



# News You Can Use!

## Important Information for Employees of Oklahoma State University

### Human Resources

December 2013

#### BlueOptions and Health Assessment

Employees and spouses who are enrolled in OSU Health Insurance for 2014 may complete a Health Assessment (HA) to receive a \$250 credit to their individual deductible. An HA provides you with information on your overall health status and specific health aspects such as sleep and nutrition, as well as helpful tips. When health risks are identified, you also receive recommendations for making healthy changes. It can discover risks that you may not even realize you have. It also reinforces the healthy choices you're already making. Some of the frequently asked questions that Employee Services have been receiving are:

- *How soon can I take the HA?* At any point now and going forward. BlueCross BlueShield will credit accounts for those employees who completed the HA after July 1, 2013.
- *Where do I go to complete the HA?* Blue Access for Members, found at [www.bcbsok.com/osu](http://www.bcbsok.com/osu).
- *Do I need to submit anything to Employee Services or BlueCross BlueShield?* No.
- *When does my credit go into effect?* It will take up to two weeks for the credit to be posted to your BCBS account. 2014 credit will not show up until after the first of the year. The credit should be made prior to incurring any claims as no adjustments will be made.
- *How do I verify I have received the \$250 credit?* Log in to Blue Access for Members and click on the "My Health" tab and "Incentives" option. Current employees who use Blue Access, this "Incentives" option will not be available until January 1, 2014.

The \$250 credit is only eligible to employees and spouses enrolled in OSU Health Insurance. Spouses must create a Blue Access account and complete their own HA.

You will need to have had a recent physical/HA screening in order to report your blood pressure, cholesterol and blood glucose levels, etc. However, if you don't know your numbers, you can select "I don't know the numbers" and move on to the next question. You may go to the Department of Wellness or your own physician to have a screening.

All parts of the online Health Assessment must be completed in order to receive the \$250 credit.

#### Mandatory Leave Days

OSU will be closed from Monday, December 23, through Wednesday, January 1, 2014. Monday, December 23 and Tuesday, December 31, are mandatory leave days. Employees who have insufficient leave to cover this absence will incur leave without pay for the mandatory leave days only. An employee in his/her 90-day orientation period may use any accrued annual leave to cover these mandatory leave days.

OSU employees receive 12 paid holidays per year. OSU Policy and Procedure Letter 3-0709, University Holidays, is on the Human Resources website, <http://hr.okstate.edu> - click on *Policies and Procedures*.

#### Verify Benefits Enrollments

Employees can use *Web for Employees*, <http://webemp.okstate.edu>, to verify benefits coverage online. You may also find it helpful to compare your December and January payroll advices to make sure benefit deductions for the new calendar year are correct.

If you find an error, contact Employee Services immediately, (405) 744-5449, [osu-es@okstate.edu](mailto:osu-es@okstate.edu), 106 Whitehurst.

#### End-of-Year Flexible Spending Account (FSA) Reminders

*What are the plan year dates?* OSU offers the Grace Period which is an extension for the standard plan year. This means the 2013 plan year is from 1/1/2013 to 3/15/2014. The 2014 plan year is 1/1/2014 to 3/15/2015. Dates of services during that timeframe can be submitted for reimbursement from those plan year balances.

*What is the claim filing deadline?* Claims can be submitted until 3/31/2014 for the 2013 plan year. The claim filing deadline for the 2014 plan year will be 3/31/2015.

*Since OSU offers the Grace Period, if I submit a claim with a date of service 1/1/2014, what plan year will that claim be reimbursed from?* If you submit a claim with a date of service of 1/1/2014 and you have funds available in your 2013 account, the reimbursement will come from your 2013 plan year. If your 2013 account balance is \$0, the funds will be pulled from your 2014 account balance. If you have funds available in your 2013 account and you want to save that balance for the 2013 dates of services, please hold off on submitting any 2014 claims (with dates of services from 1/1/2014 thru 3/15/2014) until that 2013 balance is reflecting \$0. Otherwise, the claims issue out as a first in, first out basis. It will look at your previous plan year first to issue payment out.

*For the new plan year, can I use my debit card to pay for the previous plan year expenses?* Yes, since OSU offers the Grace Period, the debit card can be used for the previous plan year services as long as have a balance. If you receive an invoice or charges for the prior plan year and have a balance, you can use your WageWorks debit card for Health Care expenses. You will need to submit a Card Use Verification form for that transaction so that the funds are pulled from the correct plan year balance.

#### Holiday Pay

Employees required to work during a University holiday will be compensated in accordance with Policy 3-0709, University Holidays.

Non-exempt employees who work on Christmas Day will be paid one and one half times for the time worked, plus time for the holiday. For work on a holiday other than December 25, the employee will be paid at the straight time rate for each hour worked in addition to holiday pay. Exempt employees will receive comparable time off if required to work during University holidays.

The University Holidays policy can be found on the web at <http://hr.okstate.edu>.

