MUS Employee Group Benefits Plan

Essential Information

for Supervisors, P.I.s, and Administrative Contacts

University Human Resources (UHR)

November 2018

Agenda

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The Plan In Brief

- The Montana University System (MUS) offers a comprehensive Employee Group Benefits Plan called "Choices" or "Plan":
  - For eligible employees e.g. scheduled to work 0.5+ FTE for 6+ months into the future
  - Opportunity for optional benefits, and dependent coverage

- All medical options are self-insured. The cost of our benefits is covered by employer contributions and, where applicable, employee premiums

- To keep the Plan financially sound and affordable employers and employees must be in compliance with appropriate regulations

MUS benefits outside the Employee Group Benefits Plan include retirement (mandatory and optional plans), and retiree medical insurance. State and Federal benefits may also apply, e.g. FMLA, Worker's Comp, VEBA

Some Compliance Obligations

- Provision of benefits to *eligible* employees & dependents, through:
  - Processing of hires, and job changes; observation of deadlines/effective dates
  - Employee *Choices* selections within 30 days of eligibility/job start date
  - Prompt application of qualifying mid-year changes

- Discontinuation of benefits when eligibility ends, through:
  - Prompt processing of separations
  - Observation of deadlines, and effective dates

- Timely collection of employer and employee contributions, through:
  - Payment of employees as/when they work
  - Accurate management and approval of time, and absence reporting
  - Prompt delivery of payouts and services due at the end of employment

Other compliance obligations apply to retirement plans and benefits, and when considering post retirement employment.

Why Be Concerned With Compliance?

Without compliance we risk loss of:

- the **Employee**'s *Choices*, dependent coverage (perhaps permanently), and continued tax advantages

- the **Manager/Supervisor**'s ability to fulfill legal responsibilities

- **Departmental funds**

- the **Plan**'s:
    - Financial stability
    - Tax status

  Plus Plan Administrator liabilities are incurred

Your UHR Partner

Your unit's work is important and its faculty, staff and student workers are essential. Departmental or project needs, and employee circumstances, are often unique.

UHR is here to help with all aspects of recruiting, retaining and, eventually, off-boarding these talented members of your team. We look forward to partnering together, navigating the requirements that can otherwise complicate and delay your work:

- *before* hire
- *at* hire (and upon an employee becoming benefits eligible)
- *during* employment, and
- ***when employment is ending***

UHR's Service Improvements: additional employee benefits orientations; a growing Benefits team, and quicker response time. Coming Additions: UHR Shared Services model; on-line onboarding, and benefits enrollment/administration; training for departmental contacts

Before Hire

- Compliance/eligibility considerations of one kind or another apply to **_all_** employment types

- Each potential employee's situation/benefits eligibility status may be unique. Employees qualify for benefits under the Plan or the "Affordable Care Act" (ACA)

- Employer benefits contributions are:
  - Collected in full beginning with month one of hire/eligibility ($1,054/mo 2018-9 Plan year)
  - Due regardless of whether or not the employee opts to receive benefits
  - Shared between Indexes in ratio to labor distribution (where the employee is paid from multiple sources, or holds more than one job)

- All approvals to hire/job changes must be in place **_prior to_** the start date

At Hire

- Ensure the employee knows how to **_initiate contact_** with the UHR Benefits Team immediately upon starting work for:
  - Confirmation of benefits eligibility status
  - Employee *Choices* selections within 30 days of the job's start date/becoming benefits eligible

- Please don't attempt to answer benefits questions or provide benefits information yourself

- I9 must be verified and submitted to Payroll within 3 days of starting work

During Employment

- Please notify UHR immediately of changes to any aspect of employment (e.g. FTE, duties)

- Payroll deadlines are necessary for the regular payment of all employees (and graduate assistants) and the collection of benefits contributions
  - 20th of the month for payment on Main Payroll (11th of the month)

- Supervisors have legal responsibilities e.g. to:
  - Manage employees' time, and
  - Promptly and accurately approve time reporting (by proxy in extraordinary circumstances only)
  - Supervisor is the final approver - ***no-one else is checking***
  - Please refer to Supervisor, Departmental Administrative Staff, Employee toolkits http://www.montana.edu/hr/flsa_info/index.htm

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When Employment is Ending

- Separations must be promptly documented and submitted to UHR

- Termination Checklist is appropriate for everyone (including temps and student workers), and helps ensure employee:
  - Obligations are fulfilled, including meeting with the Benefits Team
  - Access and services end as appropriate
  www.montana.edu/hr/documents/NewTermEmp/SeparationTermination%20Checklist%202017.docx

- LWOP is a benefits-eligible status:
  - Appropriate for: TT AY faculty, and non-faculty continuous assignments of < 12 mo/year
  - Inappropriate in most other situations: please contact UHR for case by case assistance

Post Retirement Employment Basics

The MUS and MSU greatly value the continued association with our retired faculty and staff.

- Employment in retirement is however limited under:
  - The Montana University System Retirement Plan (MUS-RP)
  - PERS defined <u>benefit</u>, PERS defined <u>contribution</u>, TIAA, TRS
  - Social Security

- The rules of each differ one from another. State and Federal law, as well as MUS/MSU policy and practice, also apply

- Each retiree's circumstances are unique

- Please consult with UHR <u>as soon as </u>the possibility of hiring/working in retirement arises.   Compensation Manager: sking@montana.edu, 994 4358

Essential Takeaways:

Your unit **needs are important** and often unique; employee **circumstances differ**; **compliance issues apply** when hiring all employee types **UHR is here to help** navigate their complexities.

- The MUS "Plan" is a comprehensive benefit for all participants
- Without compliance the employee, the department, the supervisor and the Plan are at significant risk
- Benefits eligibility must be determined promptly, benefits and payroll set up. The Plan cannot cover ineligible persons
- Please be in touch with your unit contact:

  - Before hire   *- During employment*

  - At hire   *- When employment is ending*

Information & Assistance

- Benefits Plan Compliance Toolkits: http://www.montana.edu/hr/_resources/index.html
  - Including Departmental Contacts Lists
- Benefits Inquiries: UHR Benefits Team: msubenefits@montana.edu

- Benefits Orientation Schedule: http://www.montana.edu/hr/orientation.html
- Recruitment Inquiries: UHR Recruitment Team: recruitment@montana.edu
- Compensation Team & Center of Expertise: comp-classification@montana.edu
- Compensation & Benefits Manager: Sara King sking@montana.edu, 994-4538
- Benefits Orientation Schedule: http://www.montana.edu/hr/orientation.html
- MUS Benefits Plan:
  - *Choices* Workbook http://www.montana.edu/msucommon/extras/wellness/2018-19/active/
  - Informational Slides (2018 re-enrollment) https://choices.mus.edu/Spring%20Tour/2018-2019/ActiveSlides.asp
  - Benefits Plan Summary Document https://choices.mus.edu/Notices/FY19/SPDMUS_2018-2019.pdf
  - Plan Home Page https://choices.mus.edu/
- Timesheets, Time and Leave Management Toolkits: http://www.montana.edu/hr/flsa_info/index.htm
- UHR: www.montana.edu/hr, 994 3651
  - General Employment Forms and Links http://www.montana.edu/hr/Employment.html

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Questions?
Suggestions?