

January 2026

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Early Payroll Processing: Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday

Due to the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday on Monday, January 19, 2026, online timesheets and leave reports for the January 4, 2026 through January 17, 2026, pay period must be submitted electronically no later than 3:00 p.m. Thursday, January 15, 2026 and approved no later than 10:00 a.m. Friday, January 16, 2026.

Should you need assistance, please contact [Sheri Jernigan](#) at 850.474.2884 or [Lori Werdann](#) at 850.474.2205

ERAP 2026 Nominations Still Open!

Do you work with someone who consistently goes above and beyond? A colleague who makes a meaningful difference through dedication, innovation, teamwork, or exceptional service? Now is the time to recognize them!

You still have time to submit your nominations for the Employee Recognition and Awards Program 2026!

The deadline for all fully-complete and correct nomination packets is **5:00 p.m. Friday, January 23, 2026.** *

***Please note:** Incomplete or incorrect forms received after 5 p.m. on January 23, 2026 are ineligible for consideration.

Simply fill out the nomination form and include two letters of recommendation.

Visit the [ERAP webpage](#) for more information about the awards and to submit your nominations.

If you have any questions, please contact [Jack Kolodziejski](#) at 850.474.2292.

Employee Tuition Fee Waiver for Spring 2026

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 850.474.2921 or [Adrian Rowley](#) at 850.474.2604.

Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA): Supporting Employees at Work

The Pregnant Workers Fairness Act (PWFA) is a federal law that ensures employees who are pregnant, recovering from childbirth, or experiencing related medical conditions can request reasonable workplace accommodations to support their health and ability to work.

Under the PWFA, covered employers must engage in an interactive process with employees to provide accommodations, unless doing so would create an undue hardship.

What This Means for Employees

The PWFA helps employees maintain their health and employment during pregnancy and postpartum recovery by providing access to reasonable accommodations, such as:

- Additional or more frequent breaks
- Schedule flexibility or modified start/end times
- Temporary adjustments to job duties
- Access to seating or changes to physical work requirements
- Time off for medical appointments

Employees are also protected from discrimination or retaliation for requesting or using approved accommodations.

UWF Resources & Support

UWF is committed to providing a supportive and inclusive work environment. Employees who may need an accommodation related to pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition are encouraged to contact [Human Resources](#) by email, or at 850.474.2694, for guidance or assistance.

For more information, visit the [UWF Pregnant Workers Fairness Act](#) page.

2026 University of West Florida Holidays

The University of West Florida will observe the following paid holidays:

1. New Year's Day - Thursday, January 1, 2026
2. Winter Holiday - Presidential Designated Holiday - Friday, January 2, 2026
3. Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. - Monday, January 19, 2026
4. Spring Holiday - Presidential Designated Holiday - March 16 - 20, 2026

5. Memorial Day - Monday, May 25, 2026
6. Juneteenth - Friday, June 19, 2026
7. Independence Day - Observed Friday, July 3, 2026
8. Labor Day - Monday, September 7, 2026
9. Veterans' Day - Wednesday, November 11, 2026
10. Thanksgiving Holiday - Presidential Designated Holiday - Monday, November 23, 2026, through Wednesday, November 25, 2026
11. Thanksgiving Holiday - Thursday, November 26, 2026
12. Friday after Thanksgiving - Friday, November 27, 2026
13. Winter Holiday - Presidential Designated Holiday - Monday, December 21, 2026, through Wednesday, December 23, 2026
14. Christmas Day - Friday, December 25, 2026
15. Winter Holiday - All regularly scheduled work days beginning Thursday, December 24, 2026, and continuing through Friday, January 1, 2027

Any questions regarding the 2026 University of West Florida holidays, please contact [Jamie Sprague](#) by email, or at 850.474.2694.

Shared Savings Program - Three Ways to Save

Get rewarded for shopping! Use your rewards towards your next healthcare out-of-pocket expense. Check out the State Group Insurance FREE voluntary Shared Savings Program that could keep your hard-earned cash in your pocket!

By utilizing the Shared Savings Program, you can earn tax free money to pay for out-of-pocket medical, dental, vision, and prescription costs through the Shared Savings Program. The Shared Savings Program is available to all State Group Insurance health plan enrollees and their dependents via Shared Savings vendors, Healthcare Bluebook, and Lantern.

Healthcare BlueBook - Members can earn rewards by searching online and having their medical procedure completed at a high quality, low cost facility. To learn how, visit the [Shared Savings Program](#) page on the myBenefits site.

Download the Healthcare Bluebook Mobile app on the AppStore or GooglePlay! Access code: SOF

Lantern (formerly SurgeryPlus) - Having a planned, non-emergency surgery? By using Lantern for your procedure, you can earn a reward and collect your share of the state's savings.

To learn more about the Shared Savings Program, employees can visit the [State of Florida MyBenefits](#) website or the Human Resources [Shared Savings Program Benefit Topic](#). A [video training](#) is also available for employees wishing to learn more.

If you have any questions, please contact [Adrian Rowley](#) at 850.474.2604 or [Elsie Rivera](#) at 850.474.2921.

