



AROUND NDE

A Publication of the Nebraska Department of Education Office of Human Resources ♦ February 2008

Put Your Pay Stub Data to Good Use



As you know, DAS is no longer providing printed paystubs to employees in order to save money. You are encouraged to view your pay information monthly but print out only your December paystub for your records.

It's always a good idea to review your January paystub to ensure that all of your deductions are correct. First of all, review the deductions you have for your benefits. If any changes were made to your benefits during Open Enrollment, please check to see that what you elected appears on your pay stub and that the correct amounts are being deducted. Notify Pam Goeschel of any discrepancies.

Next, take a look at the amounts being withheld for your federal and state income taxes. If you are anticipating a big federal tax refund, or if your family situation has changed through marriage, divorce, or the birth of a child, you may want to consider revising the amount of money withheld from your check. To make changes in the number of federal or state exemptions or in the additional dollar amount withheld, request the appropriate form from Pam Goeschel. Note that the number of federal exemptions claimed must match the number of state exemptions claimed. However, the additional funds withheld may vary between the two.

You should also review the amount you are saving for retirement. If you're not participating in the Deferred Compensation program, or saving additional funds in IRAs or taxable accounts, you're probably not going to have adequate savings by the time you retire.

If you would like to do some strategizing with your paystub information, check out www.paycheckcity.com. The site allows you to input your gross pay, federal filing status (i.e., single, married), number of allowances, deductions (e.g., retirement, memberships, flex, etc.). You can alter the data and see what impact it will have on your check.

Reminder on Medical Flexible Spending Accounts

Flexible Spending — Do you have cash left in your Flex Medical account? Remember, you can claim eligible medical expenses incurred between January 1, 2008 and March 15, 2008 against any remaining 2007 plan year contributions. The last day to submit claims on 2007 contributions will be April 30, 2008.

Any eligible 2008 medical expenses incurred after the 2007 plan year contributions are exhausted will be claimed against the election for the 2008 plan year.

FMLA Expansion

On January 28, 2008, President Bush signed a bill into law that expands the Family and Medical Leave Act to provide two new qualifying events. Employees caring for an injured service member will now be eligible, as will those who have a family member called to active duty.

Those eligible for caregiver leave, to care for an injured service member, are eligible for 26 weeks of FMLA during a 12 month period if they are a spouse, son, daughter, parent, or the nearest blood relative, of the injured service member.

Those who have a spouse, son, daughter, or parent called to active duty, or having been notified of an impending call or order to active duty in the Armed Forces, will be eligible for 12 weeks of FMLA leave. Leave may also be used for any “qualifying exigency” arising out of the service member’s current tour of active duty. Leave may be used in the smallest increment that the employer’s payroll system tracks.

The caregiver provision went into effect on January 28, 2008, but the call to active duty provision will not be effective until the Secretary of Labor issues final regulations defining “any qualifying exigency.” In the interim, the DOL encourages employers to provide this type of leave to qualifying employees.

December Graduate

Siobhan Duffy, daughter of Mary Duffy, graduated cum laude from the University of Nebraska—Kearney. Siobhan majored in Organizational Communications. She plans to work a semester and attend law school in the fall.

Congratulations

Word 2007 - Helpful Hints

Remove tracking changes on a document

- Unprotect the document if necessary
- Go to “Review” tab
- “Protect document”
- Select “Restrict Formatting and Editing”
- Deselect “Editing Restrictions”
- Click on the Office Button icon on the upper left of the toolbars
- Select “Prepare”
- If asked to save, say “Yes”
- Click on the boxes corresponding to the info you want inspected
- Click “Inspect”
- Click the “Remove” button(s) desired (e.g., “Comments, Revisions, Versions and Annotations” or “Hidden Text”)
- Click “Close”
- Click “Save”

Find command location in Word 2007

- Go to “Get Started” tab
- Click “Interactive Guide—Find a Command”
- Click “Start the Guide” in the narrative section.
- Click “Start”
- Find the command on the Word 2003 toolbar and click it. It will show you the location of the command on Word 2007. Click again to return to Word 2003.



Notices of New Hires and Terminations

Effective February 1, 2008, NDE Human Resources will send e-mail notices to employees when a new employee begins and when a current employee terminates.

Office 2007 Intermediate and Advanced Training

As a continuation of the introductory Office 2007 Transition training, we have arranged optional intermediate and advanced classes in Word, Excel, Access and PowerPoint. A limited number of classes is being offered.

If demand exceeds the classes arranged, NDE employees may take advantage of the public classes offered by a variety of vendors. SECC offers *public* classes at a cost of \$109 per person. Another option is the Computer-Based Training (CBT) classes available through the State. These on-line classes will be available beginning 2/4/08 and cover over 5000 topics at a cost of \$75 per person for unlimited access through 12/31/08. More information will be sent on this option when it becomes available.

Dates and Times

Note: Human Resources reserves the right to cancel classes if there is insufficient interest (less than 10) to warrant the cost of a class reserved for NDE employees.

Friday, February 22, 2008	Intermediate Word
Monday, February 25, 2008	Intermediate Excel
Tuesday, March 18, 2008	Intermediate Access
Thursday, April 10, 2008	Advanced PowerPoint (No Intermediate Class Available)
Thursday, April 24, 2008	Advanced Word
Thursday, May 1, 2008	Advanced Excel
Thursday, May 8, 2008	Advanced Access
Thursday, May 15, 2008	To Be Determined

Class Content

Not sure which class is right for you? Click on the [course syllabi](#) link to review the course topics.

