STUDENT EMPLOYMENT REMINDERS

Students cannot work more than 20 hours per week, which include breaks and summer semester. If the student is working more than one job collectively their hours cannot exceed 20 hours. To remain employed as a student employee during the summer, students must meet one of the following:

- Be enrolled full-time (12 credit hours) during the summer semester
- Have been enrolled full-time (12 credit hours) during the spring semester and returning to full-time (12 credit hours) in the fall semester.

***If not, they will need to be hired as temporary staff and the department must follow the rules of job postings and background checks for temporary hires.

During the summer semester, Work study student employees must be enrolled at least 6 credit hours. Student employees enrolled less than half-time (6 credit hours for undergraduate and 1 credit hour for graduate) in the summer, will lose their FICA exemption status and taxes will be withheld from their check.

Student employees graduating in May will end their employment as a student on May 10, 2019. Those who continue to work during the summer will have to go through the process of being hired as temporary staff, and the department must follow the rules of job postings and background checks for temporary hires. Under no circumstance can the student continue working prior to the job being posted, offer made and clearance of the background check. Please be sure to ensure enough time for completion of the posting and background check.

Please see the hiring policy on the HR website.
https://www.usm.edu/sites/default/files/groups/employment-hr/pdf/hiring_process_for_temp_staff.pdf

FOREIGN NATIONAL EMPLOYEES

University Human Resources is responsible for tracking foreign documents submitted by foreign national hires. This is to ensure that our employees have their most up to date VISAs on file with HR and maintain their eligibility to work in the United States per law. Employees are responsible for submitting updated documents prior to their expiration. Any employee who fails to update their documents will be placed on suspension without pay the day the documents expire and may be subject to termination. Human Resources will notify the employee and his/her supervisor 90 days in advance of the expiring document and a final request prior to suspending employment. HR will notify the supervisor when documents are received.
HR CUSTOMER SERVICE SURVEYS
Earlier this year, we asked many of you to participate in several surveys pertaining to HR’s customer service. We are very proud to share that we did very well on those surveys and have made major improvements on our results over the last couple of years. Some things you told us you appreciate are our improved customer service, many of the process improvements already made, and the addition of the HR Partners. Of course, there is always room for improvement.

On the HR Operations side of the house, our action items include:

- Each month a training class will be held on various topics such as benefits, forms and new hire processing. More information is included in this newsletter.
- Q&A will be included in our newsletters as needed to help answer some of your questions and to provide explanations for policy changes and process requirements.
- We are partnering with the Controller’s office to develop and implement systematic solutions for our paper and manual processes. This was the number one issue you asked for us to work on.

On the HR Partner side of the house, the number one issue was that the Partners are trying to support too many customers and are therefore spread too thin. To remedy this, we are looking at adding a 4th HR Partner to the team. We are VERY proud of the work our 3 current HR Partners have done to build this new department and create the solid relationships that they have with all of you. Your survey responses just confirmed what we already knew- they’re awesome!

Thank you to the entire University Human Resources team for the hard work and tireless effort you put in every day to take USM to the top!

2019 TRAINING SCHEDULE—HR OPERATIONS
In our latest HR Operations survey, you told us that you would like more training opportunities about our processes. You ask and you shall receive! HR Operations will host a training session on the 3rd Wednesday of each month in Cook Library Room 123 at 10:00am. The first session, Wednesday, March 20, will be a Q&A town hall style meeting for you to ask whatever questions you might have about processes, paperwork and benefits. No sign up necessary.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK UPDATES
Effective March 1, the following updates have been made to the Employee Handbook:

- Background Check policy 2.9: This is a new policy to put our processes into writing. No new information or changes to our current processes.
- Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) policy 4.73: The policy has been revised to provide more information, but no changes.
- Education Enhancement policy 5.9: Revised the policy to state that part-time employees receive a pro-rated award based on hours worked.
- Grievance Procedure policy 7.2.3: Revised the policy to clarify the process ends at Step 2 for probationary employment terminations.
- Attendance policy 7.6: This is a new staff policy that defines some basic expectations for attendance and clarifies “job abandonment” for consistent address across campus.
HR Q&A: WHY DO WE REQUIRE JOB POSTINGS?

*HR has received a lot of questions regarding the policy change last year requiring all positions be posted through the online system, including positions that were not previously required to be such as temps and adjuncts. We asked our AVP for HR, Krystyna Varnado, to explain the rationale behind the policy:*

In 2018, HR updated our hiring policies to require all faculty and staff positions at the University, regardless of status, be posted through the online applicant tracking system. There are both legal and philosophical reasons for this requirement.

Legally, we have Affirmative Action obligations. This means that we must track and analyze our hiring, promotion, termination and compensation practices and identify problematic areas of underrepresentation. Once found, we are then obligated to make “good faith efforts” to correct. We must also report these analyses and efforts to the OFCCP annually, and we are subject to audit by them as well as other government agencies. We are under OFCCP audit currently. Those audits can result in fines, penalties and even the loss of federal funding. Additionally, at any time, our practices can be legally challenged and we must be able to defend our decision-making or face financial penalties. We cannot do any of the above without records. A job posting is that record (at least part of it). While at times the job posting requirement may be an inconvenience, imagine how inconvenient the loss of federal funding would be to the University. Abiding by the law is not optional.

Additionally, we also care very deeply about diversity, fairness and opportunity at the University. Let’s say we have an adjunct position that when we have a need we have a regular go-to person we hire. That’s terrific; there’s nothing wrong with that. However, what if there are other people, well-qualified people, who want very much to work at the University and are maybe even members of underrepresented groups (maybe even underrepresented areas we have already identified through our AAP analysis for which we are required to make good faith efforts to improve). If we don’t post the job, we would never know about these people, we would never give them a chance to apply, we would never have the opportunity to hire them. We would be missing out. Additionally, there might be current employees all over this campus who have qualifications and interests we don’t know about and may never know about unless we post the opportunities and give them a chance to express interest.

