

## December 2023

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## Early Payroll Processing: Winter Break

Due to the Winter Break observed Thursday, December 21, 2023 through Wednesday, January 3, 2024, online timesheets and leave reports for the December 10 through December 23 pay period must be submitted electronically no later than 3 p.m. Wednesday, December 13 and approved no later than 10 a.m. Thursday, December 14.

Non-exempt leave accruing employees (those who complete timesheets) should report the time during Winter Break as "Holiday" hours on their timesheets. Exempt employees are not required to complete a leave report for days included during the Winter Break.

All leave accruing employees should report any leave taken outside the Winter Break as annual or sick leave (as appropriate) on their online timesheets or leave reports.

If you have any questions, please contact [Christine Dillard](#) at 850.474.2508 or [Nicole Zmary](#) at 850.474.2608.

## Employee Relations Symposium – Winner and Photo Highlights

Congratulations to the winner of the symposium survey \$50 Amazon gift card, Stephanie Kinnard! Stephanie is a Transfer Articulation specialist in our Office of Undergraduate Admissions. Stephanie, we thank you for

Supervisory Strength

PageUp Performance

Healthier U and EAP  
Collaborate for Spring  
Wellness Wednesdays

Employee Assistance  
Program (EAP) Webinars

your continued service to students and the entire UWF  
community!

## Professional Development Survey Coming Winter 2024 – Stay Tuned!



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## Introduction to UnitedHealthcare for HMO Plan Members

Hundreds of UWF employees will transition out of their former membership in the Aetna HMO, as UnitedHealthcare was awarded the management of the HMO plan for Region 1 in the recent State procurement process. Unless they are located in a county that remains managed by Aetna (see the [State of Florida HMO Map for 2024](#)), employees are not eligible to continue in the Aetna coverage. UnitedHealthcare will be sending welcome packets in mid-December, and in the meantime, more information can be found [online](#).

The UnitedHealthcare [Member Benefits page](#) has details about important topics such as telehealth offerings, the 24/7 NurseLine, maternity support, and preventative care guidelines. Additionally, resources are available related to the following:

- [Behavioral Health](#)
- [Wellness](#)
- [Condition Care](#)

Perhaps most importantly, since HMO plans are network-only, please visit the [Provider Search page](#) to make sure your visits are with in-network providers.

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## New Prescription Plan Manager Optum Rx Provides Online Tools

The new website for the [State Employees' Prescription Plan](#) under Optum Rx is now live. Members can review prescription drug lists, find a network pharmacy, and more. After Member ID cards are generated, employees will be able to register for their online accounts, but these tools can still be utilized while awaiting personalized access.

As a reminder, employees enrolled in any of the State of Florida health plans will receive new insurance cards from OptumRx, our new pharmacy manager for the State Employees' Prescription Drug Plan. All members will need to present the new cards to their pharmacies to be sure the old CVS/Caremark information is replaced effective January 1, 2024 and claims processing can continue smoothly. See page 29 of the [2024 Benefits Guide](#) for more information.

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## Employee Tuition Fee Waiver for Spring 2024

Eligible employees may apply to use credits for themselves or to assign credits to dependents at this time. Requests should be submitted at least one week before the first day of classes.

If you have any questions, please contact [Elsie Rivera](#) at 850.474.2621 or [Adrian Rowley](#) at 850.474.2604.

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## Insurance Elections for 2024: Deduction Updates

Employees who made insurance changes for the new year should verify deduction updates on the December 1, 2023 paycheck. Flexible spending account deductions begin with the January 12, 2024 paycheck. Carefully review changes to pay details and report any discrepancies to [Adrian Rowley](#) at 850.474.2604 or [Elsie Rivera](#) at 850.474.2921.

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## 403(b) and 457 Contribution Limit Changes for 2024

The University of West Florida 403(b) plan provides six (6) companies that offer 403(b) Tax Deferred Accounts and three (3) Roth 403(b) accounts to employees including adjuncts and OPS (non- student). The Tax Deferred plans allow employees to defer money prior to taxes being withheld.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) announced cost of living adjustments affecting dollar limitations for pension plans and other retirement-related items for **tax year 2024**.

According to [Notice 2023-75](#), the contribution limit for employees who participate in 403(b) and most 457 plans is increased from \$22,500 to **\$23,000**. The catch-up contribution limit for employees aged 50 and over who participate in 403(b), most 457 plans and the federal government's Thrift Savings Plan remains at **\$7,500** for 2024.

Employees may start new Tax Deferred Accounts (TDA), change providers, change deferral amounts, or start/stop contributions at any time.

