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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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P&A News – Brought to You by CAPA

January 2009 Issue

Latest News and Information

The Council of Academic Professionals and Administrators held its monthly meeting on January 16, 2009. Highlights from the meeting include:

- The Benefits and Compensation Committee informed CAPA that the University will soon address the issue of 27 pay periods (instead of the normal 26) in the next fiscal year. CAPA seeks to make long-term recommendations since this issue will arise every 10 years.
- CAPA's new [website](#) was launched with the latest information and additional features. Keep an eye on the site as it is still being updated.
- Jackie Singer from the Office of Human Resources addressed the council regarding the health care savings plan (HCSP) option. Previously, CAPA recommended a .5 percent contribution to the HCSP from new money or the employee's paycheck. Faculty voted for 1 percent from the University's contribution to the employee's faculty retirement plan. We are now in different economic times, therefore, more discussions are taking place before moving forward with a recommendation. Many are rethinking the level of contribution and the source. P&A staff are encouraged to contact their representative with questions, concerns, comments or suggestions.

Featured Article

"Why Can't I Take an Hour of Vacation?" or What it Means to be an Exempt Employee

In March 2009, the University will begin tracking vacation time of P&A employees. This will bring a number of benefits, including reduced time and effort in tracking vacation, as well as consistency across the University in how it is accrued, tracked, used and even paid out.

However, more than a few P&A employees have been curious to learn that while the system will show accrued vacation time in terms of hours, they must request vacation time in terms of full and half days. The reason for this lies not in the crazy world of making computers work for humans, nor in the diabolic mission of a faceless University bureaucrat. Rather, it goes straight to one of the key tenants that define most P&A employees, which is that we are classified as "exempt" employees under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

Specifically, this means that all P&A employees with job codes 93xx, 96xx or 97xx on 12 month appointments for greater than 67 percent time (which actually is the vast majority of P&A's) are exempt from the FLSA requirement of receiving overtime pay for being required to work more than 40 hours per week.

We came into this auspicious status by a number of methods. However, rather than list them in detail (which could, and does, fill a legal textbook), the key point is this:

we are hired to do a wide variety of work that is specialized, sophisticated and evaluated based upon the work done. In other words, the law recognizes that our type of work cannot be measured on a specific, hour by hour output.

This status provides us with the flexibility we need to complete projects, attend conferences and otherwise adjust our work week as needed to complete the goals established with our supervisor.

Consequently, we all need to recognize that vacation time should be taken for those extended periods when we plan not to work. The process regarding use of vacation is left open to the departments, but it is expected that the time away should be at least half a day when the employee would otherwise be expected to work. Employees seeking more information should refer to their local HR administrator.

Resources and Professional Development Opportunities

Be healthy *and* earn some cash

Don't forget to enroll in the [Wellness Program](#) to receive \$65 through the Office of Human Resources. Take the next step for your health and earn another \$65.

Comcast service discount for U employees

As a University employee, you can get a deal on Comcast high-speed internet service [here](#).

P & A Audio Spotlight

Jim Turman, Department of Recreational Sports

As assistant vice president for Student Affairs and director for the Department of Recreational Sports, Jim Turman has seen the U of M's "rec sports" thrive during his tenure.

[Click to listen.](#)

This e-mail was sent to all current P&A staff at the University of Minnesota by the Council of Academic Professionals & Administrators.