

Human Resources

Bulletin

June 2020

Anne Arundel County Public Schools | Division of Human Resources

2019–2020 Year-End Reminders Looking Ahead to the 2020–2021 School Year



PAYROLL

22-pay employees

- July 1, 2020, is the last pay for all 22-pay employees for the 2019–2020 school year.
- The first pay for all 22-pay employees for the 2020–2021 school year will be September 9, 2020.

26-pay employees

- **12-month employees are paid over 26 pays.** The 26-pay schedule will continue biweekly throughout the summer.
- **10-month employees receiving pay over 12 months (26 pays)** receive reserve pay over the summer. Reserve pay is the total amount withheld from the 22 regular pays to be distributed over the summer pays (July 15, July 29, August 12, August 26).

Teachers, Teacher Assistants, and Eligible Unit III Employees May Elect 26-Pay Schedule

Per the Negotiated Agreement between the AACPS Board of Education and Collective Bargaining Units, certain 10-month employees may receive their pay over 12 months (26 pays) instead of 22 pays. This election, governed by IRS code 409A, must be made by July 31, 2020, for the 2020–2021 school year. Pay election forms are available on-line (www.aacps.org/hrforms) and at work locations. This election is **irrevocable** until after the end of the school year, in accordance with IRS regulations.



If the election to receive your salary over 26 pays is to be withdrawn, a written request to Human Resources/Payroll must be submitted between **June 1 and July 31** of any calendar year to change payroll frequency for the subsequent school year.

If you have any questions about this information, call your Payroll Process Support Specialist (see your timekeeper for phone number).

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Employees can access the Employee Handbook on the Internet and Intranet sites. We highly recommend that all employees review the contents of the Handbook annually as a refresher. Go to www.aacps.org/employeehandbook.

BOARD POLICIES & REGULATIONS

Employees working in any capacity for AACPS should be aware of Board Policies and Regulations that affect their position or govern their conduct as employees.

Some specific Board Policies and Regulations are outlined in the Employee Handbook and in the brochure "What Every Employee Must Know." However, more information about Board Policies and Regulations can be found at www.aacps.org/boardpolicies.

Drug-, Alcohol-, and Tobacco-Free Work Environments

Please review Board Policy GAC and Regulation GAC-RA at www.aacps.org/boardpolicies. Violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, termination. If you have questions, please contact the Office of Investigations at 410-222-5286.

Self-Reporting

Remember: The Self-Reporting Policy and Regulation (GANN/GANN-RA) remain in effect over the summer. Criminal charges, arrests, or convictions must be reported to the Office of Investigations within 24 hours of the occurrence. You can report by phone (410-222-5286) or email: employeeeselfreporting@aacps.org.

EMPLOYMENT VERIFICATION

Applying for a mortgage? Checkout "The Work Number" 1-800-996-7566. It is the AACPS automated employment verification service for employees. It allows you to have your employment and salary verified within a matter of minutes 24/7. For more information go online to www.aacps.org>Staff> Employment Verification

Please note that language in this bulletin may change based on union negotiations.

BENEFITS

Benefit Deductions

All employees paid over 12 months have benefit deductions from all 26 pays (including 10-month employees paid over the summer).

All employees paid over 10 months will have benefit deductions from 22 pays. The last benefit deduction for the 2019–2020 school year will be July 1, 2020, and the first deduction for the 2019–2020 school year will be September 9, 2020.

These deductions include the following:

- healthcare
- dues (AEL, AFSCME, TAAAC, SAAAAC)
- supplemental retirement 403b/457b
- credit union
- flexible spending accounts
- long-term care (deducted over 26 pays only)
- savings accounts
- supplemental life insurance
- other voluntary deductions

Exception — Retirement Deductions

Retirement deductions continue at the frequency of 20 or 26 deductions per the Maryland State Retirement Agency (MSRA).

Maryland State Retirement/Pension Deductions Teachers' System

- The last deduction for all (10 and 12-month) members of the Teachers' System will be June 17, 2020.
- The first deduction for the 2020–2021 school year will be September 23, 2020.

Employees' System

- Deductions for Employees' System members occur over 20 pays for 10-month employees and over 26 pays for 12-month employees.
- The last deduction for 10-month members of the Employees' System will be June 17, 2020. Deductions will resume September 23, 2020.

