Looking Ahead

December is only two weeks away, which means the winter holidays and the end of the year are fast approaching. Deadlines that once seemed far away are now in sight. Our personal lives can also grow busier with special commitments and celebrations. When life is so busy at work and home, it’s easy for less pressing tasks to get pushed off the to-do list.

The good news is that the Division of Human Resources keeps many of these things top of mind for you. For instance, Be in the Know: biometric screenings end November 22. Register for an appointment to join Penn’s wellness campaign and learn more about your health – and earn cash incentives in the process.

Looking further ahead, will you need child care if your child’s school closes due to winter weather? If so, now is the time to register for the Snow Day Child Care program. This is also a good time to think about maximizing your retirement savings. Penn’s Retirement Plans website and our providers can help you decide the right contribution amount for you this year and into the future.

Whether you’re thinking about next week or the years to come, the Division of Human Resources will be here to help you plan ahead and be prepared.

Sincerely,
Jack Heuer, Ed.D., Vice President for Human Resources

Snow Day Child Care Has You Covered

When winter weather arrives, Penn’s Snow Day Child Care program has you covered. The program offers backup child care for benefits-eligible faculty and staff on days when wintry conditions close the School District of Philadelphia but Penn remains open. You can take advantage of the program if your child attends another school district, but Snow Day space and pricing are available only when Philadelphia public schools are closed for inclement weather.

Offered in partnership with the Penn Children’s Center, Snow Day Child Care is available this year from December 5, 2016 to March 31, 2017. Children must be 12 weeks to 12 years old. Space is available on a first-come, first-served basis. Pre-registration is required, so complete the required forms now and you’ll be ready when winter strikes.

The University covers most of the cost of Snow Day Child Care. The reduced rate you pay is based on the child’s age and your salary. Visit the Snow Day Child Care webpage at www.hr.upenn.edu/myhr/worklife/family/snowday for more information.

For information about backup care for children and dependent adults, visit the Backup Care web page at www.hr.upenn.edu/myhr/worklife/family/backupcare.

Maximize Your Retirement Contributions

The IRS recently issued the annual retirement plan contribution limits for 2017. The limit for combined pre-tax and Roth contributions remains at $18,000 per person. If you are over 50 years old or turn 50 at any time in 2017, you can make additional catch-up contributions up to $6,000.

Visit the Penn’s Retirement Plans website at www.hr.upenn.edu/retirement for more information. You can also call the Retirement Call Center at 1-877-PENN-RET (1-877-736-6738) for help determining the right weekly or monthly contribution amount to maximize your savings.

Benefits-eligible faculty and staff can also make an appointment for free, one-on-one retirement counseling. Financial professionals from Penn’s investment carriers, TIAA and Vanguard, are available to meet on campus to help you determine your right course of action. Schedule an on-campus appointment by contacting TIAA or Vanguard:

TIAA: www.tiaa.org/moc or 1-800-732-8353
The Vanguard Group: 1-800-852-6616 (ext. 14300)
Wellness Program Highlights

From expert nutrition and weight loss advice to exercise and disease prevention strategies, we can help you embrace a healthy lifestyle. For a complete list of workshops and to register, visit www.hr.upenn.edu/myhr/registration or contact Human Resources at 215-573-2472 or qoon@hr.upenn.edu.

December Wellness Walks; 12/16; 12pm-1pm free.

This month, have some fun and join the wellness walk dressed for the holiday season. Come adorned in your “ho-ho-ho” tie, reindeer antlers, jingle bells, or even that ugly holiday sweater grandma gave you last year. Whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, New Year’s Day, or simply the spirit of the season, you’re sure to have a healthy, fun time. Even if dressing up is not for you, join your coworkers for an hour of the great benefits walking produces.

Professional and Personal Development Program Highlights

Improve your skills and get ahead in your career by taking Professional and Personal Development Workshops. See a complete list of programs and registration information at knowledgeLink.upenn.edu or contacting Learning and Education at 215-898-3409.

The Gift of Feedback; 12/2; 12:30pm-1:30pm free.

Feedback can be an amazing gift that helps improve performance, but many managers feel challenged by giving and receiving feedback. In this session managers will learn how to frame feedback as a gift that creates productive dialog and improved performance. Additionally, we will cover how managers can solicit feedback from staff in order to become a more effective leader.

Quality of Work Life Workshop Highlights

These four workshops offer information and support for your personal and professional life challenges. For a complete list of workshops and to register, visit www.hr.upenn.edu/myhr/registration or contact Human Resources at 215-573-2472 or qoon@hr.upenn.edu.

90-Minute Work-Life Harmony: A Personal Retreat; 12/6; 12pm-1:30pm free.

