

Human Resources

Bulletin

December 2011

Anne Arundel County Public Schools | Division of Human Resources

PAYROLL INFORMATION

- Direct deposit funds will be available at your bank by 9 a.m. on December 28, 2011.
- Direct deposit stubs will be delivered by basket mail to schools January 3 or 4, 2012, depending on your mailroom schedule.



TAX WITHHOLDING

Tax changes may be made any time by submitting a form W-4 (federal) or MD 507 (state) Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate to HR/Payroll. Remember, if you change your address, you need to submit new tax withholding forms, if you moved to a new county or state.

W-2 INFORMATION

2011 W-2 forms will be mailed by January 31, 2012. Active permanent employees will receive W-2s at their work location. W-2s for temporary or inactive employees are mailed to the home address.

If you need to make corrections to your personal information, please do so as soon as possible so your W-2 will be correct. Send a Change of Personnel Records form (available at www.aacps.org > **HR/ Employment > Forms**, and on the intranet) to:

Address changes: Katherine Hammond,
Human Resources

Name changes: Wilmagrace Carpenter,
Employee Records File Room,
Human Resources (also include
required documentation)

Confidential Fax: 443-458-0137

BENEFITS DEDUCTIONS 2012

- New healthcare, Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and voluntary life insurance deductions begin January 11, 2012, for Units I, II, IV, V and VI.
- Unit III (AFSCME) employees' FSA and life insurance deductions begin January 11, 2012, and new healthcare deductions begin January 25, 2012.

To review your healthcare premiums, refer to the 2012 Benefits Guide on-line (pages 21-24) at www.aacps.org > **HR/ Employment > Benefits > Healthcare > AACPS Healthcare Rates 2012.**

Reminder: The frequency of deductions is aligned with your number of pays:

- 1) all employees who are paid over 12 months have benefit deductions from all 26 pays (including, for example, 10-month employees paid over the summer)
- 2) all employees who are paid over 10 months have benefit deductions from 22 pays.

Note: an exception to the above is retirement deductions, which continue at the same frequency of 20 or 26 deductions, per the Maryland State Retirement Agency.

EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION

Verification of Employment can be accessed by employees, lenders, and verifiers via The Work Number. This information can be found at www.aacps.org > **HR/ Employment > Employment Verification**. Step-by-step instructions are provided for the convenience of the employee, lender, and verifier.

HR/Benefits has two fax numbers: 410-222-5610 or 443-458-0669 (E-fax)



OPEN ENROLLMENT

Open Enrollment for 2012 has ended. The benefits on-line enrollment site is no longer available for employees to select benefits or change elections. You may still review your benefits elections or print your enrollment summary (go to www.aacps.org > HR/Employment > Benefits and click on **On-line Benefits**).

HEALTHCARE AND PRESCRIPTION ID CARDS

- **If you switched from the Aetna or Traditional medical plans to the BlueChoice or Triple Option medical plans**, you will receive a new medical card. If you also participate in the vision program, the vision benefit will show on the medical card.
- **If you switched from the PPN plan to the Triple Option medical plan**, you will receive a new medical card. If you participate in the vision program, the vision benefit will also show on this medical card.
- **If you did not make any changes in your medical coverage**, continue to use your current medical cards.
- **If a new dependent is added** in the PPN plan and coverage level changes (e.g., employee/spouse to family), new cards will be generated. For the BlueChoice, Triple Option, and dental plans, ID cards will be generated for anyone new who is added.
- **Dental cards** are issued separately from medical and vision cards. If you had dental coverage in 2011, continue to use your same dental card. If you changed your dental plan during open enrollment, you will receive a new card.
- New **CVS Caremark cards** will only be sent to employees enrolling in a medical plan for the first time in 2012. Two cards will be mailed to each member, both in the employee's name. If additional cards are needed or in case of a lost card or if a new dependent is added, a new card can be printed from www.caremark.com (an account must be established on-line first) or a card can be requested by calling Caremark at 1-800-841-5550 (allow 5-7 business days for delivery).

Be sure to show your new ID cards to any healthcare provider you see starting in January!

CAREFIRST CONCIERGE SERVICE

A dedicated CareFirst Customer Service Representative is on-site at the Central Office on Riva Road every Tuesday from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. If you have claim or eligibility questions, please call HR/Benefits at 410-222-5221/5219 on Tuesdays and ask for the CareFirst representative.

CVS CAREMARK

• **New 3-tier co-payment structure for 2012**

Starting January 1, 2012, your prescription drug co-pay will depend on whether your doctor prescribes a generic, preferred brand, or non-preferred brand-name drug. Obtain a copy of the CVS Caremark Primary/Preferred Drug List from www.caremark.com and discuss generic/preferred brand options with your physician.

