Instant HR – November 2, 2015

TOPIC: 2015 Winter Closing Reminder; New 2016 Holiday and Winter Closing Schedule

To Personnel Administrators and Timekeepers:

Please note the following and provide this important information to your faculty and staff as well. [This schedule does not apply to VCU Health employees, as those employees are covered by their Paid Time Off (PTO) program that combines annual, sick and holiday leave.]

VCU establishes its holiday schedule to meet the academic and business needs of the institution. While VCU’s holiday calendars may be different from other agencies, they incorporate the same number of state holidays and include any additional paid holiday leave granted by the Governor, as indicated below.

You can view the 2015 year-end schedule and the new 2016 holiday and winter closing schedule at http://hr.vcu.edu/communications/holiday-calendar/.

2015 Winter Closing REMINDER...


The 2015 winter closing requires eligible faculty and staff to use 24 hours of leave (with or without pay) to cover the time away from work as follows:

- 8 hours of leave for Monday, Dec. 28
- 8 hours of leave for Tuesday, Dec. 29
- 8 hours of leave for Wednesday, Dec. 30

As communicated in earlier Instant HRs, on the HR website and in the VCU TelegRAM, employees who wished to do so were encouraged to save eligible leave to offset the hours needed to cover VCU’s 2015 winter closing. As current and new employees considered saving eligible leave hours throughout the year to prepare for VCU’s winter closing, it is again important to note the following:

- Employees who are required to work during the winter closing will accrue holiday leave for the hours worked.
- State policy stipulates that employees who do not have leave to cover the time away from work will be docked for the winter closing. This means that employees who do not have leave to cover the 24 hours for Monday, December 28, 2015 through Wednesday, December 30, 2015 will be docked from December 25, 2015 through January 1, 2016.
- We do not know at this time if the Governor will grant additional holiday hours for the Christmas and New Year’s observances, which occur during VCU’s winter closing. If the Governor grants additional holiday leave, this would reduce the number of hours that employees must take leave. However, some employees who saved leave hours throughout the year to use for the winter closing could risk losing them if those saved hours exceed the carry-over accrual limit before they can be used. Employees should work with their supervisors to determine if it is possible, while considering departmental staffing needs, to use the leave before it expires.

NEW 2016 Winter Closing Schedule...

VCU’s 2016 winter closing is Friday, December 23, 2016 through Monday, January 2, 2017. VCU resumes normal business operations on Tuesday, January 3, 2017.
Good news!

- The 2016 winter closing requires no additional hours for which eligible faculty and staff must take leave (with or without pay) to cover the time away from work.

- The Governor granted 12 hours of holiday leave as follows:
  - 4 hours of holiday leave on Wednesday, Nov. 23 (half-day before Thanksgiving); and
  - 8 hours of holiday leave on Friday, Dec. 23.

- Monday, Dec. 26 is a state holiday for Christmas (observed) and is part of VCU’s 2016 winter closing.

- Following past practice, we moved four state holidays to the 2016 winter closing as VCU remains open on these days:
  - Jan. 15: Lee-Jackson Day (moved to Tuesday, Dec. 27)
  - Feb. 15: George Washington Day (moved to Wednesday, Dec. 28)
  - Oct. 10: Columbus Day (moved to Thursday, Dec. 29)
  - Nov. 11: Veterans Day (moved to Friday, Dec. 30)

It is important to note the following:

- Employees who are required to work during the winter closing will accrue holiday leave for the hours worked.

- We do not know at this time if the Governor will grant additional holiday hours for the Christmas and New Year’s observances, which occur during VCU’s winter closing. Generally, announcements about additional holiday hours are not made until later in the year or much closer to the Christmas and New Year’s holidays – and sometimes (as has been past practice) just as VCU is closing for winter break. In the event this action occurs, VCU usually designates the additional hours as “float” holiday leave to be used within the 12-month period in which they are accrued.

Timekeepers should refer to the Payroll Processing Schedule at http://hr.vcu.edu/payroll-and-leave/payroll-services/payroll-processing-schedule/ for updates to related time and leave processing information.

If you have questions about leave reporting, please contact VCU Leave Administration at leave@vcu.edu or 828-1712.

Thank you.

Cathleen C. Burke
Assistant Vice President for Human Resources
Virginia Commonwealth University

Copy: Certifying Officers