Resignations, Separations & Retirements — Impact on Benefits

Resignations/Other Separations—10-month employees

Unit I ten-month employees paid over 26 pays who notified AACPS (by April 15, 2020) of their intent to resign at the end of the school year may retain healthcare benefits through August 31, 2020 (April 1 for Units III, IV, and V). Others who resign at the end of the school year will be covered with healthcare benefits through the end of the month after submitting their notice.

Voluntary benefits, including 403(b)/457(b) plans, will terminate June 30, 2020, with the final deduction taken June 17, 2020. Dues for 10-month employees paid over 26 pays will be withheld from summer paychecks.

Retirements—10-month employees

Ten-month employees who retire at the end of the school year will be covered with healthcare benefits through June 30, 2020. Retiree coverage, if elected, will commence July 1, 2020. New retirees will prepay for July retiree healthcare via check and will start regular retiree healthcare deductions on their first pension payment.

10-month retirees paid over 26 pays will receive reserve pay over the summer from AACPS. Voluntary benefits, including 403(b)/457(b) plans and FSA deductions, will terminate June 30, 2020, with the final deduction taken June 17, 2020. Dues and savings/credit union deductions for 10-month employees paid over 26 pays will be withheld from summer paychecks.

Resignations and Retirements—12-month employees

All benefits, including healthcare, will terminate at the end of the month that employment ends.

Retiring this fall or at the end of 2020?

Check out our Retirement Information Slide Presentation by logging on to www.aacps.org/retirement or contact HR/Retirement Department at 410-222-5224

Accessing your Supplemental Retirement Plans (403b/457b) After You Resign/Retire

Consult with your personal plan representatives on options available to you concerning your Supplemental Retirement Program. If you wish to initiate a withdrawal, rollover, or take a complete distribution from your plan, you are required to initiate a "Severance of Employment Certificate" through Retirement Manager (online tool at www.aacps.org/SupplementalRetirement). You will need to provide this certificate along with the required plan forms directly to your Supplemental Retirement Plan representative for processing. No AACPS signature is required.

For additional information, you may seek assistance from your plan representatives, contact Retirement Manager Customer Service at 1-866-294-7950, or contact HR/Benefits at 410-222-5206/5221.

BENEFITS cont.

Beneficiaries

It is very important to make sure your beneficiary information for Life Insurance, Maryland State Retirement, and Supplemental Retirement (403b/457b) is always up to date. You should review your beneficiary information at least once a year and if you experience certain life events such as marriage, the birth of a child, or divorce. The beneficiary designation forms for AACPS life insurance and Maryland State Retirement Agency are available online at www.aacps.org/hrforms.

Employees should also add or update beneficiaries by logging on to your Supplemental Retirement vendor website. Go to www.aacps.org/supplementalretirement then click "Evaluate" for links to vendor websites.

The Impact Of Lifestyle Changes On Your Healthcare Benefits

When you experience a lifestyle change, the most important thing to know is you only have 31 days from the date of the event to add or drop a dependent.

The most common types of lifestyle changes are marriage, divorce, and birth, but there are others (you may check the Benefits Guide online for detailed examples). Download a lifestyle change form online at www.aacps.org/hrforms and submit it to HR/Benefits along with the required documentation (e.g., birth certificate, marriage license, divorce decree).

The changes that you make must be consistent with the lifestyle change you have experienced (e.g., adding coverage for the addition of a child). HR/Benefits will process the change as soon as possible and will take retroactive premium adjustments if appropriate.

Important Benefits Information— Divorce

Upon divorce, the divorced spouse is no longer eligible for AACPS employee healthcare benefits. Therefore, immediately upon becoming divorced, the employee **MUST** notify the Benefits Office so coverage can be terminated for the divorced spouse and covered step-children. Subsequently, the employee must submit a Lifestyle Change form and include the divorce documentation.

Failure to notify AACPS immediately of a divorce may result in the employee being held liable for any claims incurred by the divorced spouse.

Divorced spouses are eligible for COBRA.

