

Minutes of the Human Resources and University Relations Committee  
University of Kentucky Board of Trustees  
Friday, April 25, 2025

The Human Resources and University Relations (HRUR) Committee of the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees met on Friday, April 25, 2025, in the Gatton Student Center, Harris Ballroom.

A. Call to Order

Brenda Gosney, chair of the Human Resources and University Relations Committee, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and asked Hannah Nocket to report the attendance.

B. Roll Call

The following members of the Human Resources and University Relations Committee were in attendance: Hubie Ballard, Cathy Black, Maddie Duff, David Figg, Brenda Gosney, David Melanson, Hannah Myers and Paula Pope.

C. Approval of Minutes

Chair Gosney reported that the minutes of the February 21, 2025, HRUR Committee meeting had been distributed and called for a motion to approve. Trustee Ballard moved approval of the minutes, and Trustee Melanson seconded the motion. Hearing no discussion, Chair Gosney called for a vote, and the motion passed without dissent.

D. UK's Health Insurance Plans

Chair Gosney introduced Vice President for Human Resources and Chief Human Resources Officer, Melissa Frederick, to provide an update on the University of Kentucky's health insurance plans, employment branding campaign and health care recruitment.

Vice President Frederick began by providing updates on employee recruitment and retention efforts, as previously discussed at the February meeting. She focused on upcoming open enrollment, health insurance design updates and recruitment strategies amid staffing challenges.

She noted that UK operates a self-funded health insurance model that requires constant monitoring for effectiveness and financial sustainability. For the past two years, total contributions have been insufficient to cover expenses, and the University covered the difference.

She reported that last year brought changes, but further updates were deemed necessary in response to market trends and internal financial pressure. Employee feedback indicated a desire for increased flexibility and reduced premiums, which guided the redesign including:

- Provide a lower-cost option
- Increase provider network flexibility
- Offer plans that are truly distinct in both design and cost
- Provide competitive choices
- Align plan design and employee contribution to keep us competitive with our benchmark institutions
- Reduce number of plans by eliminating the least fiscally sustainable
- Rebuild reserve funds and stabilize budget risks
- Balance impact to both employee and university costs

Ms. Frederick discussed the plan designs and premium changes for FY 2025-26. She explained a cross functional team was assembled that included Human Resources, the Office of the Executive Vice President for Finance and Administration, UKHMO and the University Budget Office. They reviewed the current plans and new ideas in the market and then vetted with key stakeholders prior to the final design.

Changes include adjustments to deductibles, copays, coinsurance and out-of-pocket maximums. All current offerings remain rated gold or platinum. The 2025-26 plan sets employee monthly premiums to provide a range of options, establishes monthly rates for coverage that includes family members, aligning them more closely with the plan's cost and value, reduces monthly rates for employee-only Saver plan to provide a low-cost option, and eliminates plans not financially viable going forward.

Vice President Frederick discussed tools and support for employees and a new tool, Nya, will be introduced to help employees evaluate plans using personalized data, including importable usage history from Anthem.

She then discussed UK HealthCare and clinic expansions which will increase access to primary care.

Ms. Frederick then discussed UK's strategic employment branding campaign, titled "More than a University. More than a Hospital," which has generated over 11.6 million impressions and 1,073 completed applications to date. The campaign highlights UK as not just a place to work — but a community in which employees belong, promoting the University as an employer of choice in the Lexington, Louisville and Cincinnati regions,

while strategically engaging alumni, graduates and job seekers with compelling, authentic stories and benefits.

She then reported on the spring 2025 nurse hiring event, held at Kroger Field's Longship Club, which revolutionized the brand showcase. The event drew 222 attendees, resulting in 181 accepted offers.

Campaign media and branding were leveraged to increase walk-ins and interest. Recruitment technology helped capture additional leads and supported follow-up outreach.

In conclusion, Ms. Frederick recognized the progress made in recruitment and benefits planning while emphasizing continuous improvement. Attendees were asked to continue providing feedback and engage with ongoing initiatives as the University adapts to market and organizational demands.

Trustee Swanson asked what gaps in qualifications are being seen with the applicants. Ms. Frederick explained the gaps were not degree requirements necessarily, but relevant experience or the skills that a hiring manager might expect to see.

Trustee Melanson asked Vice President Frederick to discuss the efforts being made regionally in the counties across the state with respect to the 2025-26 health plans. Ms. Frederick shared the outreach efforts including events where benefits staff have traveled to multiple counties for face-to-face discussions to share information and support employees through the process.

G. Other Business

Chair Gosney asked if there was any other business to discuss. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned at 9:06 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Hannah Nocket