

Oklahoma Income Tax Laws

The Oklahoma Tax Commission (OTC) recently notified OSU that some OSU employees are still out of compliance with Oklahoma Income Tax laws for a third consecutive year.

Human Resources sent a letter to each employee, requesting they follow-up with the OTC. Employees were also notified in 2005 and 2004. If employees fail to resolve their tax compliance issues when a final list is issued in June, Title 68, Section 238.2 of the Oklahoma Statute directs State employers to terminate employment.

Once the issue has been resolved, the OTC will notify OSU.

Retirement Information Meetings

James Baird, TIAA-CREF Representative, is available on the Stillwater campus for one-on-one counseling each Tuesday. Sessions are held in 106M Whitehurst. To check James' schedule and make an appointment for an individual meeting, schedule online at www.tiaa-cref.org/moc or call TIAA-CREF at 1-800-842-2006. A link to the online schedule is also available from the Human Resources website, www.okstate.edu/osu_per/retirement.html.

You can review your TIAA-CREF account selections and make changes by contacting TIAA-CREF at 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.

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.

Training Opportunities

May 10	Enhancing Motivation Through Coaching
May 12	EA Forms and Payroll Sign-Up
May 12	Payroll Accounting (Full)
May 16	Sexual Harassment/Gender Discrimination Policy Training (Full)
May 17	Making Sense of Leave Part I
May 19	Payroll Processing
May 24	Making Sense of Leave Part II
May 24	Sexual Harassment/Gender Discrimination Policy Training (Full)
May 25	Virtual Camp Redlands Tour (Exclusive to Advanced Leadership Program)
May 26	Payroll Accounting
June 1	New Employee Orientation
June 1	At Your Service!
June 6	Purchasing Card Training
June 6	Sexual Harassment/Gender Discrimination Policy Training
June 7	Discussing Performance
June 8	Business Grammar and Proof-Reading
June 13	How to Build Your People

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, or call Training Services, (405) 744-5374.



News You Can Use!

Important Information for Employees of Oklahoma State University

May 2006

Change in Race/Ethnic Categories

Two new race/ethnic categories have been developed by the Department of Labor. Your race/ethnic category is how you have identified yourself on the U.S. Census. Your race/ethnicity is not something that changes from year to year. If you change this category, Affirmative Action reserves the right to call and ask for verification.

You can use *Web for Employees*, <http://webemp.okstate.edu/>, to self-identify your race or ethnicity. Or you can complete a *Personal Information Form*. A blank form is available for download from www.okstate.edu/osu_per/docfiles/docfiles.htm.

Definitions of the finalized race/ethnic categories can be found on the next page. You will notice that "not Hispanic or Latino" has been added to each of the race categories and "two or more races" has been added as a new

category.

OSU is subject to certain governmental recordkeeping and reporting requirements for the administration of civil rights laws and regulations. In order to comply with these laws, OSU invites employees to voluntarily self-identify their race or ethnicity. Submission of this information is voluntary and refusal to provide it will not subject you to any adverse treatment. The information obtained will be kept confidential and may only be used in accordance with the provisions of applicable laws, executive orders, and regulations, including those that require the information to be summarized and reported to the federal government for civil rights enforcement. When reported, data will not identify any specific individual.

Health Care Benefits Survey

Watch for a survey from the OSU Flexible Compensation Benefits Committee. The Committee wants your feedback on health care benefits for OSU employees. Your answers will help OSU better understand health insurance needs and your satisfaction with health care benefits.

Two New Race/Ethnic Categories Now Available on Web For Employees and HRS

Categories available for declaration of race/ethnic status now include the following:

Hispanic or Latino - A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race. The term, "Spanish origin," can be used in addition to "Hispanic or Latino."

White (not Hispanic or Latino) - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

Black or African American (Not Hispanic or Latino) - A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa.

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (Not Hispanic or Latino) - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.

Asian (Not Hispanic or Latino) - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian Subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.

American Indian or Alaska Native (Not Hispanic or Latino) - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America,) and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment.

Two or More Races (Not Hispanic or Latino) – All persons who identify with more than one of the above five races.

Update on Retirement Ruling from the IRS

Oklahoma State University has followed up with the attorneys who filed the private letter ruling request regarding an OTRS withdrawal option for those who were hired prior to July 1, 2004. Originally it was hoped that we would have a response from the IRS in April of this year.

We have now been notified that the IRS attorney working the private letter ruling request indicates that the request is being held because of the issues of multiple elections. The attorney has not indicated how long the delay may be but based on other experiences, our attorneys are concerned the delay may be a long one.

Therefore, our attorneys are considering other approaches which might speed up the process and make at least some withdrawals available within the coming fiscal year. They are considering modification of the letter ruling request to make withdrawal options in two groups. The first group would be those individuals who never had an opportunity to make an election because they were mandated to participate in OTRS. If approval is received for those who were mandated into OTRS, then a second request would be made for those individuals who were not mandated. Obviously if we were declined on the first group, we would not expect approval of the second group.

A favorable IRS ruling is still a key objective and OSU will continue to work toward that goal. We will keep you informed.

Want Less Paperwork? Retailers Partnering with MBI

Each of the following retailers have partnered with MBI to make using Flexible Spending Account (FSA) dollars easier. All FSA eligible items available through these retailers have been coded as such. So, when you use your MBI card to make an eligible purchase, information is traded up to MBI and automated substantiation may take place. The benefit? Most of the time, transactions for the eligible FSA items made through these retailers will NOT require you to submit a detailed receipt to PBS.

- Walgreens - www.walgreens.com
- Longs Drugs - www.longs.com
- Drugstore - www.drugstore.com
- 39DollarGlasses.com - www.39dollarglasses.com

Remember that the MBI debit card only sends date, time, total amount and retailer information to PBS. There is no product or service detail. Documentation may still be requested by PBS.

Harrington Benefits Services Changes Name to Fiserv Health Harrington

Harrington Benefits Services and Avidyn Health, third-party administrators for HealthChoice, have changed their names to reflect that of their parent company, *Fiserv Health*. Harrington, the claims administrator for HealthChoice, will now be known as Fiserv Health Harrington, while Avidyn, the precertification manager for HealthChoice, will be known as Fiserv Health Care Management. Although operating under new names, the same knowledgeable staff will be available to assist you. Customer service phone numbers and mailing addressees will remain the same.

Benefits During the Summer

Your benefits may continue during the summer, even if you are without a paycheck. OSU continues to pay health and life premiums for faculty during the summer unless separation of employment occurs. OSU-paid health and life premiums may also continue for staff members who are on leave without pay during the summer if the leave is at the request of, or for the convenience of, OSU. If, however, leave is at the staff member's request or convenience, then the staff member will be responsible for paying all premiums.

In order for benefits to be uninterrupted, you may want to check with your department to be sure that you have continuous assignments for next year with your leave during the summer reflected with zero pay.

New Faculty/Staff Fee Waiver Form

If you are a full time faculty or staff member taking classes, you may request a partial fee waiver. The *Faculty/Staff Fee Waiver Form* has recently been changed. The revised form is available for download from the Office of the Registrar's website, www.okstate.edu/registrar/FormsOnline/FormsOnline.htm. Scroll down to *Faculty/Staff Fee Waiver Form*.

Please use your social security number on this form, NOT your campus-wide identification number.

You can also pick up a blank form from the Office of the Registrar, 322 Student Union.

If you have a supply of the old forms, please discard them.