Information on Tax Sheltered Annuities & Supplemental Plans:

- [403\(b\) \(Pre-Tax\) Investment Plans](#)
- [457 Deferred Compensation Plans](#)
- [Roth 403\(b\) \(Post-Tax\) Accounts](#)

For more information, contact the Human Resources Benefits Team at 850.474.2694.

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## Flexible Spending Account (FSA) Limit Increase

Employees enrolled in healthcare and limited purpose flexible spending accounts for 2023, please note the IRS has announced an increase in the annual contribution limit. The new maximum for the 2024 plan year (January-December) is \$3,200, an increase of \$150. The carryover maximum

for Plan Year 2024 into Plan Year 2025 has been increased to \$640, allowing an additional \$30 more to be carried over as compared to plan year 2024.

People First is currently being updated to accept the new 2024 maximum. Employees that wish to increase their 2024 amount may do so by calling the People First Service Center at 866.663.4735. The deadline to make the increase for the full plan year is Friday Dec. 15, 2023. Confirmation Statements must be sent to [hr@uwf.edu](mailto:hr@uwf.edu) once the change is made with People First.

Members with an active FSA account can log into Chard Snyder to review their current and upcoming account balances, and transactions. New Members that have enrolled into an FSA for the 2024 Plan year will be able to access their Chard Snyder account on or after Jan. 1, 2024.

To access the Chard Snyder account, you may either log in to People First and select the Chard Snyder quick link or use the Chard Snyder mobile application.

For additional assistance with benefits, please contact [Adrian Rowley](mailto:Adrian.Rowley@uwf.edu) at 850.474.2604 or [Elsie Rivera](mailto:Elsie.Rivera@uwf.edu) at 850.474.2921.

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## Level 2 Background Screenings for Positions of Special Trust

The suspension on Level 2 background screenings for positions of Special Trust has been lifted. Individuals occupying a Position of Special Trust must undergo a successful Level 2 Background Screen (fingerprinting). This includes University Work Force, Faculty, Adjuncts, OPS Staff, Student employees, and volunteers that work with vulnerable populations.

### **These positions are considered Positions of Special Trust:**

- Designated by President, Vice Presidents or designee to be a position of special trust or responsibility.
- Positions in these classifications: President, Vice President, Provost, or identified as Executive Service.
- Positions in the following departments (if not already covered by the Positions of Special Trust list): Aquatics, Controller's Office, Enrollment Affairs (including Registrar, Admissions, Financial Aid, Argo Central), General Counsel, Graduate School, Human Resources, Institutional Effectiveness, Institutional Research, Intercollegiate Athletics, Internal Auditing & Compliance, ITS, Office of Campus Culture and Access, Parking Services, Pensacola Museum of Art, Post Office, Research Administration and Engagement, Student Accessibility Resources, Student Health Center, Title IX, UWF Foundation Inc., UWF Police Department, and UWF SBDC.
- As required by granting agencies for grants or contracts.
- As required by federal or state law.

### **Positions with the following types of responsibilities are also considered Positions of Special Trust at UWF:**

- Works with minors, or other vulnerable populations, such as the elderly or those with disabilities.
- Access to, or control over, cash, checks, credit/debit cards, and financial account information, including accounts receivable.
- Assigned a Pcard.
- Updates, prepares, generates, or enters a transaction that will result in one of the following: refund, wire transfer, money transfers, fiscal and Pcard transactions or vendor

changes.

- Control over fiscal operational processes either through functional roles or system security access (e.g., ability to process a payment, print or distribute checks, or process payroll corrections).
- Significant inventory control responsibilities, including the receipt and release of inventory.
- Persons authorized for a grand master or building master key and/or equivalent UWF building access.
- Access to sensitive, confidential, and personally identifiable information on students, faculty, staff, customers, research subjects or alumni (e.g., social security numbers, dates of birth, financial numbers, etc.). This includes anyone conducting surveys where personal data is collected.
- Work with hazardous or regulated materials. This includes medical and biohazardous waste/substances such as bodily fluids. Exception: Undergraduate laboratory assistants supervised by Level 2-approved graduate student or faculty instructors do NOT have to undergo Level 2 screenings.

Information regarding Positions of Special Trust and Level 2 background screenings is available on the [backgrounds webpage](#). Human Resources is reaching out to affected employees and departments to schedule fingerprinting.

Contact [Grace Giddens](#) by email, or at 850.474.3481, with questions.

