

## Employee Services is Available to Assist You

Employee Services staff are always available to help employees in 106 Whitehurst. However, you can often find answers to questions by checking the Human Resources website at [www.okstate.edu/osu\\_per](http://www.okstate.edu/osu_per).

The *Quick Links* on the Human Resources web page, [www.okstate.edu/osu\\_per/](http://www.okstate.edu/osu_per/), will take you directly to various topics. You can download forms, find telephone numbers for Benefits vendors, review past issues of newsletters and communications from our office, find answers to policy questions, link to *Web for Employees*, and much, much more!

## Notary Service - Free of Charge

Employee Services offers notary services to the campus free of charge from 8:00am to 5:00pm Monday through Friday. If you need notary service, feel free to drop by the Employee Services windows at 106 Whitehurst. Please bring a photo ID with you, and we will be glad to verify your signature in our presence.

Questions? Call (405) 744-5449.

**New, Updated Information on the Web**  
**Benefits and You**  
• **Oklahoma College Savings Plan**  
[www.okstate.edu/osu\\_per/benefits/infosheets.html](http://www.okstate.edu/osu_per/benefits/infosheets.html)  
• **2006 Retirement Information Meetings**  
[www.okstate.edu/osu\\_per/benefits/tiaamtgs2006.htm](http://www.okstate.edu/osu_per/benefits/tiaamtgs2006.htm)

## Training Opportunities

- January 17 Purchasing Card Training
- January 17 Sexual Harassment/Gender Discrimination Policy Training (Full)
- January 18 Human Resources and the Law
- January 19 FISH! Philosophy: How to Catch a World Famous Attitude
- January 26 Sexual Harassment/Gender Discrimination Policy Training (Full)
- January 26 Featuring Scholarship and Financial Aid (Exclusive to ALP)
- January 31 Strengthening Your Supervisory Skills in the Workplace
- February 1 The Student Perspective... Why We Are Here
- February 2 New Employee Orientation
- February 2 Sexual Harassment/Gender Discrimination Policy Training (Full)
- February 3 Time Management

For more information, or to register, refer to your 2006 *Faculty and Staff Development Opportunities* brochure, or go to [www.okstate.edu/osu\\_per/hr/staff\\_dvpt06.htm](http://www.okstate.edu/osu_per/hr/staff_dvpt06.htm), or call Training Services, (405) 744-5374.



# News You Can Use!

Important Information for Employees of  
Oklahoma State University

January 2006

## OSU Holidays

OSU employees receive 12 paid holidays per year. The 2006 OSU holidays are as follows:

- Monday, January 2 - New Year
- Monday, January 16 - Martin Luther King Day
- Monday, May 29 - Memorial Day
- Tuesday, July 4 - Independence Day
- Monday, September 4 - Labor Day
- Thursday and Friday, November 23-24 - Thanksgiving
- Monday, December 25, through Friday, December 29 - Winter Break

In 2007, Monday, January 1 (New Year's Day) is a paid holiday.

The *University Holidays* Policy and Procedures Letter, 3-0709, can be found at [www.okstate.edu/osu\\_per/policy\\_proced.htm](http://www.okstate.edu/osu_per/policy_proced.htm).

OSU Policy and Procedures Letter 3-0709 requires a committee consisting of faculty and staff meet with the Vice President for Administration and Finance and verify the holiday schedule for the next fiscal year and make recommendation for the following two years.

The committee recommended that December 31, 2007, be declared a day of manda-

tory leave. The committee agreed that notification, almost three years in advance, is adequate for employees to plan and accumulate the requisite eight hours of annual leave.

The *Holiday Schedule* is posted on the Human Resources website, [www.okstate.edu/osu\\_per/holidaysch.htm](http://www.okstate.edu/osu_per/holidaysch.htm).

OSU will provide reasonable accommodation for employees who request time-off to observe religious holidays on regularly scheduled work days. To avoid disruption to normal work schedules, employees must request leave in writing to the department head at least one week in advance. Employees will use annual leave, compensatory leave, or personal leave without pay, as appropriate, for the time requested. Time off will be granted unless such leave would cause undue hardship to the department.

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.

## Flexible Benefits MBI Debit Cards

*Planned Benefit Systems* (PBS) has been selected as the vendor for the Flexible Benefits Plan for calendar year 2006. If you elected to participate in the unreimbursed medical plan in 2006, you should have received an MBI debit card in the mail. The MBI debit card allows you to pay for some eligible health care products and services at the point of sale without submitting claim forms and waiting for reimbursement. The debit card will cover most expenses currently allowed under the medical reimbursement account. The debit card will work at any medical, dental and vision provider that accepts MasterCard.

It is important to ask for a receipt, just as you would if you were submitting a paper claim form. Additional documentation will be requested in some cases by PBS in order to confirm the eligibility of some debit card purchases. Just as with the current plan, you will want to keep documentation in case verification is requested by the Internal Revenue Service during an individual audit.