Healthcare Benefits While On FMLA

If you are out on Family Medical Leave (FMLA) you will continue to be covered under the AACPS group health and life insurance plans. You continue to pay your portion of the premium costs. If you are not receiving a check while out on leave, you may either:

- Allow the owed premiums to accumulate; they will be automatically deducted from the first check you receive after you return to work, or if you are out over the summer, they will be deducted from your summer pay.
- Pay AACPS directly by check during your absence.

If you fail to return to work at the conclusion of your leave, you will be required to reimburse AACPS for the total cost of monthly premiums paid for you.

If you have questions, call HR/Benefits at 410-222-5219.

Submitting FSA Claims

Reminder: The deadline to submit claims for the 2019 plan year is June 30, 2020.

Debit card use for medical expenses will require documentation to substantiate the eligibility of the expense for a FSA. Employees should log on to www.discoverybenefits.com throughout the year to verify if additional documentation is needed. Failure to substantiate the expense may result in the expense being deemed ineligible, the amount being deducted from your pay and future tax impact.

SUPPLEMENTAL RETIREMENT PROGRAM — 403(b) and 457(b)

Take some time over the summer to re-evaluate your Supplemental Retirement Plan or sign up for a new plan. New participants simply enroll online on Retirement Manager. The Retirement Manager link and additional information including provider contact information is available at

www.aacps.org/SupplementalRetirement. If you have additional questions or need assistance, contact HR/Benefits at 410-222-5221/5219 or email your questions to benefits@aacps.org. Check out the SRP Newsletter topics.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR EMPLOYEES AGE 65 AND OVER REGARDING MEDICARE

If you continue to work past your 65th birthday or your spouse turns 65, and you and your spouse are covered under the AACPS employee healthcare program, here is some important information you should know:

- 1) **Medicare Part A (hospitalization):** Enrollment is automatic if you receive Social Security payments. There is no cost for Medicare Part A. If you wish to receive Part A, log on to www.medicare.gov and apply to receive it at age 65. If you receive a Medicare Part A care while covered under AACPS employee healthcare, Medicare Part A would be your supplemental insurance and AACPS is your primary. Therefore, be sure your provider knows not to submit any claims to Medicare first. In most cases, your AACPS insurance will cover all the costs Medicare would have so you may have no use for Part A at this time.
- 2) **Medicare Part B (physician services):** If you and any dependents turn 65, you will defer Part B until you, the employee, are ready to retire. Medicare Part B costs money and you are not able to use both Medicare and your AACPS employee healthcare. However, it is a requirement that you, and any dependent 65 and older, apply for Medicare Part B in retirement in order to keep AACPS retiree benefits. Soon-to-be retirees should seek guidance from the Office of Retirement about Medicare enrollment timeframes as they approach their retirement date (410-222-5224). Active employees or dependent spouses who are offered Part B due to disability should contact Benefits to discuss.

NATIONAL CYBER AWARENESS SYSTEM

Employment Scams

(Original release date: January 22, 2020)

The Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) has issued an alert warning consumers of fake jobs and hiring scams targeting applicants' personally identifiable information (PII). Cyber criminals posing as legitimate employers spoof company websites and post fake job openings to lure victims. Cyber criminals will conduct fake interviews and even offer positions to victims before requesting PII such as Social Security numbers and bank account information.

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) encourages users and administrators to review the IC3 Alert and CISA's Tips on Avoiding Social Engineering and Phishing Attacks and Website Security for more information. If you believe you are a victim of cybercrime, file a complaint with IC3 at www.ic3.gov.

EMPLOYEE SELF-SERVICE

Employees should go to Employee Self Service (ESS) to view their biweekly pay statement, which includes pay details, deductions, leave, benefits, dependents, and other personal information. Employees can also update their address and contact information for ConnectED calls. **Information on ESS is secure and the data is encrypted. Regardless of how you access it, our server controls the security of the data.**

To access the ESS system, go to <https://ess.aacps.org> and enter your network username (entered in lowercase letters) and password. Employees **must** logout of the ESS system when they are done. Employees should keep their password secure and not share it with anyone.

Employees can access User Guides, a Quick Reference Guide, Frequently Asked Questions, and other resources at the Employee Self Service button on the HR Intranet page.