## Social Security Tax Rate Stays the Same in 2014

The Social Security tax rate will remain at 6.2% in 2014. The maximum social security tax employees and employers will each pay in 2014 is \$7,254. This is an increase of \$204.60 for employees and employers.

The combined FICA limits for 2014 (social security tax rate of 6.2% and Medicare tax rate of 1.45%) remain the same at 7.65% of taxable income, the same as they were in 2013.

## A Tobacco Cessation Program Just for You

Are you ready to quit smoking? Your plan to quit should include the BlueCross BlueShield Blue Care Connection Tobacco Cessation Program, offering you guidance and support through personal motivational coaching - at no additional cost to you.

Your Lifestyle Management Coach will provide personal assistance with:

- Goal setting
- Progress checkups
- Motivation and support

Call BlueCross BlueShield toll-free at 1-866-412-8795 to enroll today.

Want to work at your own pace? Check out the online wellness courses in Blue Access for Members (BAM) by logging into your BAM account and clicking on *Well onTarget* in the *Quick Links* section.

## Beer to Serve as OSU's First Ombudsperson

Former Oklahoma State University administrator Dr. Ronald Beer has been chosen to serve as the university's first ombudsperson. In his new position, Beer will be available to investigate disputes involving students, faculty and staff, and assist parties in mediating fair resolutions with the university, if reasonably possible.

"I hope you'll join me in welcoming Dr. Beer back to campus. He was selected from a strong pool of candidates for the position, for which he is especially well suited, thanks to his 20 years of experience as vice president of student affairs here," said OSU President Burns Hargis. Beer retired from his previous position in 2000.

Ombudspersons do not have the authority to force a resolution or other action. The goal is simply to attempt to assist the individuals involved in reaching a mutually agreeable resolution of the dispute, while maintaining confidentiality throughout the process.

The ombudsperson does not replace: (1) Ethic-sPoint which is available to receive anonymous complaints of apparently wrongful conduct by OSU employees or (2) other formal grievance processes under established OSU policies. Individuals may pursue their formal grievance rights after attempting to resolve a dispute through the ombudsperson.

Beer may be reached by email, [ombuds@okstate.edu](mailto:ombuds@okstate.edu), or by phone, (405) 744-6627. His office is located at 336 Student Union.

## Training Opportunities

### December

- 6 Introduction to Drupal
- 10 Information Security Awareness
- 10 Payroll Accounting
- 11 Ethics the Cowboy Way
- 12 New Employee Orientation
- 12 Purchasing Card Training
- 13 Q&A Drupal Training Session

For a description of classes or to register, go to <http://hr.okstate.edu>, or call Training Services, (405) 744-5374. Also, find us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

## Help Conserve Energy at OSU!

It is important we work together to minimize energy consumption over the holidays. OSU Energy Managers are working to reduce energy consumption as much as possible across campus, and the university holidays provide the best opportunity to maximize energy savings each year.

To maximize energy savings in your area for the holiday break, please remember to:

- Turn off all electronic devices including computers, speakers, monitors, printers, etc.
- Unplug and empty small refrigerators and leave the doors open for ventilation.
- Unplug electronic devices, such as fans, chargers, and radios.
- Turn off all lights and close mini-blinds. Small savings in individual areas add up to huge savings across campus when you take a few minutes to ensure "off is OFF" in your area.

Please be advised the heat will not be scheduled on in many areas, so anticipate cooler temperatures should you choose to visit campus during the holiday break. OSU Energy Managers will be monitoring buildings over the break, and they are prepared to deal with any extreme weather events that might occur.

## Follow OSU Human Resources on Facebook and Twitter!

OSU Human Resources has a Facebook page and a Twitter account. Important and general information is communicated, including what's going on in Human Resources, benefits information, training opportunities, what's going on around campus, and more!

- Follow OSU Human Resources on Facebook: Go to the Human Resources website, <http://hr.okstate.edu> and click on the Facebook icon. If you are logged in to Facebook, search for *Oklahoma State University Human Resources* - and "Like" us!
- Follow OSU Human Resources on Twitter: *ok-stateHR*.

## TIAA-CREF Visits

TIAA-CREF representatives will be on the Stillwater campus for financial planning and retirement advice to meet one-on-one with employees:

- January 7th, 8th, 9th
- March 11th, 12th, 13th
- May 6th, 7th, 8th

Appointments fill up fast! To make an appointment, schedule online at [www.tiaa-cref.org/schedulenow](http://www.tiaa-cref.org/schedulenow) or call TIAA-CREF at 1-800-732-8353.

# Happy Holidays from University Human Resources!

OSU Human Resources developed this information for the convenience of OSU employees. It is a brief interpretation of more detailed and complex materials. If further clarification is needed, the actual law, policy and contract should be consulted as the authoritative source. OSU continually monitors benefits, policy and procedures and reserves the right to change, modify, amend, or terminate benefit programs at any time.