Vacation – Use It or Lose It!
Staff employees should remember there is a limit to the number of vacation hours which may be carried forward to the September timesheet. Excess unused hours on September 1 will be transferred to your sick leave balance. Refer to the chart of vacation accrual limits on http://personnel.mwsu.edu/office/vacationrates.asp.
The hours shown are for full-time employment and should be prorated for vacation-eligible part-time staff.

Return to Work Release Form
A new Return to Work Release Form has been added to the Human Resources Forms Webpage. As you know, when using sick leave for an absence of more than three (3) continuous work days, employees are required to provide a physician's certificate or other written statement showing the cause or nature of the illness or injury and release for duty. Employees should immediately begin using the new form for this purpose.

Retirement Plan News – TRS & ORP
The Texas Legislature recently approved changes to the Teacher Retirement System (TRS) and Optional Retirement Program (ORP) that will impact members.

- Increases in the TRS active member contribution rate will be as follows: September 1, 2013, 6.4%; September 1, 2014, 6.7%; September 1, 2015, 7.2%; and September 1, 2016, 7.7%. The State matching rate will increase effective September 1, 2013 from 6.4% to 6.8%.
- The TRS normal retirement age was changed to 62 with Rule of 80 and at least five years of service credit for all TRS members who are not vested as of August 31, 2014 and all new members on or after September 1, 2014. (A member is vested with five years of service credit in TRS.) All members vested as of Aug. 31, 2014, are not subject to the new requirements and will experience no change in normal-age retirement eligibility.
- The interest rate paid on TRS member account balances will reduce from 5% to 2% effective September 1, 2014 and the interest earned through that date will not be affected.
- Texas Optional Retirement Program matching contributions effective 9/1/2013 are set at 6.6% (grandfathered employees, 8.5%).

Changes to Retiree Health Insurance Eligibility
The state’s retiree health insurance contribution will be based on years of service for employees who retire in the future and have less than five years of ERS GBP participation as of 8/31/2014.

- A full-time** employee (75%-100% FTE) retiring with at least:
  - 10 years of service = 50% employee and 25% dependent state contribution
  - 15 years of service = 75% employee and 37.5% dependent state contribution
  - 20 years of service = 100% employee and 50% dependent state contribution
**Part-time employees receive ½ of the state contribution shown.

*If you have less than 10 years of state service credit and participation in the ERS GBP insurance plan at retirement, you are not eligible for retiree insurance. (Future insurance entitlements are not guaranteed by the state or the university and are subject to change.)
Q. If I certified my tobacco use last year, do I have to recertify?
A. No. You only need to recertify if you stop or start using tobacco products. Otherwise, no action is necessary. However, anyone who does not certify by August 31 will automatically be charged additional tobacco surcharge(s) depending on the level of insurance enrollment.

Q. I currently have $3600 pledged to my Texflex HealthCare account. How will my enrollment roll over to the new plan year?
A. The new federal healthcare law limits enrollment in healthcare flex plans to $2500. Therefore, anyone with a current enrollment level of $2500 or more will be rolled over automatically to the new plan year with a maximum enrollment of $2500. Otherwise, anyone wishing to change their enrollment must complete a form in HR or make changes at ERS Online.

Q. How do I increase my life insurance?
A. During annual enrollment or during the plan year following a life changing event, you may request an Evidence of Insurability form (health questionnaire) through ERS Online to increase life or add disability coverage. You may request the form be sent to you by either mail or email. You must complete and submit the form for review and send a timely response to any follow-up requests for medical documentation. If approved, the enrollment will be automatic.

Important Reminder to Departments
On or before the FIRST day of employment, hiring departments MUST:

- Provide non-benefits eligible (NBE) employees (temps, students, GA, TA, etc.) with the HR form, New Employee Instructions. The department must complete the Employee Name, Department, Date of First Active Employment, and Deadline for I-9 Completion (3rd working day following first active date) on this form.

- Provide the NBE employee with the printed Form I-9 which is within the New Employee Instructions link, and instruct him/her to complete and sign page 1 on or before the first day of active duty. This page MUST be completed entirely by the employee; you may not fill it in or type it in for the employee.

- Instruct the employee to BRING BOTH the “Instruction Form” and the “Form I-9” to Human Resources within the first three working days. This should coincide with the deadline date you entered on the instruction form.

- Instruct the NBE employee to also bring their supporting documents with them to HR proving eligibility to work in the United States. A list of these documents is included online with the New Employee Instructions and Form I-9.

Employees who do not complete this process within the deadline MUST be terminated under federal USCIS laws. Failure to comply could result in a fine of $1100 per incident against your department.

Congratulations to July Retirees!

Carol Bisbee  Assistant Professor/Chair, Social Work
James Hoggard          Professor, English
Cindy Loveless                    Supervisor, Postal Services