



# Staff Newsletter

January 2021

## COVID LEAVE BENEFIT EXTENDED

Human Resources recently announced that the COVID-19 leave benefit will be extended through the Spring semester. AVP Koczara said, “It’s being offered to all UW employees. Full-timers are eligible for up to 80 hours and part-timers are prorated based on their FTE. It can be used again in the Spring, even if the employee used it in 2020. In effect, each employee’s bank is “reset” or “refilled.”



## STAFF RECOGNITION DAY AWARD NOMINATIONS

Staff Recognition Day is coming up this spring, and it’s time to nominate your favorite staff member for an award or two! We’ve got awards for [teams](#), [supervisors](#), [off-campus staff](#), and everything in between - [view the full list here](#).

► **NOMINATIONS CLOSE FEBRUARY 12TH!**

**PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS**

Now is a great time to get a head start on 2020 Performance Evaluations. This year, HR has assembled a comprehensive [resource web page](#) to help answer some common questions. Don’t forget that evaluations are due by March 31st, 2021!

## CLARIFICATION OF RETIREMENT GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE BENEFIT

The question was asked at the January Staff Senate meeting if employees who had qualified for the option to convert accrued sick leave to State health insurance at retirement would lose that benefit with the next round of budget cuts. AVP Mai explained that the benefit was discontinued July 1, 2016, but those UW employees who qualified prior to that date were grandfathered in and would not lose the benefit upon retirement. Below is an explanation of the benefit taken from the Retirement section of the Employee Benefits Handbook, which basically says if you qualified for Board Retirement or had completed 15 years of service, 10 of them being consecutive, prior to July 1, 2016, you qualified for the sick leave to health insurance conversion retirement benefit. Those not qualifying will receive payment for one-half (1/2) of their current unused sick leave balance as of the employee’s termination date not to exceed 480 hours.

**“BOARD RETIREMENT** - before July 1, 2016, on or after July 1, 2016 for employees Board retirement eligible on July 1, 2016, and after July 1, 2016 for employees who have completed fifteen (15) years of University service with at least ten (10) consecutive years of uninterrupted service immediately preceding July 1, 2016 Each Board Retiree (1) who retired before July 1, 2016, (2) who was eligible for Board retirement on July 1, 2016 and who retires on or after July 1, 2016, with continuous University employment from July 1, 2016 through the date of retirement, or (3) who earns qualifying status on or after July 1, 2016, with continuous

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service from July 1, 2016 through the date of retirement, and who had completed fifteen (15) years of University service with at least ten (10) consecutive years of uninterrupted service immediately preceding July 1, 2016, shall be eligible for the following benefits.

a. Conversion of up to 960 hours of accrued sick leave to a state contribution for group health insurance or payment for one-half (1/2) of the current sick leave balance as of the employee's termination date, not to exceed 480 hours (see VI.B above). If the Board Retiree elects to convert the 960 hours of accrued sick leave to a state contribution for group health insurance, the conversion rate is 1.5 months of coverage for each 40 hours of accrued sick leave. If the employee dies, the sick leave conversion benefit shall be transferred to the surviving spouse. A rehired Board Retiree who has received this benefit previously is not eligible to receive this benefit again."



## ATHLETIC PLANNING COMMITTEE LIAISON REPORT – DECEMBER 7, 2020

*(The majority of the meeting addressed COVID issues being faced by the Athletic Department.)*

- Conference schedules are being set for spring including the fall sports that did not compete. The NCAA Basketball tournament may all be played in Indianapolis. The Mountain West Basketball tournament is still being decided.
- Tom Burman is committed to honoring another year of scholarships for SA's\* and the potential cost could be as high as \$500,000 due to the NCAA allowing SA's to sit out a year without losing eligibility because of COVID. Basically everyone gets a redshirt year whether they sit out or participate.
- Review of gender equity, diversity and inclusion issues:
  - LEAD1 survey link was sent to athletic directors to ask their perspectives about diversity, equity, and inclusion practices. China Jude will be co-authoring a White Paper for LEAD1. The White Paper can be used as a resource for best practices in creating diversity, equity and inclusion programming initiatives.
- More SA's are reaching out for counseling, but others still hesitate because of the stigma attached to counseling and Zoom sessions are perceived by SA's as not as private.
- A lot of concerns for the incoming Freshmen adjusting to new way of life during COVID.
- Student-Athlete survey focused on the following 5 critical areas rated by SA's as most important:
  1. Stress Management
  2. Career/job/intern connections
  3. Money Management
  4. Depression
  5. Nutrition
- SA's who test positive don't have to be tested again for 90 days. Teams testing positive early in their seasons are benefiting from that policy.

*\*Student Athletes*



### COVID-19 RESPONSE RESOURCES

- [UW's Official Page for COVID-19 Communication](#)
- [Employee Concerning Behavior Reporting Form](#)
- [Accommodations and Workplace Exceptions](#)
- [Request form for Expanded Family Medical Leave Act \(EFMLA\)](#)



**DON'T FORGET** to take your Spring COVID-19 Training before January 25th!

### ● February Staff Senate Meeting

Wednesday, February 3rd at 1:15 PM  
Virtual meeting via Zoom

### ADMINISTRATIVE HOLIDAYS

The Office of the President recently distributed the administrative holiday and summer schedule for 2021 & 2022 via email. **Friendly reminder that President's Day, February 15th, 2021 will only be a holiday for this year!**