This experiential, engaging Work-Life Harmony retreat will help you calm your mind and take stock for clarity and balance. Jennifer Schleiter, Retreat and Mindfulness Leader, will guide you through practical strategies to nurture your wellbeing, including three essential practices to destress. Jennifer is a renowned inspirational and motivational speaker who focuses on wellbeing and mindfulness strategies for empowering individuals to take your next step and embrace new beginnings.

HR CALENDAR

Programs and Events Visit www.hr.upenn.edu/events for details.

Pay Timing Reminder

Moving forward, the University will follow the normal payment schedule in the weeks before Thanksgiving and the Special Winter Vacation. Penn faculty and staff will now receive regular, steady payments based on actual time worked. Weekend or month-to-month, regardless of the season. This payment schedule eliminates the two- or six-week gap in paycheck payments.

Late Fall and Winter Compensation Payment Schedule

If you have any questions, please contact the Payroll help desk at 215-896-6031 or payroll@exchange.upenn.edu. For additional details, please see the pay timing in November and December announcement available at the Almanac at http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/volumes/v63/n02/pay-timing.html.

November

- Weekly Paid Staff
  - Thanksgiving week payment date: Friday, November 25, 2016, the day after Thanksgiving

- Monthly Paid Staff
  - Payment date: November 30, 2016

December

- Weekly Paid Staff
  - Weekly payments throughout the month on Fridays, beginning December 2 and ending December 30, 2016

- Monthly Paid Staff
  - Payment date: December 30, 2016

- Weekly Paid Staff
  - Weekly payments throughout the month, beginning January 6, 2017

- Monthly Paid Staff
  - Payment date: January 31, 2017
  - The schedule change does not affect pay for this month.

MY JOB

Pay Timing Reminder

Moving forward, the University will follow the normal payment schedule in the weeks before Thanksgiving and the Special Winter Vacation. Penn faculty and staff will now receive regular, steady payments based on actual time worked, weekend or month-to-month, regardless of the season. This payment schedule eliminates the two- or six-week gap in paycheck payments.

MY HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Be in the Know Fall Biometric Screenings End November 22

Penn’s 2016/2017 Be in the Know wellness campaign is off and running. On-campus biometric screenings are just the beginning of year-round activities that can improve your overall wellbeing.

So far this fall, nearly 4,000 faculty and staff members have completed the on-campus biometric screenings. Now they have a snapshot of their current health by measuring blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose levels. Plus, they are on their way to receiving up to $200 in their paychecks or as Campus Recreation credits.

Don’t miss your opportunity to join in. Fall term screenings end November 22. Register today at www.hr.upenn.edu/beintheknow.

If you can’t attend a fall screening, you can still participate in Be in the Know Look for additional biometric screening dates in 2017. You can also submit results from bio metric screenings conducted by your physician between July 1, 2016 and June 30, 2017. Check the Be in the Know webpage at www.hr.upenn.edu/beintheknow for complete details and updates.

Extra Flu Shot Clinic on November 21

Penn has added an additional on-campus flu shot clinic to the fall schedule of wellness events for faculty and staff. Prepare for flu season with a free influenza vaccine on campus at this no-cost clinic.

Monday, November 21

9am - 2pm • Houston Hall, Bodek Lounge

Pre-registration is required. Visit https://www.hr.upenn.edu/myhr/registration/events?category=40 to register online and reserve your time slot. Please bring your PennCard with you to the clinic.

Benefitseligible faculty and staff can earn Bonus Action points for Be in the Know when they receive a flu vaccine. For more information, visit http://www.hr.upenn.edu/benefitsfocus.

In accordance with the Affordable Care Act, Penn employees do not need to pay up front for flu shots and seek reimbursement from their insurance plan.

Support from the Employee Assistance Program

Life’s changes and challenges can be stressful and even feel overwhelming at times. When you need help, Penn’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is there for you.

The EAP offers free, confidential counseling and referral services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to eligible faculty, staff, and their immediate family members. Simply call 1-888-521-4455 to talk to a licensed counselor.

The EAP provides assistance in dealing with major life events, such as having or adopting a child, getting married, purchasing a home, or receiving a new work assignment. EAP counselors can also help with other serious concerns like anxiety, depression, substance abuse, loss of a loved one, or interpersonal conflicts. The EAP can even connect you with financial and legal services.

When you call, an EAP professional will work with you to assess your situation and identify next steps. Through the program, eligible faculty and staff may also schedule up to eight counseling sessions per specific issue each fiscal year. The EAP can also refer you to health care providers and other appropriate resources for long-term support. All EAP discussions and records are confidential.

Care for yourself and your family is just a call away. Call the EAP at 1-888-521-4455, or visit the EAP website, https://www.hr.upenn.edu/myhr/worklife/healthy/eap, for more information.

To learn more about the EAP, visit www.hr.upenn.edu/beintheknow.