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## Graduating Student Employees

Departments with student employees who will be graduating in the Fall 2023 semester should send in Personnel Action Forms to end their student positions. If you wish to have your graduated student employee(s) continue working in your department they must be converted to OPS Staff employees. This will require a background screening and additional documentation to be completed prior to them working in an OPS Staff capacity. If you have any questions, please contact [Sheri Jernigan](#) at 850.474.2884 or [Nicole Zamy](#) at 850.474.2608.

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## Nominations Open Today, December 1 for the 2024 Employee Recognition and Awards Program!

Each year our campus community has the opportunity to recognize and honor fellow team members for excellence, outstanding performance, and a commitment to professionalism.

You may nominate a team member by completing the appropriate nomination form and uploading two letters of recommendation. \*

**Save the date April 04, 2024, from 9 to 10:30 a.m. to join us for food, fun and fanfare at our Employee Recognition and Awards Program!**

Please visit our [ERAP website](#) for details.

\*This year's nominations require only two letters of recommendation in addition to the nomination form.

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## Supervisory Strength

The significance of workplace culture in the success of an organization cannot be underestimated. Do you invest regularly in the development of a positive and productive team culture? Your ability to inspire and motivate is crucial. Culture is not static and requires ongoing attention. Leaders above all others must ensure that their actions align with their stated values.

Fostering a positive and productive workplace culture is essential to the sustained success of your team. By prioritizing culture you can create a work environment that attracts and retains top talent, increases productivity, and drives your overall success.

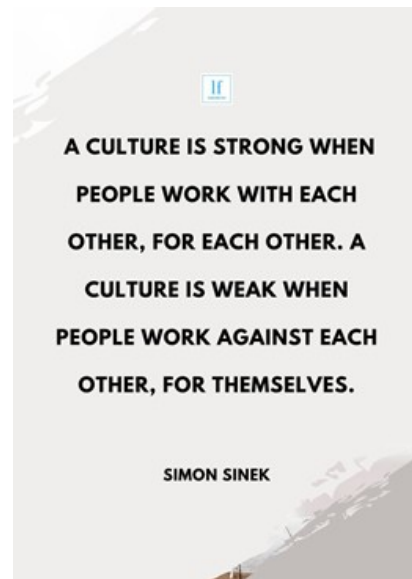
**It's crucial to ask yourself... Do I engage in practices that build up my team's culture or bring it down? Do I encourage others to build it up and hold them accountable when they knowingly or unknowingly tear it down?**

Read [Work Excellence, LLC's LinkedIn post](#) "Why Team Culture is so Important" which includes insight into key factors behind Apple and Google's culture success stories.

Photo credit to [Leadership First](#), International Professional Teaching and Coaching Organization.

If you'd like additional resources to enhance your team's culture, please reach out. I'd be happy to share.

If you'd like to join my Supervisor Strength email group and receive additional resources to grow your supervisory skills, please send a note with your request to [Lynne Randall](#).



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## PageUp Performance

### Position Orientation and Abbreviated Annual Review Update

University Work Force staff who have POE Reviews which end between 7/1/23 and 12/31/23 will automatically see an Abbreviated 23 – 24 Annual Review created near the POE end date.

Reach out to [Lynne Randall](#) in Human Resources if you have questions.

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## Healthier U and EAP Collaborate for Spring Wellness Wednesdays

This spring celebrate workplace wellness by attending one or all eleven of our virtual, instructor-led **Wellness Wednesdays** 12:00-1:00 pm lunch and learn workshops.

- 1/17 - Organize Your Life
- 1/31 - Wellness for Busy People
- 2/14 - Working Parents – Achieving Balance
- 2/28 - Caring for Aging Loved Ones
- 3/13 - Resilience
- 3/20 - Effective Communication at Work
- 4/3 - Coping with Anxiety

4/17 - Stress Management and Achieving Balance at Work and Home (Part 1)  
5/1 - Stress management and Achieving Balance at Work and Home (Part 2)  
Plus two additional dates and topics TBD.

Registrations are open on the PageUp Learning Library by searching Healthier U Wellness Wednesday.

Earn new Healthier U incentive items for completing workshops, including a Cooling Towel, a 6-Can Cooler Bag, or even a Happy Dude Phone Holder! For a complete list of incentive items and completion requirements, visit the [Healthier U website](#).



## EAP Resources for Living Webinars – Click [here](#) to register for a webinar.

- 12/7 @ 2pm [Top 10 Thinking Errors that Keep You Stuck](#)
- 12/12 @ 2pm [Self-Discipline: Learning Delayed Gratification](#)
- 12/21 @ 2pm [Overcoming the Idea of Failure](#)

Our Aetna Resources for Living EAP is available for you and your family. Explore the [website](#) for related resources. You'll be glad you did! (Username- UWF Password – UWF).

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