Tier	Medication Type	Retail (up to 30-day supply)	Mail order or CVS retail pharmacy maintenance choice (up to 90-day supply)
1	Generic	\$5	\$10
2	Preferred Brand <i>(no generic equivalent)</i>	\$15	\$20
3	Non-Preferred Brand	\$25	\$40

- **Waiver of Generic Co-Pay.** You may be eligible to receive a one-time free first fill for a generic alternative for a brand medicine you currently take. You may switch from a brand medication to generic at your local CVS retail pharmacy (90-day supply) or through mail-order. You will receive a letter from CVS Caremark if you are eligible. Ask your doctor if a generic alternative is right for you.
- **Maintenance Choice.** You may choose to receive your 90-day supply of medications through CVS Caremark Mail Service or at a CVS pharmacy.
- If you would like to switch a current mail order 90-day prescription with remaining refills to a CVS pharmacy:
 - Contact CVS Caremark at 1-800-824-6349, or
 - Go to a CVS pharmacy to request the 90-day prescription (CVS will check with CVS Caremark that a prescription is on file), or
 - Go to a CVS pharmacy with a new 90-day prescription.

If you are filling a maintenance medication for the first time and want to use a CVS pharmacy:

- Bring the 90-day prescription to a CVS pharmacy, or
- Bring a 30-day prescription to a CVS pharmacy; CVS will contact the prescriber after the last allowable fill to get a 90-day prescription.



Do you have a benefits-related question? E-mail HR/Benefits staff at benefits@aacps.org.

SUPPLEMENTAL RETIREMENT PLAN – Are you participating?

It is never too soon – or too late – to start saving for your retirement. While traditional pensions and Social Security benefits provide a safety net in retirement, they often are not enough. This is especially true in light of what experts say you will need to maintain your standard of living after you stop working. The amount may surprise you. With healthcare costs rising and life spans increasing, you may need as much as 80%-100% of your pre-retirement income to maintain your current standard of living.

Four AACPS-approved investment providers – ING, Lincoln Financial, MetLife, and VALIC – offer excellent investment options to help you reach your retirement savings goals. You can enroll at any time during the year. Please contact a representative directly to learn more and set up a plan. Representatives from the AACPS-authorized investment providers are available to spend a few minutes at your staff meeting to educate employees on the importance of participation in the Supplemental Retirement Plan and how it should be an essential component to each employee's retirement plan.



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Remember, ALL employees, even temporary employees like substitute teachers, are eligible to participate and the minimum contribution need only be \$1/pay. Remember, you can enroll at ANY time! Better to get started earlier rather than later!

More information can be obtained at the AACPS/Benefits website www.aacps.org > HR/Employment > Benefits > Supplemental Retirement.

Enjoy a Full and Balanced Life!

As life continues to get more hectic, you may be wondering if it's possible to successfully balance your work and home life. We are constantly charged with getting everything done and getting it done fast. The good news is you have the power to reach a healthy work-life balance.

In fact, the more balanced you are, the more productive and happy you will become.

The following guidelines can help you get on the right track if you have determined that you need to make some changes in the balance of your life:

- Set realistic expectations
- Set realistic goals
- Be efficient
- Prioritize
- Modify responsibilities
- Think positively

Achieving a more balanced life is a constant process. From day to day, your focus may shift, but give yourself the freedom to be flexible. The end result of balancing work and home means allowing yourself to have a more fulfilling life.

(adapted from Your Source, Magellan Health Services, 2011)



FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNTS

HFS Benefits (HFS) is the plan administrator for the Flexible Spending Account (FSA) Program. You may link to the HFS website from www.aacps.org > **HR/Employment > Benefits > Flexible Spending Accounts** to view general FSA and specific account information.

Note that a dependent care FSA cannot be used for healthcare expenses of a spouse or child. Please make sure you enrolled in the correct Flexible Spending Account. If you enrolled in a dependent care account in error, please contact HR/Benefits as soon as possible.

Pre-funded Benefit debit cards will be mailed by January 1 to new 2012 healthcare FSA enrollees. If your spouse is listed as a dependent, two cards will be provided. If you were previously enrolled in a healthcare spending account and your card does not expire at the end of this year, you can continue to use the same debit card in 2012. If you did not enroll in an FSA for 2012, your current card will be deactivated December 31, 2011.

Reimbursement forms for dependent and healthcare FSAs:

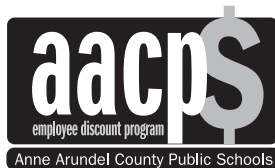
- can be downloaded from the HFS website,
- can be downloaded from www.aacps.org > **HR/Em-
ployment > Benefits > Flexible Spending Accounts**,
- can be downloaded from the on-line enrollment website, or
- are available from HR/Benefits.

Keep in mind to save all receipts/documentation to submit with reimbursement forms or to verify expenses for the Benefits card. Claims are processed weekly.

Remember certain over-the-counter (OTC) medications can be covered with a prescription or the HFS Letter of Recommendation (available on-line at the website above) completed by your provider.

Outstanding FSA expenses incurred in 2011 must be submitted to HFS no later than March 31, 2012, for reimbursement. They may be faxed to HFS at 410-771-5533 or 888-510-4218, mailed to 4 North Park Drive, Suite 500, Hunt Valley, MD 21050, or e-mailed with scanned receipts to claims@hfsbenefits.com.

EMPLOYEE DISCOUNT PROGRAM



The Employee Discount Program offers AACPS employees discounts from local businesses that are greater than those offered to the general public. All

AACPS employees are eligible. These services include entertainment, finance, fitness, and technology.