If you have trouble accessing the ESS system, or need your network login and password, please contact the Help Desk at 410-222-5135 or Help-Desk@aacps.org. If you have a question about the information displayed in ESS, please contact HR at 410-222-5061.

CERTIFICATION

Certificate Renewal Timeline

REMINDER: Maryland teaching certificates are issued effective January 1 or July 1 and expire on December 31 or June 30 of the year shown on the certificate. All AACPS educators holding Maryland Professional Educator Certificates **MUST** complete all renewal credit requirements and submit all required documentation to the Human Resources Certification Office no later than the date of the expiration of their certificate. Please verify which credits are applicable to your renewal. For any questions, please contact your Certification Specialist.

A completed Professional Development Plan (PDP) is required for every renewal. The PDP is available on the **Intranet: Human Resources > Certification > Forms & Information**. It is always recommended to follow up via email to ensure the materials were received.

However, as part of the MD Recovery Plan for Education, "all educator certificates that expire during the state of emergency will be extended for 30 days from the date that the state of emergency is declared over." The AACPS Certification office will continue to accept credits and documents needed for renewal until that declared end date. This unique situation will only apply in this circumstance and should not be viewed as a precedent for future renewals.

Current certificates can be accessed on the MSDE website. Directions on how to do so are located at www.aacps.org/hrforms.

Slowly returning to normal testing schedules!

Despite the recent interruption in services related to the pandemic, the Educational Testing Service, www.ets.org, is back to offering tests either online or in Prometric Centers on modified schedules. Updates to schedules and testing options are linked from the ETS homepage under various COVID-19 updates links.

When registering for a test, always verify your current test requirement and the required test score needed by visiting www.mdcert.org under "Testing Information". Test numbers and required test scores are periodically updated so timely submission of your score report is important. Neither ETS nor MSDE automatically provides test scores to AACPS.

Always submit a copy of your qualifying test results to the attention of your AACPS Certification Specialist, preferably by attaching the PDF document to an email. Include a notation in your email referencing your certification, e.g. if adding an endorsement or completing conditional or reading requirements.

It is important that you allow ample time to prepare for and take your test if you are required to do so for continuing your certification. Contact your Certification Specialist with any questions related to your test requirements.

Employees with **last names**—

A–K contact Joyce Matney at 410-224-6268 (jmatney@aacps.org)

L–Z contact Nicki Carpenter at 410-222-5079 (ncarpenter@aacps.org)

Reminder...if you are considering accepting a position which reduces your hours next school year

Part-time employees are subject to part-time healthcare rates if their Full-time Equivalency (FTE) is from 0.46 FTE to 0.749 FTE (Tier 2) or below 0.46 FTE (Tier 3). Contact HR/Benefits at 410-222-5221 for more information. Please see the chart below for clarification of funding levels for each tier.

Status	Full Time Equivalent (FTE)	Benefit Premium Tier	Funding Level
Full Time	1.0 FTE	Tier 1	Full funding for benefits per negotiated agreement
Part Time	0.75 FTE – 0.999 FTE	Tier 1	Full funding for benefits per negotiated agreement
Part Time	0.46 FTE – 0.749 FTE*	Tier 2	84% of Full Time Funding
Part Time	0.1 FTE – 0.459 FTE*	Tier 3	50% of Full Time Funding

* Effective January 1, 2018, employees must meet minimum hours (FTE) to be eligible for AACPS healthcare. See page 3 of the 2020 Employee Benefits Guide.

TUITION REIMBURSEMENT

Reimbursement information, including payment schedule and document due dates, is outlined at www.aacps.org/TuitionReimbursement. Make sure to review your eligibility requirements before you embark on classes or a program of study.

Unit III and Unit IV staff, please remember to seek pre-approval for courses by emailing Teresa 'Tracy' Williams at tlwilliams1@aacps.org before enrolling in courses.

For **Tuition Reimbursement questions**, employees can contact Laurie Hanley at lhlanley@aacps.org or Jaymika Mitchell at jdmitchell@aacps.org.

