

Human Resources

Bulletin

September 2020

Anne Arundel County Public Schools | Division of Human Resources

Welcome Back!

School Year 2020-21

First pay for 10-month employees

The first pay for the 2020–2021 school year for all 10-month employees was September 9, 2020.

Review Paychecks!

Please review your paycheck carefully, including tax filing status (i.e., married/single, state of residence, number of exemptions), leave balance data, and voluntary deductions. Ensure that you have been credited with the correct number of sick and personal business hours.

If you believe your tax, pay, or leave balance is incorrect, please contact the timekeeper at your work location. If you believe your voluntary deductions are incorrect, call HR/Benefits at 410-222-5221.

Benefits Deduction Frequency

Benefits deduction frequency is aligned with the employee's number of pays:

1. All employees paid over 12 months have benefits deductions from all 26 pays (including, for example, 10-month employees paid over the summer).
2. All employees paid over 10 months have benefits deductions from 22 pays. The first benefits deduction date for the 2020–2021 school year was September 9, 2020, and the last deduction date will be June 30, 2021.

Benefits deductions include the following:

- Healthcare
- Union dues
- Supplemental retirement 403(b)/457(b)
- Credit union
- Flexible spending account(s)
- Long-term care (*deducted over 26 pays only – 22 pay employees are direct billed*)
- Savings account
- Supplemental life insurance
- Other voluntary deductions

Exception: Retirement deductions continue at the same frequency of 20 or 26 deductions per the Maryland State Retirement Agency. The first deduction date for employees with 20 pay deductions will be September 23, 2020.



Open Enrollment for 2021 Benefits October 26–November 11, 2020

Open Enrollment will occur online where you can:

- waive current coverage
- change your medical, dental, or vision benefit elections, or update or change dependent coverage.
- enroll in a 2021 Flexible Spending Account (**MUST BE RE-ELECTED EVERY YEAR**).
- complete spousal/surcharge certificate (**MUST BE SUBMITTED EACH YEAR, IF ELIGIBLE, TO RECEIVE EXEMPTION**).

Adding any dependent during Open Enrollment will require proof of relationship to the employee before approval (send to HR/Benefits). While enrolling online, you can upload your documentation to your personal File Cabinet.

The Open Enrollment materials will be on the AACPS website at www.aacps.org/benefitsenrollment. Look for the Open Enrollment Toolkit.

Name & Address Changes

Be sure to take a moment to verify your name and address as they appear on your pay stub in Employee Self Service.

- For **address and phone changes** make the changes directly on ESS or send the Address/Phone Number Change Form to HR/Benefits
- For **name changes**, send Legal Name Change Packet to Employee Records File Room, Human Resources (*also include required documentation*)

The above forms are available at:

www.aacps.org/hrforms, and on the Intranet.

Note: AACPS is required to comply with reporting requirements of the Social Security Administration (SSA). Information on file with AACPS regarding name, address, date of birth, and gender must agree with your record at SSA.

Retirement Contributions and Eligibility

The Maryland State Retirement Agency (MSRA) pension program requires a 7% employee contribution. The first retirement deduction for 12-month employees of the Teachers' Pension System and 10-month employees will be September 23, 2020.

Employees hired on or after July 1, 2011, are enrolled in the Employees' and Teachers' Reformed Contributory Pension Benefit, a new tier of the pension system. Key pension differences are as follows:

	Alternate	Reformed
	Enrolled before July 1, 2011	Enrolled on or after July 1, 2011
Fully Vested	5 years of service	10 years of service
Early Retirement	Age 55 w/15 years of service	Age 60 w/15 years of service
Full Retirement	Age 62 w/5 years Age 63 w/4 years Age 64 w/3 years Age 65 or older w/2years Any age w/30 years	Age 65 w/10 years OR age and service equals 90

Retirement Preparation

Due to the inability to meet in groups during the pandemic closures, we have created two narrated slide presentations (Retirement Information Presentation and Retirement Forms Preparation and Submission) that are located on the AACPS website www.aacps.org/retirement. On our website you will also find links to webinars and the occasional full day virtual seminar hosted by the Maryland State Retirement Agency (MSRA).

