

# HR HORIZONS

July 2009

## Virginia Sickness and Disability Plan (VSDP) Changes effective July 1, 2009

The 2009 Appropriations Act makes the following changes to the Virginia Sickness and Disability Program (VSDP) effective July 1, 2009:

**One-year waiting period** – Any new employee hired or rehired on or after July 1, 2009 will need to satisfy a one-year waiting period before being eligible for non work-related short-term disability benefits.

**Five-year vesting period** – Any new employee hired or rehired on or after July 1, 2009 must be employed for at least five continuous years before becoming eligible for 100% or 80% income replacement during periods of short-term disability. Until the five-year vesting period is satisfied, income replacement will be capped at 60% of pre-disability income.

**Forty-five day waiting period** – Any employee who returns to work, after a short-term disability, on or after July 1, 2009 and again becomes disabled due to the same condition within 45 consecutive calendar days is considered to have a continuation or recurrence of the prior disability. This is a change from the previous policy specifying a 14 consecutive calendar day break.

## New Virginia State Employee Loan Program

The Governor announced the new Virginia State Employee Loan Program. The program will be open to classified, non probationary employees who are paid on a monthly or semi-monthly basis. Loans are for \$100 - \$500, and the borrower must be (or become) a Virginia Credit Union member. Participants must complete an online application and a brief online financial education program. No credit check is performed and no reporting to a credit bureau is done. For more information, please visit [www.dhrm.virginia.gov/vaemploan/faqs.html](http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/vaemploan/faqs.html). To begin the four step application process, visit [www.dhrm.virginia.gov/vaemploan/howtoapply.html](http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/vaemploan/howtoapply.html).

## Logging into JobLink and PositionLink Becomes Easier

Beginning in August, you will no longer need a separate password to log in to JobLink or PositionLink. When you access the JobLink/PositionLink home page, you will be prompted to enter your JMU e-ID and password. Upon entering this information, the system will confirm that you are an authorized user and you will be logged into the system. This means one less system password to remember! Additional information will be e-mailed to all JobLink and PositionLink users in August.



## Performance Evaluations: The Critical Conversation for Tough Economic Times

Employees may have a tendency to equate their self-worth with the size of their pay increase. Money can be a very emotional topic in the workplace. When no money is forthcoming, a sense of fear that one's career is ending can take hold. Providing employees with an effective, meaningful performance evaluation is essential during uncertain times. Assessing performance is not only about awarding compensation for being a contributor or extraordinary contributor.

According to Dick Grote of Grote Consulting and author of *Forced Ranking: Making Performance Management Work*, "the real reason we do performance evaluations is because it's an ethical obligation of leadership. Every person who works for an organization wants the answer to two questions: what is it you expect of me, and how am I doing at meeting your expectations? That's why we do performance appraisals. The fact that there are no merit increases has no bearing on that obligation." Greg Szymanski, Director of Human Resources for Geonerco Management, Inc. a Seattle-based real estate development firm, leads his organization with this in mind, "appraisals provide a way to define performance, a path

to success, and are one way to keep people focused on what they can control – the execution of their job – instead of what they can't control – the constant stream of bad news being blathered all over the media."

The current economic climate provides opportunities for meaningful conversations with employees who will be listening intently to what their supervisors have to say. A higher level of employee commitment may be the result of these thoughtful, planned meetings. Supervisors should be writing and delivering performance reviews and development plans which reinforce the behaviors of high performers and address performance issues in low performers. Embrace the opportunity to say "thank you" to those who are doing the work. Coach and provide feedback to those who may need a bit of bolstering and a sense of direction. Supervisors can also use the meeting as an opportunity to elicit feedback from employees about ways to best meet departmental goals with reduced resources. Even when employees are not seeing an increase in their paychecks, they can leave their performance evaluation meeting feeling more valued and more integrally connected to the department's mission.



### *Dollars and Sense* from Payroll

#### DID YOU KNOW...

- The university has an account code set up specifically for university automobile and cell phone stipends? The account code is 114540 and should be selected in the account code box on the PAR form when requesting payment for these types of stipends. This will help departments identify stipend amounts impacting their budget.
- Minimum wage will increase to \$7.25 effective with time worked 7/16/09 - 7/31/09 for wage and student employees.

## Vacation Reminder for Classified Employees & Supervisors

All classified employees should review their current vacation balance with their supervisor and plan to use hours that will exceed their maximum carry-over limit. Excess vacation hours must be used before January 10, 2010.

The chart on the right reflects the number of hours earned each pay period and the maximum carry-over limits based on months of service.

