

## April 2011 Newsletter

Hello Colleagues -

I hope everyone is enjoying the springtime in Kentucky!. In this issue we have included an article concerning the surprising **benefits** of conflict in the workplace. If you never thought of conflict at work as potentially productive, I encourage you to check out the article. We have also identified upcoming "months to remember" as well as some interesting facts.

Have a great day!

Sherri Murphy

HR Employee Relations Supervisor

### In this issue:

- Article: The Benefits of Conflict
- FAQ: Reduced Summer/Winter Hours
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### Interesting Reading:

We often avoid conflict within our organization to get things accomplished as smoothly as possible. That's what most of us are used to focusing on. We have learned to fight for issues that are important to us, but avoid getting involved in issues that aren't. And we expect the same of others. That's how we foster teamwork. But it's more a characteristic of losing teams than winning teams to ignore problems and avoid conflict.

Avoidance of conflict is neither healthy nor productive when the conflict revolves around sincere differences of opinion on how to solve problems. Instead, allowing team members to disagree often leads to the best solutions and the most productive work systems.

By Cary Gutbezahl, M.D.

[Click here](#) for full article.

### Related UK Human Resources Links

Employee Relations

<http://www.uky.edu/HR/emprel/>

Training and Development

<http://hr.uky.edu/TandD/welcome.php>

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q:** Is it possible for departments to consider reducing an employee's regular work hours, *at the employee's request*, during the summer and/or winter months?

**A.** Yes! That can be accomplished through the Work-Life Reduced Seasonal Hours Program.

University of Kentucky Reduced Seasonal Hours Program Guidelines

### Purpose

While recognizing the need for a balanced work life during the summer and winter months and desiring to more effectively utilize the University's resources during slower periods, it may be possible for some departments to consider reducing an employee's regular work hours, *at the employee's request*, during the summer and/or winter months. However, department operations cannot suffer due to the approval of reduced seasonal hours and additional positions cannot be added to assist with the completion of work.

### Eligibility

Regular, clinically non-essential, full-time staff employees, exempt or non-exempt, who have successfully completed the new hire orientation period, are eligible to apply for reduced seasonal hours. Approval of a reduced seasonal hours program is at the discretion of department management and administration.

### Options

1. A regular employee with a full-time equivalent (FTE) of 0.75 or greater may request leave without pay from January 4, 2011 through February 25, 2011 and/or May 16, 2011 through August 12, 2011; Leave must be taken in full-week increments.
2. Regular staff members with an FTE of greater than 0.75 may request a temporary reduced work schedule to no less than 0.75 FTE.

Related Link:

[http://www.uky.edu/HR/WorkLife/reduced\\_seasonal\\_hours\\_guidelines.html](http://www.uky.edu/HR/WorkLife/reduced_seasonal_hours_guidelines.html)

## Upcoming Months to Remember

### April -- Temporary Disability Leave Conversions

Regular staff employees with a full-time equivalent (FTE) of 0.5 or greater and who have accrued a minimum of 66 days of temporary disability leave (TDL) have a conversion option for extra vacation leave or credit toward retirement. It is the intention of this policy to reward loyal, long-time employees who remain healthy as well as to encourage employees to use TDL only when necessary.

Note: For a staff employee who works in a regular staff position with an assignment of 0.5 FTE or greater, but less than 1.0 FTE, conversion is available if the employee has TDL accrual which is pro rata the equivalent to 66 days. For example, for an employee who works 50% (0.5 FTE), an accrual of 33 full days (66 multiplied by 0.5 days) must be maintained to be eligible for conversion.

### May -- Shared Leave Pool Donations

The Staff Shared Leave Pool is a pool of donated Vacation Leave (VL) time, which can be used by a staff employee who has exhausted all accrued paid leaves to recover from personal illness or injury or to care for a spouse, sponsored dependent, or child who has suffered a catastrophic illness or injury. Regular University of Kentucky staff employees with a 0.5 FTE (50% assignment) or greater can donate up to five days of Vacation Leave per year to the pool.

VL issued through this program is subject to available VL balances in the Pool. If the available VL balance in the Shared Leave Pool is zero, VL from the Pool will not be awarded

Visit the Shared Leave Pool website for more information:

<http://www.uky.edu/HR/emprel/Donation.html>

### **June -- Vacation Subject To Loss**

A campus employee shall forfeit vacation leave accrued and available June 30 of every year, if the vacation leave (VL) is not used by June 30 of the following calendar year. This allows 12 months following the close of any fiscal year for use of any newly accrued VL balance. (UK HealthCare employees operate with a VL expiration date of September 30 each year.)

### **Related Links:**

<http://www.uky.edu/HR/policies/hrpp087.html>

<http://www.uky.edu/HR/emprel/SharedLeavePoolOverview.html>

<http://www.uky.edu/HR/policies/hrpp080.html>

### **Did You Know?**

Employee Relations provided assistance with approximately 956 issues during the months January, February and March of 2011? (That's over 300 issues per month!)

We can provide guidance on a wide variety of employees relations issues. Please contact us!

### **HR-ER Contact Information:**

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