I stand firmly by this policy. Our AA/EEO office will be conducting training this year for all managers at the University on the Affirmative Action Plan (we are calling that training AA 101) so that we can all understand our legal obligations better. We will also share information to the campus community on our analyses so everyone will have an opportunity to participate in our good faith efforts.

We appreciate your help and assistance, even when inconvenient, in helping us meet our obligations and improve and embrace diversity at USM.

For more information about this updated posting policy, please refer to the Employee Handbook Policy 2.2.Pre-Employment, specifically section 2.2.1 Recruitment, which begins, “The University is committed to the recruitment and retention of a diverse and skilled workforce.”
ACTIVE HEALTH MANAGEMENT MOTIVATING MISSISSIPPI-KEYS TO LIVING HEALTHY

ActiveHealth Management is passionate about helping everyone achieve their best health and focused on providing resources to assist participants in meeting their personal health goals. The following services are provided by ActiveHealth and included at no additional charge to Plan participations (employees enrolled in our BCBS insurance plans):

- Monthly Webinars on how to get fit and manage health challenges.
- Digital Coaching with more than 150 topics to inspire and motivate participant.
- Informed Care Management with one on one support for those with a chronic medical condition such as diabetes, heart disease or asthma.
- Case Management for those with long-term or frequent hospital stays.
- Maternity Management where a nurse coach will help you navigate the changes of pregnancy and understand the needs of your baby and yourself.
- Weight Management this program can help you take control of your fitness and nutrition for long-term weight management.
- Tobacco Cessation whether you smoke, chew or dip, the program offers the one-on-one support and resources you need to lead a tobacco-free life.

For more information, contact ActiveHealth Management at 866-939-4721 or go online to http://knowyourbenefits.dfa.ms.gov/motivating-mississippi-keys-to-living-healthy/

ONLINE PROVIDER VISITS

Did you know you can see a healthcare provider online for things such as a rash, pink eye, ear infection, headache/migraine, behavioral health therapy, registered dietitian and more?

Amwell provides employees with a faster, easier way to see a provider. You can have around-the-clock video visits with a provider anytime on your smartphone, tablet or computer. (All visits must be real-time video.) Amwell's urgent care services are available anytime, day or night. It's a perfect option when it’s after hours and your doctor’s office is closed, you’re too sick or busy to see a physician in person, or traveling and unable to see your primary care physician.

Employees with SELECT coverage can use Amwell for only a $10 copay. For those with BASE coverage, the $10 copay applies once the deductible has been met. Until then, the visit is $49.

For more information go online to http://knowyourbenefits.dfa.ms.gov/online-provider-visits/
CORNERSTONE UPDATES

Sending Offer Letters (to staff and adjuncts):
When extending an offer letter to your candidate through Cornerstone, you must send it to their “Candidate Profile” (as opposed through email). This will allow the candidate to electronically accept the offer through Cornerstone and automatically record their response. Once the offer letter is generated and approved in Cornerstone, it will be ready to “Send Offer.” When the “Send To” pop-up box appears you must ensure that “Candidate Profile” is selected as the Send Method:

Cornerstone Training: The next Cornerstone training is scheduled in Hattiesburg:

Wednesday, March 13th Cook 123 at 10:00 a.m.

A training calendar have been published and is available along with the user guides on the HR website: https://www.usm.edu/employment-hr/applicant-tracking-system-hiring-manager-resources

Requisition Clean-up: We currently have 160 requisitions posted on our external job board and 229 in an open status. If you are a hiring manager, search committee chair, or administrative support to an open requisition please make sure your requisitions are up to date with current applicant status’s and if you no longer want to accept new applicants please let you HR Partner know to remove your posting from the website. Please remember that our Affirmative Action Plans depend on accurate applicant and hire statistics. If a position is still in your hiring dashboard that means it does not have a final resolution of closed or cancelled.
WHAT IS FORM 1095c AND WHAT DO I DO WITH IT?

Q: What is form 1095c?
A: This is a form that employers are required to send employees in accordance with the Affordable Care Act. It is used by the IRS to determine offer and election of health coverage.

Q: When will employees receive the 1095c?
A: You should have already received your form. All forms were mailed to your department box number on February 27th. If you did not receive your form for 1095C please email hr@usm.edu.

Q: What do I do with the 1095c form?
A: When you file your income taxes this year, present the 1095c to your tax preparer who will offer guidance on the necessity of the 1095c. DO NOT THROW IT AWAY.

Q: Must I wait to file my taxes until I receive this form?
A: You do not have wait to file your return until you receive Form 1095-C. Once you receive the form, keep it in a safe spot in case you need to reference it later.

Q: I didn’t elect benefits through the University in 2018. Why am I receiving a 1095c?
A: You are receiving the 1095c because you were eligible for health benefits in 2018, and were offered coverage by the University. Whether you selected health benefits or not, the University is required to provide you the 1095c if you were deemed full time, or if you elected a "Preventive Care" minimum essential coverage plan.

Q: Should I attach form 1095c to my tax return?
A: No, Form 1095c is for your records only. Do not attach it to your return. Your employer sends a copy of to the IRS, which they then use to match with the information you enter.

Q: Can I get a copy of form 1095c for my adult children who are on my insurance plan?
A: Your employer is only required to provide one form 1095c to the primary policyholder. If you have other people on your plan, such as adult children, make copies for them so they can prepare their tax returns.

If you have questions about any of the information contained in this HR Update, please contact our main line at 6-4050 or your HR Partner for more information.