In the past, MSRA mailed to your home a Personal Statement of Benefits every September. The State now offers members access to a secure website to obtain your personal statement of benefits as well as an instant estimate of your monthly pension payment. This process, in the past using Form 9, would take six to 16 weeks to obtain the results. The new site allows participants to obtain information and make transactions related to their retirement account.

At MySRPS (My State Retirement Pension System) you can estimate your pension using various retirement dates to compare benefits. It even provides a way to estimate the value of your unused sick days. To learn more about the secure website and to enroll in MySRPS, [click here](#).

If you have moved within the past year, please take a moment to make sure your address is updated in ESS. Maryland State Retirement always sends correspondence to the address they have on file, which is reported electronically by your employer.

If you are ready to retire and have selected a retirement date, watch the slide presentations on our website and then reach out to the AACPS Retirement Office to obtain a set of retirement paperwork. You will work with your Retirement Facilitator to send in your completed forms to AACPS so they may be processed and forwarded to the State on your behalf. Be sure to try and submit your paperwork at least two or three months before your retirement date.

You may contact Retirement by emailing Retirement@aacps.org, or calling 410-222-5224. For those with last names starting A-K, contact Carla Thomas. For those with last names starting L-Z, contact Mia Harper.

Certification Application for Salary Increase

Unit I Employee

In accordance with the negotiated agreement with TAAAC, educators who have completed certification, coursework, or a degree that qualifies him/her for a salary increase may request it using the applicable form found on the **Intranet > Forms > Human Resources > Certification > Forms and Information > Salary Increase/Certificate Change**

Unit II Employee

In accordance with the negotiated agreement with AEL, administrators who have completed a degree that qualifies him/her for a salary increase may request it using the applicable form found on the **Intranet > Forms > Human Resources > Certification > Forms and Information > Salary Increase/Certificate Change**

Unit IV Employee

In accordance with Article 15.5 of the negotiated agreement with SAAAAC, Unit IV employees may be eligible for a salary increase after completion of 30 college credits.

See the request form on the **Intranet > Forms > Human Resources > Compensation > Application for Salary Increase Unit IV**.

All Unit IV employees who earn an additional 30 hours of college credit after July 1, 2013, for a total of 60 hours, will receive one step or 2.5% increase if they are at the maximum step, on the salary schedule.

Educator Tenure

For certificated/licensed employees, tenure is established when an educator completes three consecutive years of successful experience, has been issued a regular contract and a professional certificate, and is reemployed for a fourth year.

If after achieving tenure, an educator fails to maintain his or her professional certificate, tenure is automatically lost. The individual no longer holds a professional certificate or a regular contract, and his or her employment may be terminated. If AACPS elects to retain the educator, then the

educator will be issued a one-year Provisional Contract and must begin earning tenure all over again. Once professional certification is reinstated and a Regular Contract is issued, then satisfactory experience on the Provisional Contract(s) may be applied toward the three years of satisfactory experience required to be granted tenure.

If an educator resigns his or her position and returns at a later date, the educator returns to a non-tenured status.

OPEN ENROLLMENT 2021

(More details will be contained in the October Open Enrollment Guide)

Spouse Surcharge

Employees covering a spouse in the BlueChoice HMO or BlueChoice Triple Option medical plan will have a surcharge added to their biweekly premium. See the 2021 bi-weekly rates below:

UNIT	26 PAY	22 PAY
I, II, V, VI	\$36.92	\$43.65
III, IV	\$32.32	\$38.18

Employees eligible for an exemption from the surcharge due to one of the reasons listed below, must complete a spouse surcharge exemption certification EVERY year.

You may qualify for an exception if:

- Spouse is unemployed, or
- Spouse is an AACPS employee or retiree, or
- Spouse is not offered coverage by their employer, or
- Spouse is self-employed as a sole proprietor, or
- Spouse is enrolled in the PPN plan.

Completion of the certification is how we are informed of your eligibility for an exception. Certifications submitted late will not result in refund of any surcharge deducted prior to receipt.