Class Duration

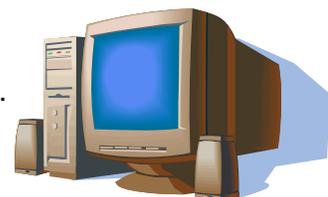
All sessions will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. with an hour lunch break. The instructor may offer an option to shorten the lunch break to 30 minutes with an earlier release time, upon mutual agreement of the class participants.

Location

Southeast Community College Continuing Education Center at 301 S. 68th Place, Lincoln (the former Gallup Building). Use the main entrance off of the circle drive. Room assignments may vary. Check the sign at the reception area.

Class Materials

Participants will receive a reference book, which is theirs to keep. The cost of the book is included in the course fee.



Intermediate and Advanced Training (Continued from page 3)

Fee

Participants are responsible for paying the training cost out of their program budgets through internal chargebacks by Network Services. If each class is completely full, the cost will be \$80 per participant.

Dress

Dress casually. Jeans are acceptable. It is suggested that you dress in layers as the temperature in the training room fluctuates.

Severe Weather

If Southeast Community College cancels daytime classes, our training classes will be cancelled as well.

Withdrawal

Please choose your class date carefully. Due to the small class size and limited number of classes, registrants will be responsible for paying the cost of the class if they withdraw from the class after registering, unless another participant is found to take their place. If you need to withdraw, please provide as much notice as possible by e-mailing Shayne Ortmeier who is handling the on-line registration.

Registration

Registration will be conducted on-line, on a first-come, first-served basis. Classes marked "closed" have reached the maximum 12 registrants. If you are interested in a class that is full, e-mail Shayne Ortmeier so she can put your name on a waiting list should there be any cancellations. Registration instructions follow.

Please include your first and last name.
Enter your team name for "School".
Enter your work phone for "School Phone".
Enter 123-456-7890 for "Home Phone".
Enter your work email address.
Enter 123 in all other text boxes.



Click Here to Register

[Intermediate](#)

[Advanced](#)

New Employees

Anusha Tummala, Data/Database Analyst with Education Support Services, 1/28/08

Ryan Stamm, VR Service Specialist with Omaha Vocational Rehabilitation, 2/1/08

Rachael LaBounty, Program Specialist with Education Support Services, 2/1/08

Aimee Lempke, Program Specialist with Education Support Services, 2/4/08

Stacy Lang, Service Specialist with the Omaha office of Vocational Rehabilitation, 2/9/08

Welcome to NDE!

HR-Related Legislative Bills

Second Session, One Hundredth Legislature 2008

■ = Carryover from first session ■ = Introduced Second Session

<p><u>LB 57</u> Provide for a fair share representation contribution by employees who are not members of certain labor organizations for representation provided by the labor organization. This provision would be a subject of bargaining between NAPE/AFSCME and NDE (Reintroduced as LB 936--See below.) Status: General File</p>	
<p><u>LB 175</u> No employee (includes NDE) shall be terminated from employment until such employee has been given the specific reason for the proposed termination and the employee is provided with a meaningful opportunity to present his/her position in response to the reason for the proposed termination. Status: Committee</p>	
<p><u>LB 408</u> Prior to entering into a proposed contract for services with an independent contractor in excess of \$50,000, state agencies must complete a cost analysis between using a state employee to perform services and the proposed contract. This applies if (1) the services proposed in the contract are being performed or have been performed by a state employee covered by the Classified Personnel System any labor contract within the 12 months immediately preceding the proposed effective date of the contract, or (2) the services are for new programs that did not exist within the previous twelve months. LB 408 also provides a ten business-day time limit for filing the cost benefit analysis with the Legislative Fiscal Analyst. The State Material Division is charged with developing guidelines for the cost benefit analysis and the bill lists minimum requirements including a formal plan of assistance for any state employees replaced by a contract for services. Status: Committee</p>	
<p><u>LB 432</u> Renames "Act Prohibiting Unjust Discrimination in Employment Because of Age" to "Age Discrimination in Employment Act." Provides that prohibitions for employment discrimination apply to individuals who are "forty years <u>or more</u> of age" and deletes "but less than seventy years of age." Sets out timelines and procedures for filing and processing complaints under the act. Status: General File</p>	
<p><u>LB 450</u> Employer reference immunity for civil liability for disclosing the following: written employee evaluations; reason for separation; whether voluntarily or involuntarily released from service and reason; and information about job performance. Status: Committee</p>	
<p><u>LB 495</u> Prohibit employer from requiring use of compensated leave. Status: General File</p>	
<p><u>LB 500</u> Exclude apprenticeship training programs from disqualification for unemployment insurance benefits. Status: General File</p>	
<p><u>LB 833</u> Increase weekly benefits for unemployment compensation from the current 50% of the average weekly wage by 5% each year to 75% by 1/1/13 Status: Committee</p>	
<p><u>LB 884</u> State contribution to employee health benefits remains at 79%, if employees participate as required in a wellness program offered by the State through DAS. Status: Committee</p>	
<p><u>LB 936</u> Requires Fair Share contributions for coverage by a labor organization. Status: Committee</p>	
<p><u>LB 981</u> Prohibit nepotism. Status: Committee</p>	<p>Check out the bills in their entirety on the Legislature's web site.</p>