary jobs (additional compensation) outside of the current department that are meant to be for work outside the normal scope of their Primary job. The approval for Zjobs are initiated by completion of the HR-12 (**Administrative-Professional & University Staff Extra Compensation** form) for Staff and Administrative-Professional Employees) and the UPO-10 (**Faculty Application for Permission to Engage in University Activities for Extra Compensation** form) for Faculty.

Saliba shared that a termination date has been added to the Epaf to ensure that a Zjob does not remain active in error for a long period of time. Typically, six months is recommended for a Zjob length with the ability to get approval for continuance through a recertification by submitting a new, applicable form (HR12 or UPO10). Bailey Ward in Compensation has been reaching out to some of the HRLs regarding Zjobs that have been active but have not been paid in some time. She asked HRLs to review and determine whether there is a need to continue the Zjob assignment.

1. **Employee Relations – Sonya Dixon**

* **Employee Appreciation Week:** Dixon spoke about the Employee Appreciation Week for 2019 and showed the website that is almost finished which highlights the week’s activities.
  + The week will be April 22 – 26, 2019
    - Monday, April 22 – Department activities and appreciation. Determined at the division/department/unit level.
    - Tuesday, April 23 – Walk at Lunch: Currently, there are two areas that have organized walks planned – Pharmacy and Facilities. Dixon shared that if any area is working on coordinating a walk at their location to let her know so that it can be highlighted and coordinated with swag bags from BlueCross/BlueShield.
    - Wednesday, April 24 – Administrative Professionals’ Day, held in the AU Student Center. There will be one speaker in the morning, Jamie Brown; a lunch speaker, Thom Gossom, Jr., and three breakout sessions.
    - Thursday, April 25 – Employee Recognition Program, held at the AUHCC. Dixon shared that the programs will be going out by the end of next week. She encouraged HRLs to speak to their deans and department heads about attending the event if they have an employee being recognized.
    - Friday, April 26 – Picnic at Facilities, serving 10:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.. Thanks to Facilities and Outreach, HR is able to serve hamburgers, hot dogs, chips and drinks for approximately 3,500 employees. Parking is available across the road in the field and organizers plan to work with campus security to ensure safety of employees crossing the road.
  + Dixon said that we will definitely need volunteers to successfully host and execute the events all week. She encouraged all in attendance to consider volunteering. The communication and website launch will be sent in the next week or so.
* **Workflow Email Change – Probationary Review Form and Initial Training Form:** Dixon shared that she is working with Robin Ellis in OIT for language changes, email address and subject line on the workflow emails that auto-generate for employees approaching the deadline for supervisors to complete the Probationary Review Form and the Initial Training Form. She further added that the forms can be accepted via email to [employeerel@auburn.edu](mailto:employeerelations@auburn.edu) or through the secure document upload to employee relations.

1. **Employment Services – Chris Thompson**

* **Employment Specialist assigned division responsibilities:** Chris Thompson provided a handout that included the assigned divisions by Employment Specialists. Going-forward, he asked that the HRLs work directly with the assigned specialist. However, the current activity in-process will be finalized with the employment team member that has been handling it. Any new identified finalists and new job postings need to be handled by the new assigned specialist.
* **Pre-AU (Pre-employment) Update:** Thompson reminded HRLs that Pre-AU is a mechanism that will enable new employees the ability to be assigned a Global User ID and Banner ID number prior to completion of the job assignment being placed in Banner. Thompson shared that he and Lori Bush have discovered some issues and he has shared the issues with Scott in ISS. Scott is currently off-site and will be back in the office on Monday, March 11th, and he will begin to address the concerns. Thompson thanked Lori for her participation in piloting the process.
* **Internal Job Posting Request:** Thompson provided a copy of the Internal Job Posting Request form and shared with the HRLs that the time length for internal job postings will be aligned with the timing of the external job posting and will be posted for a minimum of 10 calendar days. The referenced request form will be required when submitting a job posting for internal recruitment only prior to the job posting being open for accepting applications. The request form will be located on the HR forms page and on the HRL resource webpage.

1. **Human Resource Development – Bill Shannon and Kim Graham**

* **New Employee Orientation Update:** Bill Shannon thanked the HRLs for their work in making sure that the new employee gets to orientation. There have been some recent issues where the new employees were not aware of their User ID number or Banner number and had not completed the DUO-Mobile process. This required these employees to miss a portion of the orientation session to set up this information. Shannon asked the HRLs to help the hiring managers and supervisors on their new hires.
* **Performance Management Training**: Shannon talked about the Performance Management Training that has been developed online as Kim Graham, Instructional Designer, showcased and demonstrated Quick Dive (micro-learning) training videos on the webpage. Kim showcased one video of performance management, session number MG500E. A handout was also provided that highlighted the micro-learning series of trainings that are currently available and how to access the videos. More information will shared soon that gives a lot of information regarding the sessions**.** Shannon also added that he is available to come out to any unit on campus and talk about the performance management process. He added that Lunch and Learn sessions may be added a later time.

No other questions. Meeting was adjourned.