Eligibility for Healthcare

Employees must work a certain minimum number of hours or FTE (full-time equivalent) in order to be eligible for healthcare:

UNIT	MINIMUM REQUIRED
I	0.5 FTE
II	0.5 FTE
III	4 hours/day (i.e. 20 hours/week)
IV	15 hours/week
V	0.5 FTE
VI	0.5 FTE

Employees with a hire date of November 30, 2017, or before, are grandfathered and eligible for healthcare, with premiums determined by the current tier structure:

TIER	FTE
1	0.75–1.0
2	0.46–0.749
3	0.1–0.459

Beneficiary Information

Group Term Life Insurance, Maryland State Retirement, and Supplemental Retirement

All permanent employees are provided with Group Term Life Insurance and should have completed and signed a "MetLife Beneficiary Designation Form" in their benefits file maintained in Human Resources. If you are not sure if you completed this form, or wish to update it, complete a new form at any time and send it to Human Resources/Benefits. This form is available on the AACPS website at www.aacps.org/hrforms.

If you wish to also update your Maryland State Retirement beneficiaries, call the Human Resources Retirement Office at 410-222-5224, or go to www.aacps.org/hrforms, which must be accurately completed, notarized, and returned directly to the MSRA.

You should take similar actions with any Supplemental Retirement Plan vendors if you have an account.

Any time you have a lifestyle change, you should consider updating your beneficiaries accordingly.

Supplemental Retirement Plans – National Save for Retirement Week is October 18–24, 2020.

In addition to your health and wellness benefits, AACPS offers employees a Supplemental Retirement Plan (SRP) which provides 403(b) and 457(b) savings options. This program allows you to save for retirement on a tax-deferred basis. AACPS' program includes three investment providers: AIG Retirement Service, Lincoln, and Voya. There is more information about planning for retirement, evaluating the investment providers, and how to contact an investment provider representative on the internet at www.aacps.org/supplementalretirement.

Enrollment in, or a change to a deferral in an SRP is made on-line, through Retirement Manager. The system guides you through the enrollment process. Access this site on the internet at www.aacps.org/supplementalretirement or go directly to www.myretirementmanager.com. It is recommended you consult with our investment providers to establish your account and investments. You may contact HR/Benefits at 410-222-5221/5206 for further information.

All certificate holders with the endorsement of Guidance Counselor or School Counselor

To maintain Maryland professional certification, all certificate holders with the endorsement of Guidance Counselor or School Counselor are required to comply with 'Lauryn's Law'. Lauryn's Law requires specialized training in intervention or referral in response to students showing indicators of mental illness and behavioral distress, and the identification of professional resources and best practices for distributing resources to parents or guardians to help

students in crisis.

Please contact the Student Services Office for information about regulation and training opportunities.

Grades PreK–8 Shirley Jackson-Avery, 410-222-5280
sjackson-avery@aacps.org

Grades 9–12 Susan Love, 410-222-5280, slove@aacps.org

Certification Q&As:

When does this requirement become effective?

All certificate holders with the endorsements of Guidance Counselor or School Counselor will eventually fall under the regulation. The first group are those with certificates issued or renewed on or after January 1, 2017.

My current guidance certificate was issued prior to January 1, 2017. Am I required to comply with Lauryn's Law now in order to renew my current certificate?

No. You will fall under the regulation with the first renewal cycle after January 1, 2017.

I hold a Standard Professional Certificate in guidance. I only need 3 years of satisfactory experience to qualify for the Advanced Professional Certificate (APC). When I finish my third year, do I need to comply with Lauryn's Law to move to the APC?

If your SPC was issued prior to 1/1/2017, you do not need the Lauryn's Law credit to move to the APC. If your SPC was issued on 1/1/2017 or thereafter, then you do need the Lauryn's Law credit to move to the APC.

I am designated a senior teacher under the the Senior Teacher Exemption. Do I need to comply with Lauryn's Law to renew my APC under the Senior Teacher Exemption?

Yes, you must complete a Lauryn's Law credit even if you plan to renew your APC under the Senior Teacher Exemption. The regulation governing Lauryn's Law is not covered by the Senior Exemption.

My certificate includes School Counselor but I do not work as a school guidance counselor. Am I required to comply with Lauryn's Law?

