

Cooperative Extension HR News

February 2009

Greetings Everyone!

The HR Office will use this newsletter on a periodic basis to communicate with folks who regularly wear the “HR hat” as one of the ways to keep you in the communication loop. In this February 2009 edition we will cover Reminders, Reference Check Form, new FMLA poster, Updated D2L site, new Fringe Benefit Rates and New Colleague Orientation information. ***Please forward this email to others who may have a need to know this information.***

REMINDERS:

Leave of Absence Requests

Colleagues who are going to request a paid or unpaid, medical or non-medical leave of absence from job duties for more than five days in length must complete a “[Leave Request Form](#)”. **This form is to be completed as soon as the colleague knows that he or she will be gone from their job responsibilities.** Per Board of Regents policy, medical leaves of absence must be pre-approved if: 1) they are more than five days in length; and 2) paid sick leave is being used to account for the days away from the job. This on-line method provides for an efficient and confidential way to process and document such requests. This form is not for use when scheduling time off for purposes of taking a paid vacation. However, in most instances, if an employee wishes to be paid while on a leave of absence, it is possible to use accrued vacation days to cover the time the employee is away from the job.

Criminal Background Check Requests

UWEX is committed to providing a high quality and reasonably safe and secure environment for its workforce, partners and clients. **This means that all vacancies (permanent classified; LTE classified, faculty, academic staff (long-term and short-term), ad hoc, interns, volunteers and students) are included.** Current employees will be asked to complete a criminal records review if they transfer into a new role within UWEX.

The hiring authority may make an offer of employment and negotiate a start date, with the understanding that final confirmation of the appointment is conditional on the results of the criminal record review. **You must request via email to [Joann Johnson](#) and cc [Angie Koppen](#) for a criminal background check to be completed.** *(Please include the appropriate coding string so it is easier for the HR Office to differentiate requests by divisions.)* **The selected candidate may not start until UWEX HR notifies you that they are ok to hire.**

REFERENCE CHECK FORM (NEW)

Cooperative Extension has a new [reference check form](#) and it's posted on the HR website. The former version of the reference check form has been converted into a document of competency-based reference check questions and posted to the HR website for your use as an added resource. Many thanks to the District Directors who worked on developing and piloting the new form!

FMLA POSTER (NEW)

The Department of Labor just released an updated [FMLA poster](#) that includes the new provisions that went into effect in January 2009. It is our obligation to post this information in locations where it can be seen by employees. **Please forward this link to department and unit heads so that they can post the information accordingly.**

<http://www.dol.gov/esa/whd/fmla/finalrule/FMLAPoster.pdf>

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION HR D2L SITE (NEW)

It is up and running! District Directors, State Program Directors, Assistant State Program Directors, designated state WNEP staff and designated administrative staff have been given access to the CE Human Resources D2L site. This site will be used as a central resource center for hiring authority information. These template documents, while not confidential, are less appropriate to post on the public HR website given their administrative nature. Types of template documents that we will post on the D2L site are appointment contract letters, cover letters, ad hoc appointment letters and exit letters. Position description templates will continue to be posted on the HR website.

FRINGE BENEFIT RATES (NEW)

[Fringe benefit rates for July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010](#) have been released.

NEW COLLEAGUE ORIENTATION EVENTS

Please encourage your new colleagues (generally those hired since October 2008) to participate in **all** the events listed below. We have recently added 2 new Post-Workshop Wisline web learning opportunities to continue new colleague orientation after the face-to-face workshop. The following is the announcement that goes out to newly hired colleagues shortly after they begin their employment with us:

Pre-Workshop New Colleague Wisline Webs:

Before coming to the New Colleague Orientation Workshop, join us for two Wisline web meetings to begin this learning process. We will share information that you can use before coming to the workshop and that will help you make the most effective use of your time at the workshop.

New Colleague Resources

Learn about resources for getting started as a New Colleague (session is repeated 3 times before the workshop)

- 10:00 - 11:30 a.m., Monday, January 5, 2009
- 10:00 - 11:30 a.m., Monday, March 2, 2009
- 10:00 - 11:30 a.m., Monday, April 27, 2009

New Colleague On-line Community

Join an on-line community, utilizing **Desire2Learn (D2L)** technology, to get to know fellow new colleagues and those involved in New Colleague training before meeting at the face-to-face workshop.

- 10:00 - 11:00 a.m., Monday, April 20, 2009 - Wisline web to introduce on-line community concept and pre-work for the NCO workshop.
(Community will be established during the week of April 20 – April 24, 2009)

New Colleague Orientation (NCO) Workshop:

Meet face-to-face to get a better understanding of Cooperative Extension and concepts important to Extension work; meet other new colleagues as well as Cooperative Extension administrative leaders and Madison-based staff; and apply some of the key concepts learned.

- Monday, May 18 – Tuesday, May 19, 2009

Post-Workshop New Colleague Wisline Webs (NEW)

After attending the NCO Workshop, join us again for two more Wisline web learning opportunities to continue your orientation with additional topics not covered during the workshop or pre-workshop Wisline web. Each Wisline web covers different topics.

Extension Career Life Events

Learn about HR policies and procedures, promotional opportunities, and governance rights and responsibilities that are part of your career life with Cooperative Extension.

- Monday, June 1, 2009

Expanding Access through Civil Rights Outreach; Ensuring Human Subjects Protection

Expanding Access is a part of Extension's civil rights responsibilities. Learn about the importance of expanding access to Extension programs, preparing for Civil Rights Days and tips for documenting civil rights activities. Learn expectations related to ensuring Human Subjects Protection.

- Monday, August 3, 2009

ONE MORE REMINDER: Future NCO Workshop Dates

- Tuesday, October 27 - Wednesday, October 28, 2009
- Tuesday, April 27 – Wednesday, April 28, 2010
- Tuesday, October 26 – Wednesday, October 27, 2010

THAT'S ALL FOR NOW! *Your friends in the CE HR Office*