If you have not received your card, call PBS, 1-800-800-0133 x266. To request an additional card or a card for a spouse, forms are available at [www.okstate.edu/osu\\_per/benefits/FSA\\_SpouseCard\\_0905.pdf](http://www.okstate.edu/osu_per/benefits/FSA_SpouseCard_0905.pdf). In the meantime, you can submit a paper claim form.

## 2005 Flexible Benefits Reimbursement Reminder

If you had a flexible spending account in 2005, remember the deadline to submit eligible expense receipts for 2005 is March 31, 2006.

Receipts may be submitted to American Fidelity for reimbursement up to your goal amount. Any non-reimbursed money remaining in your account will be forfeited, which means it is unavailable for reimbursement.

## Carefully Review First Payroll Advice of the Year

In the past we have asked employees to keep their last paper payroll advice of the year and compare it with their January payroll advice, to make sure that benefit deductions for the new calendar year are correct. That has been made easier with *Web for Employees* because employees can verify benefits coverage online at their convenience. They also have previous payroll advices available to compare enrollment.

If you find an error on your payroll advice, contact Employee Services immediately, (405) 744-5449, 106 Whitehurst.

## New Benefits Plan Year for Health Care Insurance

A new benefits plan year begins each January for HealthChoice Standard participants with a new \$300 annual deductible. If you have more than three people covered in your family, you will want to monitor your claims to be sure that you are not charged more than \$900 (family deductible) in a given year. This is true even if your spouse is covered by HealthChoice through another employer. Inform HealthChoice that your spouse is covered and you wish to be treated as a family unit.

Also, remember that a new *Statement of Claim* form must be completed on the first claim each plan year for each family member. Failure to provide the claim form may result in a delay. This once-a-year form ensures current information on each covered family member.

The *Statement of Claim* form is available at [www.healthchoiceok.com](http://www.healthchoiceok.com) under *HealthChoice Plan Info.*, then *Forms & Applications*.

## Retirement Information Meetings

It's never too early to plan for your retirement! Throughout the year, OSU Human Resources works with TIAA-CREF to present information opportunities for you to learn more about OSU's Retirement Plan. The first meeting of the new year is as follows:

**January 17**     **A Great Plan Just Got Even Better (Simple Steps to Understanding the OSU Retirement Plan)**  
**2:00-3:00pm, 106B Whitehurst**

*This presentation provides you with a detailed overview of Open Plan Solutions (OPS)—what has changed with the plan, and what hasn't changed. Topics include new investment options, the allocation process as well as the new OSU/TIAA-CREF microsite.*

Mark your calendar for these other meetings planned for 2006:

**April 18**     **Getting Started with TIAA-CREF**  
**July 11**     **A Woman's Money, a Woman's Future** *Men are certainly invited*  
**September 19**     **Planning for Retirement and Other Goals**  
**December 5**     **5 Habits of Highly Successful Investors**

Meetings are held in 106B Whitehurst from 2:00-3:00pm, except for the Planning for Retirement and Other Goals meeting, which is from 10:00-11:00am.

TIAA-CREF is also available on campus each week to meet with you individually. If you would like to make an appointment for an individual meeting, you can schedule through their website at [www.tiaa-cref.org/okstate](http://www.tiaa-cref.org/okstate) or call TIAA-CREF at 1-800-842-2006. The meetings are held in 106M Whitehurst.

You can review your TIAA-CREF accounts selections and make changes by contacting TIAA-CREF at [www.tiaa-cref.org/okstate](http://www.tiaa-cref.org/okstate) or by calling 1-800-842-2776. The website allows you full access to your account.

Questions? Call Employee Services at (405) 744-5449.

## Tool Sale for Supervisors!!!

Do you supervise employees? Save almost 50% on a national seminar coming this month on January 31, 2006. *Strengthening Your Supervisory Skills in the Workplace* gives you the critical tools to help build essential people skills. Learn to prevent conflict before it happens by confronting others professionally, calmly and tactfully. Recognize and eliminate self-sabotaging interpersonal habits. Gain insight as to why difficult people behave the way they do.

Nowadays you can not just rely on mere supervisory skills to be an effective leader. The old rules and tools of managing and supervising simply do not work with today's complex workforce.

Take advantage of this one time offer on the Stillwater campus. And don't forget, if three employees attend from your department, the fourth may attend free. An even bigger savings!

For more information, go to [www.okstate.edu/osu\\_per/hr/staff\\_dvpt06.htm](http://www.okstate.edu/osu_per/hr/staff_dvpt06.htm) or call Training Services, (405) 744-5374.

**Staff Appreciation Day (Picnic)**  
**Thursday, April 6, 2006**  
**Mark your calendar!**