

HSU Furlough FAQs

Revised August 26, 2009

The following questions were asked at the CSUEU and APC open-campus sessions on Tuesday, July 28, 2009 and Thursday, July 30, 2009. We have also posted your inquiries as they have been received in HR. This document is based on current information from the Chancellor's office. Please understand that some revisions may be made as we learn more. If you have a question that isn't covered in this FAQ, we encourage you to email us at furlough@humboldt.edu. This FAQ will be updated on a regular basis

- 1. I attended the Payroll furlough training session on 8/25 in Goodwin Forum. I noted that absence reports do not need to be turned in for faculty, but they do need to be turned in for everyone else (i.e., staff, intermittent hourly). Why is that? Since the staff furlough days are pre-assigned, what additional information is gained from the absence reports?**

A: On Monday night August 24th, the Office of the State Controller's Leave Accounting Division posted the furlough units for July and August for all staff and twelve month faculty. Beginning in September they will post two units each month for all faculty and staff. Payroll will collect the faculty certification forms, verify that the days are following the rules and enter all the furloughs for faculty in the September pay period in lieu of absence reports. While everyone has been encouraged to take the furlough days that are on the green and gold calendar, not all employees will be able to do that and have moved some of their days to different ones in the month. Since staff does not have a certification form, payroll will need absence reports in order to process the furloughs into the State's leave accounting system and to verify that the furlough days have been taken.

- 2. If a staff person is half-time, how many furlough days do they take per semester? How many furlough days do they take per academic year?**

A: Every employee takes two furlough days per month. How many hours those furlough days are is dependent on time-base.

- 3. Can you receive CTO for hours over 32 in a furlough week?**

A: CTO cannot be received for hours worked up to 40 hours in a furlough week. The only option is pay. However, for hours over 40 in a furlough week, CTO can be requested.

- 4. How will paycheck for August be effected for 10/12 and 11/12 positions?**

A: The campuses have not received clear information on whether that check will be fully effected by furlough or not. As soon as we have more information, we will update this FAQ list.

5. Will union dues be affected by furlough based reductions in pay?

A: It is our understanding that CSUEU will be reducing their dues proportionally. We don't have information regarding the other unions at this time. We suggest you directly contact your union steward.

6. How is shift differential impacted by furlough?

A: According to California State University Technical Letter HR/Salary 2009-07, shift differentials shall not be paid on furlough days.

7. How are CSUEU employees receiving a stipend impacted by furlough?

A: Since the provisions of CSUEU Collective Bargaining Agreement Section 20.44 indicate a 3%-10% stipend amount would be based upon the base monthly salary rate, stipends would be excluded from the furlough reduction.

8. Will there be payroll training? How do I find out about it?

A: Yes, there are already payroll calculator classes posted, as well as plans for payroll coordinator training to follow. Browse offerings and/or sign up at http://training.humboldt.edu/Training_calendar_hr.php

9. I can't figure out how you furlough a person who works .6 time-base, 2 8 hour days and 2 half days (no Fridays) and not do partial furlough days. How do you figure the furlough time base - hours per month since months are different lengths? How do you take this furlough that is not divisible by 4 and divide it into 8 or 4 hour segments?

A: Based on the .6 time base, this person would be furloughed two 4.8 hour furlough days/month. The number of days in the month doesn't really have anything to do with it. I would suggest that you reduce one of their 8 hour days by .8 and add it to the day they are furloughing, which would not be on a Friday or change their schedule to 5 4.8 hour days and they can furlough on Friday with the rest of us.

10. Does the furlough plan constitute a "change in events" allowing employees to stop, start, cancel or reduce Health Care Reimbursement Accounts (HCRA)?

A: The newly implemented furlough plan does not have any impact on the change in status events that allow an individual to stop, start, cancel or reduce Health Care Reimbursement Account (HCRA) Plan contributions. Therefore, employees would not be allowed to cancel or reduce HCRA contributions due to furlough implementation.

11. Does the furlough plan constitute a “change in events” allowing employees to stop, start, cancel or reduce Dependent Care Provider Accounts (DCRA)?

A: For the Dependent Care Reimbursement Account (DCRA) Plan, the change in status events detailed in the HCRA/DCRA Administrative Guide is a bit more permissive. A change in work schedule including a decrease or increase in hours (DCRA only), full-time/part-time switch (DCRA only), start/stop of unpaid leave of absence or a strike or lockout of Employee, spouse or Dependent qualifies as a “change in events”.

