

## **FLEXIBLE FURLOUGH PROGRAM**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

Revised 5/18/09

Most of the following frequently asked questions are applicable to the majority of SPA employees working standard schedules. Employees working other work schedules may receive more specific responses from their HR Office.

#### **What is the program?**

The Flexible Furlough Program reduces all teachers and state employees' paychecks in May and June of this year by an annualized amount equivalent to 0.5% over the remainder of the fiscal year. Full-time employees will be credited with 10 hours flexible time off.

#### **What do I receive in return for the money being deducted from my pay in May and June?**

In return, each employee will receive 10 hours of flexible time off that can be taken between June 1, 2009 and December 31, 2009. When an employee takes their time off, their pay will not be deducted any further beyond the .5 percent taken this fiscal year.

#### **When does the pay deduction start? When does it end?**

It will start May 1 and end June 30, 2009.

#### **How long do I have to use the ten hours of time off?**

You have from June 1, 2009 through December 31, 2009, with supervisory approval, to schedule and use this time off.

#### **Will this reduce my base salary?**

No, it will not permanently reduce your base salary. The deduction will be made only from your May and June 2009 paychecks during the period of the program. Once the program ends, the deduction will no longer be made.

#### **Will this affect my leave earning ability?**

No, you will continue to earn leave at the rate you do now.

#### **Can I use vacation leave or bonus leave or comp time to cover the deduction in May and June?**

No, you cannot substitute other leave to offset the pay deduction.

#### **How much money will be deducted from my paycheck?**

Example: An employee's annual salary is \$40,000 and is paid monthly. The amount of the annualized .5% is \$200. The amount coming out of the employee's May and June paychecks is \$100 each month.

#### **Can I take my time off whenever I want? Does my supervisor have to approve my request to take this time off?**

Your supervisor must approve any request for time off.

#### **What happens if I don't request time off?**

Your supervisor is responsible for monitoring your use of time off, and may schedule you for time off if you do not request it.

**What if I don't like the time the supervisor schedules. Can I file a grievance about it?**

No, supervisory decisions about approving or scheduling time off are not grievable.

**What happens if I don't request the time off and my supervisor doesn't schedule me for time off? Will I get the ten hours of pay back?**

No, if you do not request time off and your supervisor does not schedule it by December 31, 2009, then you will lose the ability to take this time off.

**How will this affect my ability to earn overtime?**

Supervisors will be strongly encouraged not to allow overtime in any week in which time off is scheduled. The total of leave, comp time, and work time should not exceed the hours of work normally scheduled.

**What happens if I leave state service before I use the time off? Will money still be deducted from my paychecks in May and June?**

Yes, if you leave state service before you use the time off, monies will still be deducted from your May and June paychecks.

**Will the Flexible Furlough Program affect my benefits?**

The General Assembly has ratified House Bill 917 and the Governor has signed the bill on 5/18/09 that protects employees' retirement and health insurance benefits for the duration of this program.

**Can I use the 10 hours of Flexible Furlough time off for the same purpose as vacation or sick leave?**

Yes, with prior approval of the supervisor; however the 10 hours may not be used to make up for current adverse weather balances.

**Can I use the 10 hours of flexible furlough time off to make up for adverse weather leave?**

No.

**How will my agency/university track my use of this time off?**

Each agency/university will be responsible for tracking the use of leave under this program.

**I work for the NC Educational Lottery. Am I included in the Flexible Furlough program?**

Yes, Lottery employees are included.

**I work for the Department of Transportation. In what pay periods will I see the deduction?**

The deduction will occur in the 5/29, 6/12, and 6/26 paychecks.

**If I am paid for any overtime during May or June, how will my pay be impacted?**

The hourly overtime rate will likely be slightly less during the months of May and June because the hourly overtime rate is, in part, based upon the money earned in those months.

**If I am paid Shift Pay during May or June, how will my pay be impacted?**

Shift premium pay will not be impacted by the Flexible Furlough program.

**How many hours of time off do I get if I work part-time?**

The number of hours of time off that part-time employees receive is proportional to the number of hours worked. For example, employees working 20 hours a week will earn 5 hours of time off, those working 25 hours a week will earn 6.25 hours of time off, and those working 30 hours a week will earn 7.5 hours time off.

**Will employees who are being separated in a RIF either May 31 or June 30 have the .5% deducted from their paychecks?**

Yes, employees receiving a pay check in May and/or June will have the appropriate deduction made.

**Will employees who are being separated in a RIF either May 31 or June 30 be able to use the Flexible Furlough time off prior to being separated?**

Flexible Furlough time off is not available to be used until June 1. Persons separated before June 1 cannot use Flexible Furlough time off.

**Is the salary continuation (injury leave) for law enforcement officers subject to the .5% reduction in May and June?**

Yes.

**Will this program affect the amount of longevity I am supposed to receive?**

No. The Flexible Furlough program will only affect your base pay in May and June, 2009.