PageUp Performance News

Work Force Supervisors, please check your PageUp Team Performance Reviews to ensure a 2025 – 2026 Annual Review launched July 1 for each of your direct reports. If you are missing a review, please reach out to [Jack Kolodziejski](#), Assistant Director of Employee Relations, by email or by phone at 850.474.2292.

(Note: This does not apply to the University President, Vice Presidents, General Counsel, or Athletic Fall/Winter Coaches.)

Abbreviated FY 25 - 26 Annual Reviews will be automatically launched for employees completing their Position Orientation Year by December 31, 2025.

Insurance Elections for 2026: Deduction Updates

Employees who made insurance changes for the new year should verify deduction updates on the December 12, 2025 paycheck. Flexible spending account deductions begin with the January 9, 2026 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.

Healthier U and EAP Wellness Wednesday Partnership Continues!

We are excited to announce the continuation of the Healthier U and EAP Wellness Wednesday partnership for fall and spring semesters 25-26. Working with our EAP, we identified workplace wellness hot topics for our faculty and staff. Pack a lunch or schedule a team lunch-and-learn. This year our lineup includes:

Breathe Your Way to a Better Life - January 14

Supporting Family Members with Mental Health Issues - February 18

Don't Wait Until Monday - Get Motivated Now - March 11

Getting Unstuck - Breaking Old Habits - April 15

Neurodiversity in the Workplace - May 13

For a detailed description or to register, visit the [PageUp Learning Library](#) or Calendar today! Links to the online classes will be sent to all of the registered attendees as soon as they are received from the outside facilitators.

Veterans' Preference at the University of West Florida

The University of West Florida is deeply committed to honoring and supporting our military veterans. Just as we uphold a high standard of respect and care for our students and employees, we must extend that same level of respect to our jobseekers.

UWF operates in accordance with [Florida Statute 295](#), which governs Veterans' Preference in employment. This statute requires that eligible veterans, their spouses, and certain family members receive preference in hiring, promotion, and retention for designated positions.

Human Resources maintains a [comprehensive list of all 62 position classifications](#) that are subject to Veterans' Preference. For applicants claiming preference, Human Resources will determine and verify the eligibility of the preference. It is the Hiring Official's responsibility to determine whether the applicant meets the minimum qualifications for the position.

If an applicant qualifies for Veterans' Preference, and meets the minimum qualifications for the position, then that *applicant must be given preference in the selection process and must be interviewed*.

It is important to note that the minimum qualifications a veteran must meet are those listed in the blue box of the job posting and the standard minimum qualifications for the position class.

Veterans *do not* need to meet specific or preferred qualifications to be granted an interview under Veterans' Preference.

When making the final hiring decision, the Hiring Official should select the candidate who is most qualified for the position. *However, if a preference-eligible veteran is equally qualified to other candidates, the veteran must be selected for hire.*

Departments are required to notify all remaining applicants of their application status within 14 days of the hire date of the selected finalist.

Applicants who believe they were not properly granted an interview may file a written complaint with the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs, Division of Benefits and Assistance. It is imperative that we are in compliance and do our due diligence to uphold the statute.

If you need assistance reviewing a veteran's resume or determining whether they meet the minimum qualifications, please contact [Ronna Carden](#) or [Brianna Collins](#) on the Employment Team for assistance.

For more information on Veterans' Preference, please review the HR webpage:
<https://uwf.edu/offices/human-resources/recruitment-selection-and-onboarding/veterans-preference/>

Health Insurance Tax Form 1095-C

In the past, People First has sent the Health Insurance Tax Form 1095-C to employees who have their preferences set up to have a form mailed to them in hard copy. Under the federal Paperwork Burden Reduction Act, employers are no longer required to automatically mail or email Form 1095-C to all employees. Instead, employers are now required to make this form available upon request. Form 1095-C is still available online, but instructions for requesting a hard copy may be found in [Management Advisory #25-005](#).

If you have any questions, please contact the [Human Resources Benefits Team](#) at 850.474.2694.

Stalking Awareness Month

January is Stalking Awareness Month, a time to further our understanding of what constitutes stalking behaviors, identify warning signs, consider response options, and reflect on the lasting and invasive impacts of stalking. Stalking may involve repeated unwanted contact, monitoring, surveillance, or threats that affect a person's safety, well-being, and ability to work or learn. Stalking can occur in person or online and may involve students, colleagues, or others connected to campus. Staff play a vital role in noticing concerns early and helping connect individuals to support. Visit [stalkingawareness.org](#) for virtual resources and safety planning tools, and remember to report stalking concerns, for yourself or others, to Title IX so supportive and intervention measures can be offered.

If you have any questions, please contact [Jenny Palacios](#), Title IX Coordinator/Equal Opportunity Officer, at 850.474.2175.

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

- 1/8 @ 2pm [Exercise and mental health](#)
- 1/13 @ 2pm [Self-care](#)

- 1/22 @ 2pm [Breathe out stress](#)
- 1/27 @ 2pm [Investing in yourself through personal growth](#)

Our Aetna Resources for Living EAP is available for you and your family. Explore the [website](#) for related resources. You will be glad you did! ('Company log in/Register' then Username= UWF, Password = UWF).

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