LAST WORKDAYS FOR 10-MONTH EMPLOYEES • 2019–20 School Year

Unit	Contracted Days Worked	Last Onsite Duty Day	Day of the Week
I	191, 193, 195, 200	Negotiations Ongoing	
III	181	6/18/2020	Thursday
III	187	6/19/2020	Friday
III	200	7/2/2020	Thursday

Unit	Contracted Days Worked	Last Onsite Duty Day	Day of the Week
IV	191	6/25/2020	Thursday
IV	200	7/2/2020	Thursday
V	191	6/25/2020	Thursday
V	200	7/2/2020	Thursday

FMLA & LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Employees who are facing challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic may be eligible for leave under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act ("FFCRA"). For more information visit www.aacps.org/coronavirus.

Employees who are teleworking are reminded to follow customary leave protocols. Employees who are unable to work must use leave. Employees on extended medical leaves must be approved to return to work.

On March 1, 2019, AACPS' FMLA leave procedures changed. For more detailed information, consult the staff memorandum dated December 28, 2018, and the reminder dated February 21, 2019. The most relevant highlights are:

- It is strongly recommended that employees who require FMLA/JPAL leave consult the leave management office 30 days in advance to determine their eligibility.
- All employees who apply for extended unpaid medical leave next fiscal/school year must meet a "service hours" requirement to be eligible. For FMLA, an employee must have worked 1,250 hours in the 12 months prior to taking leave. Employees who cannot meet the requirement because of their FTE may be eligible for JPAL, a new leave type.
- To be eligible for JPAL, employees in Units I, II, III, V, and VI must have worked 87% of their duty hours in the 12 months prior to commencing leave. Unit IV employees must work 1000 hours during the same time period.

LEGAL NAME CHANGE

This form is found at www.aacps.org/hrforms. Submit the completed forms **AND** required documents to HR/Employee Records File Room (ERFR) via fax at 1-443-458-0137 or e-mail at ERFR@aacps.org.

If you are adding any dependents to your insurance or benefits, you must do so within thirty-one (31) days from the date of your lifestyle change.

- After that, you will have to wait and enroll during Benefits Open Enrollment in November of each year.
- The required Lifestyle Change Form must be completed and submitted if there are any changes to your benefits

Employees must submit copies of TWO (2) documents:

1. A legible copy of your signed, NEW Social Security Card reflecting the new name

AND

2. A copy of one (1) of the following official documents:
 - Marriage document
 - Divorce Decree (specifically stating your name change from old name to your new name)
 - Court Order for a name change from old to new name
 - Certificate of Naturalization

ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER CHANGE

Employees can update their address and contact information using the Employee Self Service system <https://ess.aacps.org>. You can provide more than one contact number for ConnectED calls. If you wish to receive texts and phone calls, use the mobile number field. If you wish to receive calls only, use the home number field. An email address can also be provided.

To change your Address and Phone Number

1. On the HOME tab, click Update Address
2. Enter Name, click Next
3. Enter new address
4. Click SUBMIT then CLOSE

If you no longer work for AACPS, you cannot access ESS. In that case, go to www.aacps.org/hrforms and complete the Address/Phone Number Change form and return it to HR/Benefits or fax to 443-458-0669.

Wellness Corner – Emotional Health and Well Being Support

Employee Assistance Program—Help is Here

www.bhsonline.com (username AACPS) or call 800-327-2251. Free short-term confidential counseling by phone or video. Coaching is also available for Tobacco Cessation, Improving Sleep, Healthy Eating, Weight Management, Work Life Balance and more.

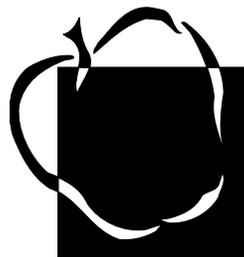
CareFirst Assist

When mental health difficulties arise for you or a loved one, remember you are not alone. Help is available and feeling better is possible. If you or someone close to you needs support or help making an appointment, call the Mental Health/Substance Abuse phone number 1-800-245-7013 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Authorization is required for inpatient admission.

CareFirst Video Visit—The Care You Need, Wherever You Are

www.carefirst.com/aacps to register

Securely connect with a doctor whenever and wherever you want on your smartphone, tablet or computer. It's convenient and easy to use! Video visits are also available for therapy and psychiatry services, diet and nutrition support, and breastfeeding support.



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George Arlotto, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools