

SPRING 2007

Benefits Newsletter



Please direct any inquiries to:
Kim Powell
Benefits Coordinator
570-484-2486 or
kpowell@lhup.edu

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Reminder:

When you have life event changes such as marriage, birth, adoption, ineligibility of a dependent, or divorce, be sure to notify Kim Powell, Benefits Coordinator, as soon as possible so that the proper changes may be made to your health plans. For SSHE Group Employees, the number of people on your health care plan will affect the amount of premium you pay.

Tips to Help You Through The Retirement Process

The State Employees' Retirement System (SERS) and the Deferred Compensation Program (DCP) are experiencing much higher-than-normal service demands, which are expected to continue through June. The following tips will help employees through the retirement application and leave payout deferral processes.

SERS Retirement Application

- Retiring members should prepare financially for a period of 8-10 weeks from retirement until they receive their initial payment from SERS.
- If you are planning to retire, you must schedule an appointment with your SERS Retirement Counselor to review and sign your retirement application. Appointments are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. We urge you to schedule an appointment as soon as possible, by calling 1-800-633-5461.
- General information about your SERS retirement benefit and interactive retirement calculators can be found on the SERS Web site at www.sers.state.pa.us.

Additional Tips to Help you Through the Retirement Application Process can be found on the SERS Web Site.

Leave Payout Deferrals to Deferred Compensation Program (DCP)

Employees wishing to defer taxes on their leave payouts must be members of the DCP:

- **DCP participants**—your signed Salary Deferral Agreement must be received by Great West Retirement Services before the first day of the month in which you will receive your leave payout;
- **Employees who are not DCP members**— You must establish an account and have at least one deferral from your bi-weekly pay deferred into the program.

For more detailed information, please visit the "Guest Section" of the DCP Web site at www.sers457.com for information on "Leave Payouts" and to obtain enrollment forms.

Alternative Retirement Plan (ARP) Enrolled Employees (TIAA-CREF, AIG VALIC, ING, and METLIFE)

You are able to change companies or allocations to plan companies two times a calendar year. Contact information for the ARP vendors is listed on page 3 of the newsletter.

You can obtain a Retirement Allocation Change Form by contacting Kim Powell at extension 2486 or by email at kpowell@lhup.edu.

Work-Related Injury Procedures

In case of a life threatening emergency, an employees should report **DIRECTLY** to the nearest hospital emergency room.

Employee Responsibility

Employee should notify their supervisor as soon as possible.

- Supervisor will complete LHUP Work-Related Injury Report available at http://www.lhup.edu/HR/Worker's_Compensation_Directory.htm

Any employee injured on the job, but not needing medical care should contact Kim Powell, Benefits Coordinator, at (570) 484-2486 or kpowell@lhup.edu.

- Kim Powell will need a completed LHUP Work-Related Injury Report from the supervisor.

Any employee injured on the job, and requiring medical will:

- Contact Kim Powell at (570) 484-2486 or kpowell@lhup.edu;
- Kim Powell will need a completed LHUP Work-Related Injury Report from the supervisor.
- Kim Powell will complete the First Report of Injury with Inservco, Inc.
- The employee will seek medical care for the first 90 days from the date of injury from ANY panel physician. Panel list is available at: http://www.lhup.edu/HR/Worker's_Compensation_Directory.htm.

Injured employee should maintain contact with his/her supervisor and Kim Powell, Benefits Coordinator, regarding absences from work due to the injury.

Supervisor Responsibility

- Complete an LHUP Work-Related Injury Report. Report can be located at: http://www.lhup.edu/HR/Worker's_Compensation_Directory.htm;
- Forward completed LHUP Work-Related Injury Report to Kim Powell;
- Maintain contact with injury employee regarding return to work.

New Highmark ID Cards for SSHE Group (Coaches, Faculty, Managers & SPFPA)

Highmark will be implementing a revision to the design of their member ID cards.

The main revision is that their ID cards are being redesigned to show both the subscriber's name as well as the covered dependent's name. This is a provider-driven initiative designed to improve claims processing and prevent privacy breaches.

Highmark is enhancing their member identification cards to help providers correctly identify both the member/patient and subscriber

when submitting claims. With the current ID card format, the name appearing on the ID cards is that of the member/patient only. A member's claims can be delayed or denied if Highmark can't identify both the member and subscriber during the claims processing. Highmark's new ID card format will identify both the member and subscriber, so providers can include all of the necessary information when they file claims on behalf of the member. Each covered family member will receive their own ID card with their name listed under the subscriber's name.

The new ID cards will be issued toward the end of July 2007.



"Notify your supervisor and Kim Powell when a work-related injury occurs"

Important Dates to Remember

AIG Valic Retirement Counseling

May 9, 2007— 9 a.m.—4 p.m.—Sullivan 310

June 7, 2007—9 a.m.—4 p.m.—Sullivan 310

To schedule an appointment, contact Dale Reitz at 484-767-7214, or by email at Dale_Reitz@aigvalic.com.

ING Retirement Counseling

May 2, 2007—10 a.m.—3 p.m.— Clearfield Campus (FOUN138)

May 3, 2007— 8 a.m.—2 p.m.— Sullivan 310

To schedule an appointment, contact Ron Banerjee at 814-689-3637, or by email at ronb@naretirementservices.com.

MetLife Retirement Counseling

June 15, 2007—9 a.m.—4 p.m.—Sullivan 310

To schedule an appointment, contact Tom Gross by cell phone at 800-492-3553 Ext. 28433, or by e-mail at tcgross@metlife.com.

SERS Retirement Counseling

May 17, 2007— 9 a.m.—12:00 p.m.—Sullivan 310

June 21, 2007— 9 a.m.—12:00 p.m.—Sullivan 310

To schedule an appointment, contact Martha Hoover at 800-633-5461, ext. 3401.

TIAA-CREF Retirement Counseling

April 26, 2007—10 a.m.—3 p.m.—Clearfield Campus (FOUN138)

To schedule an appointment, sign up online at www.tiaa-cref.org/moc or call (866) 842-2173.

Employee Self Service (ESS)

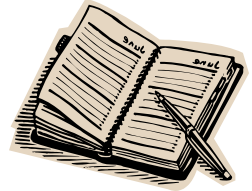
ESS is a web-based service which allows employees to review their personal information on-line. Employees can view the following data elements:

- Payroll statements (current and past);
- Benefit Plans, coverage, dependents, and contributions;
- Leave balances;
- Banking information;
- TSA and other savings plan contributions;
- Addresses and other personal data (dates of hire, emergency contact).

The ability to directly view your human resources and payroll data in the PASSHE Human Resource/Payroll System (SAP) provides an excellent opportunity for you to ensure that the information is correct and kept up to date.

One of the major advantages of the ESS system and the resulting information is that the data is real-time data. In other words, when you view your information in ESS, the system pulls the most current information directly from the Human Resources/Payroll System (SAP). In comparing the information from your most recent printed pay stub to the information available in ESS, the information in ESS may be more up to date.

More information on ESS can be found on the Human Resources Web Site at: www.lhup.edu/HR/Index.htm.



“ESS system information is real-time data.”

Budgeting Strategies



When planning a budget, it is important to set financial goals to help keep both your spending and savings on track. It's a good idea to set short-term goals, which you can accomplish within one year, and long-term goals, which can take five years or more. You may even find it helpful to set mid-term goals, which can take one to five years. However you decide to set your financial goals, make sure your goals are realistic, measurable, and achievable.

- **Realistic goals can be achieved in a specified timeframe**—Paying off \$2,000 credit card balance in two years is a realistic goal, while paying off a \$200,000 credit card balance in the same timeframe is probably not.
- **Measurable goals can be quantified**—Putting \$10 in a savings account each week is a measurable goal, while putting random amounts of money in a savings account is not measurable.

Eliminating Credit Card Debt is a Measurable Goal—While your goals are specific to your situation, you may want to consider settling the goal of getting out of debt as your number one priority. If you have credit card debt, determine the best way to pay it off. If you're only paying the minimum amount due, it can take you many years to pay off your credit card balance. Making payments greater than the minimum amount due can substantially lower the pay-off timeframe and total interest paid.

Discretionary Expenses—The money you spend on everyday items may seem like pocket change at the time, but it adds up. For example:

	Approximate Item Cost	Cost Per Week	Cost Per Month	Cost Per Year
Cup of coffee Five days/week	\$1.00	\$5.00	\$20.00	\$260.00
Pack of cigarettes Seven days/week	\$4.00	\$28.00	\$120.00	\$1,460.00
Eating lunch out Five days/week	\$7.00	\$35.00	\$140.00	\$4,160.00
Dinner out for two Two days/week	\$40.00	\$80.00	\$640.00	\$4,160.00

The amount you would actually spend on these items may be different, but it's clear that discretionary expenses can use up a large part of your money. A good way to think of a discretionary expense is something you want rather than something you need. For example, subscribing to cable pay channels, going to the movies, eating out, and using extra telephone services such as call waiting and caller ID are all discretionary expenses. So is getting a cup of coffee at a store, going to a salon to have a manicure or a pedicure and having your clothes dry-cleaned.

Think about your own expenses. Where can you eliminate or reduce discretionary spending to help meet your financial goals? For example, if you can't stop eating out completely, how about taking lunch to work three days a week? You'll save approximately \$728 a year that you can put toward other debts.

Another way to save on discretionary spending is to do things that don't cost anything, such as visiting parks, taking walks or spending time with friends.

Managing Variable Expenses

One way to keep costs low is to watch your variable expenses, such as long distance calls, electrical bills, and transportation costs. Using those examples you could take the following steps:

- Write letters or use email instead of telephone to communicate long distance
- Turn all lights off when not in use
- Switch from 100 watt bulbs to 60 watt bulbs
- Set your thermostat to 65 degrees in the winter and 75 degrees in the summer to save on heating and cooling
- Carpool to work
- Trade in your gas guzzling SUV for a more economical car

RESOURCES

United Behavioral Health

www.liveandworkwell.com
Access code: Pennsylvania

Keyword search "budgets," "financial"

Follow the Financial Resources link to access calculators and tools to help you with home buying and renting, college saving, simple savings goals, retirement planning and more.

SEAP

Call toll-free
1-800-692-7459
1-800-824-4306 TDD

or log on to

www.liveandworkwell.com
Access code: Pennsylvania