Information on this program is available at:

www.aacps.org > **HR/Employment > Benefits > Employee Discount Program**. New businesses are continuing to join the program so check this site often! If you have any questions regarding a discount, contact the vendor directly.

All AACPS employees are encouraged to access the Employee Discount Program. However, AACPS assumes no responsibility for any arrangements, contracts, purchases, or disputes between individual employees and the discount vendor. The program does not negotiate, guarantee, or endorse discount vendors or prices. All arrangements are strictly between the employee, as a consumer, and the vendor. AACPS employees are encouraged to research and compare prices and services before purchasing, signing any contract, or making arrangements.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Information related to Spring 2012 Professional Development Workshops and college courses is accessible through the AACPS website. The online booklet can be accessed through the AACPS intranet under **Site Index > Professional Growth & Development > Professional Development Workshops Opportunities > Workshop Booklet**.

Registration on ERO for Spring workshops begins on December 12, 2011. Workshops start as early as January 23, 2012. Please register on ERO at least three days before the workshop start date.

FRAUD, WASTE, AND ABUSE REPORTING HOTLINE

Anne Arundel County Public Schools has a Fraud, Waste, and Abuse reporting hotline number. The number was established so that employees and citizens of Anne Arundel County can report instances where they believe potential fraud, waste, or abuse of AACPS property or resources is taking place. The toll free fraud hotline number is 877-453-6681. It can be reached 24 hours a day. All calls are confidential and can be made anonymously.

INTEGRATED DISABILITY AND LEAVE MANAGEMENT (IDLM)

According to Board Policy and the Negotiated Agreements, **any sick leave in excess of three consecutive days** shall be attested to by a physician. Medical certification will provide pertinent information regarding the seriousness of the illness as well as its duration to help administration plan for short-term vs. long-term coverage. The medical certification must be made available as soon as possible to determine whether the leave usage should be authorized or denied. For this reason, the physician's statement should **not** be held by the employee until the time of return. The medical certification must relate only to the serious health condition for which the current need for leave exists. It should identify the health care provider and type of medical practice (including pertinent specialization, if any), what the patient is being treated for, the approximate date the serious health condition commenced, and its probable duration. This note must be faxed directly to IDLM's secure, confidential fax machine at 443-458-0140.

When employees have been absent from their workplace due to their own personal illness for a period of two (2) weeks or if they are returning to work with restrictions/limitations, they are **required** to present a medical release from their treating practitioner/ provider prior to their intended date of return. This form must be submitted to IDLM at 443-458-0140 prior to

the employee reporting for duty at their work location. **If such certification is not received and approved by Human Resources, they may not return to work.**

Please be reminded that assistive devices such as orthopedic boots, casts, crutches, canes, walkers, wheelchairs, etc. are limitations and should be reported to IDLM immediately.

The Division of Human Resources will review all employees' medical releases to return to work along with any specific, medically necessitated accommodations/limitations associated with their return. On occasion, additional information may be requested from the treating practitioner. The purpose of such a review is to ensure that the employee is able to perform the essential functions of their position and to determine whether their return would present a risk to the health, safety, and welfare of themselves, co-workers, or students. An employee's return to work may be delayed until appropriate medical certification is provided regarding his/her fitness for duty. Principals/supervisors will be notified by Human Resources when an employee is cleared to return to work. No employee should be permitted to return to work until that communication has been received.

TEACHER CERTIFICATION



Everything you wanted to know about certification, tuition reimbursement, and salary changes for teachers with AACPS is on the intranet, including important deadlines for submitting information. To access this useful information and to learn how to obtain a copy of your Maryland

educator certificate, go to the intranet at: **Human Resources > Certification**, on the left hand side of the page.

Have you recently renewed your certificate? Does it seem like you have plenty of time to get those credits completed? Don't wait until the last minute! You never know what obstacles life may throw in your path. Please make arrangements to complete your required renewal credits and send the necessary documentation via basket-mail to Human Resources, Certification. Questions can be directed to Penny Post

(ppost@aacps.org) 410-222-5077 for staff with last names A-K, and Crystal Moede (cmoede@aacps.org) 410-222-5079 for staff with last names L-Z.

Need to submit a Professional Development Plan?

As part of the certificate renewal process and tenure application process, all current employees holding an active professional teaching certificate are required to complete a Professional Development Plan. This plan, commonly referred to as the PDP, should reflect the steps the teacher will take regarding the completion of credits toward his/her next renewal. The regulation for this form is COMAR 13A.12.01.11. The PDP can be an effective tool for a principal and teacher to map out a plan to continue his/her education and meet renewal requirements. The PDP form can be found on the intranet at: **Human Resources > Certification > Forms & Information.**



ANNE ARUNDEL
COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Anne Arundel County Public Schools prohibits discrimination in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability unrelated in nature and extent so as to reasonably preclude performance. For more information, contact The Office of Investigations, Anne Arundel County Public Schools, 2644 Riva Road, Annapolis, Maryland 21401, (410) 222-5286; TDD (410) 222-5500. www.aacps.org