Years of Service (Full Time State)	Vacation Hours Earned Each Pay Period	Vacation Max. Carry-over Limits
0-5 years	4 hours	192 hours (24 days)
5-10 years	5 hours	240 hours (30 days)
10-15 years	6 hours	288 hours (36 days)
15-20 years	7 hours	336 hours (42 days)
20-25 years	8 hours	384 hours (48 days)
25+ years	9 hours	432 hours (54 days)

Reminder: Employees can review their leave information on J-Ess. All leave taken and any overtime leave and compensatory time earned transactions are reflected in the balances.

Due to the time frame that "leave taken" is submitted to Human Resources, vacation and sick accrual (non-VSDP) are generally one pay period behind. The last accrual date on J-Ess reflects that last pay period date the accrual process was run.

If you have any questions or need assistance calculating your vacation hours, please contact Krystal Smith, Benefits Leave Coordinator, at 83974 or [smithkf@jmu.edu](mailto:smithkf@jmu.edu).

## Changing Lanes, Changing Roads, Changing Highways: Getting from Here to There



"Change is situational; transition, on the other hand, is psychological" (Bridges, 1980). Life transitions affect each of us in a different way. We often find ourselves taking on new professional and/or personal roles in which we hit the ground running without ever giving thought to, or actively engaging in, the process of transition. This presentation will help you explore the process of transition as it relates specifically to you. Frameworks and theories of transition will be discussed. Activities will help you determine where you are in the process of transition, empower you to be comfortable in that place and provide you with tools to assist you in progressing through the final stages of transition. Whether you are experiencing a professional transition to a new role in the same department (changing "lanes"), a new role in a different department (changing "roads"), new to JMU altogether (changing "highways") or personal transition, this presentation will empower you in your transition process.

Course# TD1251, Presented by Tisha McCoy  
 Thursday, September 10, 2009 , 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM, USB 102  
 Registration is available through J-Ess



# Driving Directions to Our Office

We are located in the University Services Building on Patterson Street, across the street from the Quad. Traveling north on Route 11/Main Street, make a left turn at the stop light located beside Buffalo Wild Wings onto Warsaw Avenue. When approaching the next light on Warsaw Avenue, travel forward and follow the road around to the University Services Building.

## Your HR Teams



### Administration

Michelle Chase, Yohna Chambers



### Business Analysis

Debbie Glass, Amber Lam



### Workforce Management

Sandra Anderson, Andrea Kiser, Steve Hedrick



### Benefits

Seated: Julie Byers, Wanda Layman  
Back: Kristi Moon, Paula Love, Becky Sanford, Krystal Smith, Diane Ricketson



### HR Service Center

Front - Melinda Hardwick, Maureen Burt, Christina Eaton, Kristen Gregory  
Back - Cathy Thomas, Jennifer Campfield, Natasha Butler, Kellie Dovel, Jennifer Meeks, Jorge Matallana

## Human Resources At-A-Glance

JMU's Human Resources is dedicated to customer service, positive change and the pursuit of excellence that promotes employee success.

### Administration

Michelle Chase	83825	chasepm
Yohna Chambers	83825	chambeyj
Fax	87916	

### Benefits

Julie Byers	83976	byersje
Wanda Layman	83728	laymanwb
Paula Love	82808	lovepd
Kristi Moon	83970	moonkd
Diane Ricketson	85533	ricketdl
Becky Sanford	82358	sanforrj
Krystal Smith	83974	smithkf
Fax	87105	

### Business Analysis

Amber Lam	82296	lamar
Debbie Glass	85534	glass2dl
Fax	87105	

### HR Service Center

Maureen Burt	86591	burtmt
Natasha Butler	84473	butlernm
Jennifer Campfield	83982	campfjif
Kellie Dovel	86165	dovelkl
Christina Eaton	8.8056	eatoncl
Kristen Gregory	87305	gregorks
Melinda Hardwick	83968	hardwimm
Jorge Matallana	84115	matallji
Jennifer Meeks	86728	meeksjm
Cathy Thomas	83967	thomasce
Fax	87916	

### Workforce Management

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Steve Hedrick	82997	hedricsm
Andrea Kiser	83597	kiserar
Fax	87916	

The success of an organization depends on its people. People are the heart and soul of this university. Taking care of people is the objective of HR. This newsletter was prepared with this in mind and HR, like you, is committed to providing a high level of customer service.

### HR Horizons Team:

Kristen Gregory, Cathy Thomas, Michelle Chase, Krystal Smith, and Andrea Kiser