12. Are special consultants subject to furlough?

A: No.

13. An employee is a state-funded ASC. Over and above her 40 hours regular work assignments, she provides some budget management for contracts run through the Foundation. This employee is paid as a foundation employee for her HOURS with a foundation payroll check, but the GROSS pay is generated by a mixture of contracts she bills to. Her time is direct to the contracts and she is named within each contract from which she is paid. Her time is not indirect. Is her time paid directly from grants subject to furlough?

A: Her time paid directly from the grants is not subject to furlough.

14. What happens when a Unit 4 or CSUEU employee who had previously voluntarily moved to an 11/12 schedule wants to go back to a full time (12 month) time base?

A: If the employee had voluntarily requested 11/12 within the last 12 months, he/she can be changed back to 12/12. If it has been a longer period than that, the employee should talk with his/her appropriate administrator to discuss whether if based on operational need it is possible to revert back.

15. If a furlough schedule agreement is entered into, then there is an operational need to modify it, can that be done? If so, how should it be done i.e. through an addendum, etc.?

A: Yes, a furlough schedule can always be changed. An addendum would be appropriate.

16. What about retired annuitants – specifically someone who is working a 4 hour per week shift. Would a retired annuitant be affected by furlough?

A: Yes, retired annuitants are affected by furlough. The furlough hours would be based on how many hours per week they are working.

17. Is the Unit 4 agreement finalized (Academic Professionals of California)?

A: The Unit 4 agreement has been ratified by its members.

18. When is the tech letter from the Chancellor's office expected to be available?

A: The Chancellor's Office has told us that we can expect the tech letter to be issued soon, and we expect to have it this week or next.

19. How does the furlough plan work from month to month?

A: There will be one furlough day per week, with a total of two furlough days per month. Only one week (December 21st-24th) will allow consecutive furlough days.

20. How is the work week defined for payroll purposes?

A: Sunday 12:01a.m.-Saturday 11:59 p.m.

21. When does my pay reduction begin?

A: The first reduction is for the August pay period which you will receive at the beginning of September.

22. Am I going to lose paid holidays that are replaced by furlough days?

A: No paid holidays have been lost. Veteran's Day, which once was a holiday that could be rescheduled, must now by State mandate be observed on the actual holiday date.

23. How do we manage office closures?

A: The campus guidelines should be followed if possible, and special operational needs should be discussed with your direct supervisor, manager, and/or appropriate administrator.

24. In some departments that are not centralized, staff is performing services in various locations. How do we coordinate the department furlough days?

A: There will be many operational needs that will necessitate employees having individual furlough plans. These operational needs need to be discussed at the department level with approval for individual furlough plans obtained by the Deans or appropriate administrators.

25. How do we enforce and facilitate the 10% drop in workload?

A: It will be important to work out these details together and prioritize services at the department level. Communication between employees and supervisors/managers is key. There will be training sessions for managers and supervisors on managing furloughs. Workload and workload prioritization discussions will be included as part of this training.

26. Will I need to sign an individual furlough plan agreement?

A: Yes. Although the form has not been made available to us yet, each furlough employee will have a signed furlough plan that contains the planned schedule, important policies for furlough weeks, and provides a chance for managers to work with their employees to balance department needs and furlough policy.

27. Can the furlough agreement be used to manage workload reduction?

A: It is possible to discuss this while you are working out this plan with your manager.

28. Can employees take more than one furlough day per week through an individual agreement?

A: The policy allows for four consecutive days only once during the 11 month furlough period, which is planned for December 21 through 24, 2009. The Chancellor's Office has provided these guidelines which must be followed by the campus.

29. May employees take "partial" or half-day furlough days?

A: No. The guidelines do not allow full-time employees to take a partial furlough day. Full-time employees must plan for using eight hours on furlough days. Part-time and intermittent hourly employees will have pro-rated furlough hours.

30. How will my pay reflect furlough days on shorter months?

A: The pay reduction will be equal on all pay checks for the eleven month period.

31. I have accumulated many vacation days. Am I allowed to "carry-over" vacation days now that I have less time available to take vacation?

A: If you have accumulated a surplus of vacation days, you should meet with your appropriate administrator to determine a plan. Only the appropriate Vice President can authorize the carryover of excess vacation hours.

32. My unit works four 10-hour shifts. How do I manage furlough days on days when I am supposed to be "off duty?"

A: It is recommended by the Chancellor's Office that on weeks with a furlough day that compressed schedules be changed to a 5/40 schedule.

33. What will HSU employees, who are paid through grant funding do on furlough days?

A: We are awaiting further information and hope to provide a detailed explanation in the near future.

34. What percentage of pay reduction is being applied to my pay and when will it begin?

A: Because the deduction is coming out of 11 pay periods, the percentage is 10.08. There is a payroll calculator tool and training available for employees who wish to calculate how their pay will be affected beginning in the August 2009 pay period. You can find the calculator at the HR website. http://www.humboldt.edu/~hsuhr/erp/community_resources.html
The payroll calculator is at the bottom of this page.

35. Will I have to fill out an absence report to record my furlough days each month?

A: Yes. Even if you do not take vacation or other time off, you will need to record the furlough days you took off. The current absence report form is being updated with a place to record furlough days and will be posted when available.

36. Were 10-month employees given a bigger cut than everyone else?

A: No. Every employee will have the same percentage reduction.

37. How will Intermittent Hourly employees be affected?

A: We do not know at this time exactly how furlough will be processed for these employees. However, it is our understanding that there will be a pro-rated furlough plan. Once we have the information, we will share this with the campus.

38. After we sign our individual furlough plan, if we have to modify the plan in some way, what is the process?

A: It will be important to notify your manager immediately and amend your written furlough plan before proceeding. This will be the only way to track and maintain records for accuracy.

39. How will student employees be affected by furlough?

A: Student employees are currently outside the scope of furlough.

40. How do I figure out my pay?

A: [Click here to use the Payroll calculator on the HR website.](#)

41. Will public assistance resources be available to our least-paid employees?

A: The HR team has posted information about public assistance resources on our website, including information about how to determine eligibility for different forms of public assistance.

42. Will shifting or changing furlough days be possible?

A: As long as all of the furlough guidelines, including the limitations regarding the one day per week, two days per month are followed, it may be possible to adjust schedules on an as-needed or operational need basis.

43. Can departments alternate furlough days to stay open? Can employees have individual furlough plans to keep departments open and provide services?

A: Needs should be discussed with appropriate administrators and then individual furlough plans established through consultation with the employee.

44. What is the timeline for all this and how can I make plans?

A: It is true that this process has moved quickly and much of the information has been arriving fast and often changing daily. We will continue to provide updates, documents, and information to the HR website as we receive information.

45. Are there plans to communicate campus furlough closures to the public?

A: Yes. The calendar is already available to the public. There were many considerations when the schedule was made. Attempts to be thorough and sensitive to calendar issues and campus events were made as much as possible.

46. What about the furlough schedule conflict with Fall Preview Day?

A: Individual furlough plans may be in order for employees who will be working on this important day.

47. Is there a way to have alternate furlough days as opposed to strictly following the furlough schedule?

A: As long as there is a operations/reasonable need and the furlough guidelines are followed, there can be some flexibility through individual furlough plans.

48. In terms of sharing information across campus, how will we know who is open and who is closed?

A: The campus will attempt to have an on-line resource available that will help all of us know what is open or what services are available on campus furlough days. Information can be made available to the campus community and to the public through the website.

49. How will 11 month employees, who take December off, be affected?

A: An 11/12 employee would be impacted differently depending on whether the employee was scheduled to work during December. This could be addressed through an individual agreement.

50. How do we deal with furlough days that fall on payroll deadlines?

A: You may find a need for individual plans for payroll coordinators on those dates.

51. What about Fall Admission Day (October 24) and Campus Preview (April 9th and 10th)?

A: As long as the guidelines are followed, it is possible for certain employees to have individual plans to work these important days.

52. What about employees who work for the Sponsored Programs Foundation?

A: These employees will have to be assessed based on the percentage of their funding source. Their furlough impact will be based on the percentage of their state funding.

53. Will the FAQ s be available on the HR website?

A: Yes. We will post these questions as soon as possible, and provide updates as further information becomes available.

54. How is call back time affected on a week that has a furlough day?

- A. Call back would follow the language in the collective bargaining agreement. Call back time would be at straight time until the employee worked over 40 hours in that work week.

55. Must furlough days be recorded in my absence report?

- A. Yes, furlough days must be recorded. There is a payroll workshop scheduled for department coordinators and supervisors to address payroll issues. This workshop is scheduled for two dates: August 25th at 9:30a in Goodwin forum or August 27th at 2:30p in Goodwin forum. Register at <http://training.humboldt.edu/>