



Frequently Asked Questions

Professional/Administrative Voluntary Cost Saving Program

1. Q. When does the voluntary cost saving program begin and end?

A. This cost saving program will begin on November 1, 2011 and end on June 30, 2012.

2. Q. Which employees are affected by the voluntary cost saving program?

A. All professional/Administrative exempt employees.

3. Q. What are my options?

A. There are three options available: (1) you may schedule up to six unpaid furlough days, (2) forfeit up to six earned but unused vacation days (3) make a monetary contribution, or any combination of the three options. A form has been developed to enable an employee to designate the option(s) they would select.

4. Q. What is a forfeiture of earned but unused vacation leave?

A. On June 30, 2012, your earned but unused vacation balance would be reduced by the number of days you would authorize forfeiting. This time would no longer be reflected in your unused vacation leave balance.

5. Q. What is a monetary contribution?

A. This is a monetary contribution to the university that could be paid by writing a check to the University, charging a credit card, or by authorizing a payroll deduction for a period of time.

6. Q. If I make a monetary contribution is it tax-deductible?

A. All gifts are tax-deductible as provided by law.

7. Q. How is a voluntary furlough day defined?

A. A furlough day is defined as a regularly scheduled work day or holiday on which an employee who volunteers to take an unpaid furlough day is not paid and is not allowed to perform any work on that day.

8. Q. If I opt to take an unpaid voluntary furlough day do I have to take it as a full day or can I take partial days?

A. Employees must take furlough days only in daily increments.

9. Q. Has the University considered mandatory furloughs or other cost saving measures?

A. The University is currently considering all cost saving options for implementation in this fiscal year and in the next fiscal year should there be a need.

10. Q. As an impacted employee, can I choose my voluntary furlough days?

A. Yes you may choose the days on which you would take unpaid furlough after consulting with your supervisor.

11. Q. May I change my option and/or my scheduled voluntary furlough days?

A. Option choices and scheduled furlough days are irrevocable upon submission.

12. Q. Can my supervisor force me to make up my work time spent on a furlough day on weekends?

A. No.

13. Can my supervisor dictate the days I take?

A. We hope this will be a discussion between the employee and the supervisor. A supervisor can suggest other days due to operational needs. For example, having all employees in a unit off on the same day may not be possible due to operational concerns. Similarly, if the work load is extremely heavy at the beginning of the month it is not unreasonable for the supervisor to ask that furlough days be taken during the middle or end of the month.

14. Q. While on voluntary furlough, can I perform my duties elsewhere (telecommuting), be on call or travel on YSU business?

A. No. When you are on furlough you should not be performing work duties.

15. Q. If multiple employees in the same department request the same voluntary furlough day(s), what determines which employee will be given what day(s)?

A. The supervisor will assess the University's operational needs in deciding what furlough days will be allowed. We expect that the supervisor will take the needs of the work unit and the employees when determining who will get what days.

16. Q. How many voluntary consecutive furlough days can I take? I would like to take an entire week off.

A. The furlough days can be taken for three consecutive days during any single calendar week. If an employee desires to take an entire week off, only three of the days during that week could be taken as furlough days. If the supervisor has approved a week's absence, the other two days would have to be taken as vacation time.

17. Q. Can I use vacation or sick leave time during the unpaid voluntary furlough day(s)?

A. No.

18. Will my vacation or sick leave accrual be adversely impacted by my being on unpaid voluntary furlough?

A. No. A furlough day will not decrease your leave accruals.

19. Q. How do I record a voluntary furlough day?

A. There is no need to complete a leave form. The Voluntary Financial Contribution Form is all that is necessary. Employees will have their pay reduced in the month on which the furlough day(s) has been selected.

20. Q. Are these days tracked?

A. Yes, all furlough days will be monitored and tracked. Employees will be required to take their furlough days selected before June 30, 2012.

21. Q. Can I request a voluntary furlough day prior to an observed holiday, after an observed holiday, or in conjunction with my vacation?

A. Yes. Employees will not be required to be in a paid status the day before or after a holiday if the employee has selected that day as a furlough day and has the prior approval of the supervisor.

22. Q. If I resign, will I be expected to complete my voluntary furlough days?

A. Yes, if the elected furlough days occur prior to your resignation. If your resignation occurs prior to one or all of your designated furlough days, the answer is no.

23. Q. When a position is supported by external funds, would the employee in the position be part of the voluntary cost saving program?

A. Yes, all professional/administrative exempt employees are part of the program regardless of how the position is funded.

24. Q. What impact will an unpaid voluntary furlough have if I currently have child support or a garnishment being taken out of my check?

A. As always, all garnishments and child support orders will be processed in accordance with federal, state, and local guidelines. You will need to make certain that you have adequate earnings for such deductions when contemplating the unpaid furlough option.

25. Q. Is health insurance affected by the voluntary furloughs?

A. No. Health insurance eligibility is not impacted by the furlough plan.

26. Q. Is life insurance affected by the voluntary furloughs?

A. No.

27. Q. Will voluntary furloughs affect accrual of employees' leave benefits?

A. No. Accrual of vacation and sick leave will not be affected by furloughs.

28. Q. Am I eligible for unemployment compensation while participating in the voluntary furlough program?

A. No.

29. Q. Will this impact my retirement contributions?

A. Retirement contributions in the retirement *OPERS* ,*STRS* and *ARP* plans are a percentage of your salary. Since your salary is being reduced by taking the unpaid furlough days your retirement contributions will be reduced accordingly due to any unpaid voluntary furlough day.

30. Q. Will this impact my service credit with OPERS? STRS?

A. Currently OPERS requires you to earn \$250.00 a month to receive a full month of service credit. As long as you will earn \$250.00 for the month your service credit will not be impacted. STRS is also a service credit plan and the furlough program will not adversely impact this type of service credit.

31.Q. How does relinquishing a portion of my vacation leave help save money for the University?

A: The University is obligated to account for 100% of every employee's accrued vacation leave. By giving up a portion of your vacation hours, you would help reduce the University's obligation.