



Human Resources

<http://hr.okstate.edu>

INSIDE HUMAN RESOURCES

Timely Information
For Managers, Supervisors,
Directors and Support Staff

June 2010

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PROVIDING REFERENCES

In today's litigious environment, the question often arises of how much information should be provided when you are called for a reference on a current or prior employee. The base rule is only provide information that can be supported by actual documented fact and not opinion. And obtain a release from the individual, including student employees. A sample release is on the Human Resources website at <http://hr.okstate.edu/hr/supertools.htm>.

When called for a reference, ask the inquirer to send you a signed release if you do not already have one. Many application procedures automatically secure releases as part of the employment process.

The release provides the opportunity for the employee to authorize OSU to release factual information to any prospective employers about attendance, salary, performance, and/or eligibility for rehire. In the absence of the release, only the employee's dates of employment, title and full- or part-time status may be provided, per the Oklahoma Attorney General's Office.

If you have secured a release, a copy should be kept in the department. The original form should be sent to Human Resources, 106 Whitehurst, to be kept in the employee's personnel file.

One exception to the above procedures of securing a release is for reference information to be provided within OSU or to another Oklahoma state agency. The State of Oklahoma provides special protection that foster sharing of information within the state agency system. Of course, in all cases, the information should be factual.

Questions? Contact your HR Partner, (405) 744-7401.

CHILDREN IN THE WORKPLACE

While OSU values family and work/life balance, the workplace should not be used in lieu of child care. The presence of children in the workplace during working hours can cause disruptions in job duties of the employee and co-workers, create liability for the University, diminish a professional work environment, and risk harm to the children.

In the unusual event that bringing a child to work is unavoidable, the employee must contact his/her supervisor and obtain permission for the child to be present. For instance, an employee may need to bring a child to the office at 8:00 a.m. before a medical appointment at 8:30 a.m. Factors that the supervisor needs to consider before granting permission are the age of the child, how long the child needs to be present, the work environment in the employee's area, and any possible disruption to work being performed. In no case will any exceptions be made for sick children.

Occasionally the question also arises about bringing pets in the workplace. Service animals to accommodate persons with special needs are welcome. Pets, however, should not be brought into the workplace. Many people are not pet-friendly and may even have allergies or other health problems which are not conducive to pets. Pets may be disruptive and even destructive. Unfortunately, many pet owners do not act responsibly and have been reported to create problems and work for others. Enjoy your pet at home.

Questions? Contact your HR Partner, (405) 744-7401.

VACANT NON-EXEMPT POSITION NUMBERS

On March 23, the Office of the Associate Vice President and Controller communicated new procedures which require future nonexempt employees to be paid on the biweekly payroll, with job code "Q." All new and vacant positions need to be established with a "Q" job code.

The budget rollover from FY2010 to FY2011 presents an opportunity to change the job code associated with vacant positions without changing the established position number. This is the only time of the year in which this change can be made without changing the actual position number.

When we roll budget into HRS, we will change the job code "I" associated with the position number in FY10 to job code "Q" for FY11 and send you notice of these positions.

Questions? Contact your HR Partner for more details, (405) 744-7401.

TEMPORARY/PERIODIC EMPLOYEES

Departments may hire individuals in a temporary employment status to meet occasional short time departmental needs. Temporary/periodic employees are not eligible for benefits and do not have the policy rights of continuous regular employees.

A temporary/periodic employee classification is suitable in the following instances:

- A full-time person is needed for a job lasting no more than six months; OR
- A person is needed for an on-going assignment that requires less than half-time work, no more than 20 hours a week; OR
- A person who works periodically on an as needed basis but less than 1,040 hours in any given fiscal year.

Temporary/periodic employees are usually nonexempt with a job code of V. HR reviews job assignments based upon hours worked by temporary/periodic employees to determine continued work eligibility. If a temporary/periodic employee exceeds the allowable number of hours worked, an appropriate course of action may include the creation of a continuous position or immediate termination of the employee's assignment.

Questions? Contact HR Partner Services at (405) 744-7401.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND COMPUTER SEMINARS

Please pre-register for training opportunities.

June Administrative Seminars

3	New Employee Orientation
10	Payment Card Industry 101
10	e-Commerce
15	Fraud and Internal Controls
16	Purchasing Policies and Procedures

June Computer

4	Introduction to Computing at OSU
8	Word 2007 Mail Merge
9&10	Access 2007 Level 3 (Day 1&2)
14	Bridging from Office 2003 to 2007
15&16	Publisher 2007 (Day 1&2)
16&17	Excel 2007 Level 1 (Day 1&2)
17&18	PowerPoint 2007 New Features (Day 1&2)

For a description of the 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.

ACCOMMODATING NURSING MOMS UNDER THE PATIENT PROTECTION AND AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The newly enacted Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act amends the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) to require employers to provide unpaid "reasonable" breaks each time a nursing mother needs to express breast milk for up to one year after the birth of her child. Additional federal guidelines may be forthcoming.

Under existing OSU Policy (3-0713), employees are provided two, 15-minute rest periods. If this time is not sufficient for the nursing mother, the employee may request additional time for which accrued annual leave or compensatory time may be used to avoid unpaid status.

The Act also requires that a private space must be provided for these breaks. The private space cannot include a bathroom and must be away from view and free from the likelihood of intrusion. It would be beneficial to designate in advance a suitable place in your area that can be used for this purpose.

More information will be provided at the next Administrative Officers meeting. Questions? Contact your HR Partner, (405) 744-7401.