If you wish to maintain your School Counselor endorsement, then you must comply with Lauryn's Law. If you do not, you will lose the endorsement.

Once I complete the training will I be covered for life?

No. To maintain the endorsement you will need to comply with Lauryn's Law each renewal cycle.

Reminder to all clinical service providers

New federal provider enrollment requirements affecting school districts became effective September 3, 2019. From that date, all Maryland Medicaid claims for IEP and IFSP services ordered by a licensed practitioner must include the National Provider Identifier (NPI) of the ordering provider. Also, the ordering provider must be actively enrolled in Maryland Medicaid under the NPI listed on the claim.

Positions impacted are:

- Licensed Certified Social Workers - Clinical
- Physical Therapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Speech Language Pathologists

Questions can be directed to Linda Sponsler, Manager of Third Party Billing, 410-222-5387 or lsponsler@aacps.org

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. There are no exceptions or extensions. Send materials to the HR Certification Office. 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 on time.

Current certificates can be accessed at any time on the MSDE website. Directions on how to do so are located at www.aacps.org/hrforms > **MD Teaching Certification > Directions for Accessing your Maryland Certificate on-line with MSDE.** All certification notifications are now sent to staff via email in lieu of hard copy, basket, or postal mail.

Tuition Reimbursement

Before you sign up for your course, visit the tuition reimbursement page of the website at www.aacps.org/Page/1672.

All reimbursement documentation must be received by Human Resources no later than the close of business on September 15, 2020, to receive reimbursement on October 7, 2020. All requests must be submitted as a complete packet which includes the request form; the original official transcript; and the account summary for the course (check the website for more specific instructions). Incomplete paperwork will not be accepted.

For reimbursement questions, please contact:

A-K: Jamika Mitchell (jdmitchell@aacps.org/410-222-5077)

L-Z: Laurie Hanley (lhhanley@aacps.org/410-222-5078).

Have you taken a Praxis test lately?

Current Praxis test requirements can be found at www.mdcert.org. Under *Testing Information*, click "Basic Skills", "Praxis Subject Assessments" or "ACTFL". AACPS does not automatically receive test scores from ETS or MSDE.

Always submit a copy of your qualifying test results to the attention of your AACPS Certification Specialist. Failure to provide your score report to the Certification Specialist on a timely basis may result in disqualification of your test score. Send the score report as an attachment to an email along with the "Application for Salary Increase/Certificate Change". This form can be found on the Intranet > **Human Resources > Certification > Forms & Information.** There is an option to Add an Endorsement.

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).

New Hire Paperwork

(All Employees including Temps/Subs)

All required documents for new hires must be submitted to HR within 30 days of the first day of work. Transcripts and verifications of previous employment have a direct impact on your salary. If you have questions about your new employee file, or wish to submit official paperwork, please contact the following technician based on your last name:

A-C Lesley Bright, 410-224-9240, labright@aacps.org

D-G Alison Cole, 410-266-3658, acole@aacps.org

H-L Amanda Stelmazczyk, 410-224-6215
astelmazczyk@aacps.org

M-R Ki'Sha Jones, 410-222-6242, kdjones1@aacps.org

S-Z Angie Robertson, 410-224-6211, arobertson1@aacps.org

Substitute Office

The SmartFind Express (SFE) System* can be accessed via the web, the mobile app, and phone system. See below for system access details:

Web:

<https://aacps.eschoolsolutions.com>

Access ID — Employee ID
(without leading zeros)

Password — user created

Mobile App:

SmartFind Express
Mobile

must be downloaded from the app store on the user's device

Access ID — Employee ID
(without leading zeros)

Password — user created



Phone:

410-846-0399

Access ID — Employee ID
(without leading zeros)

PIN — user created (Pin must initially be created over during the system registration, and afterwards can be changed at any time by the user)

*Please note: Smartfind Express is often referred to as SEMS or the substitute and employee management system.

Dependent Documentation

New employees—remember that dependent documentation (such as copy of your child’s birth certificate, or your marriage certificate and one secondary document supporting the marriage) is required within 31 days of your date of hire to cover your dependents on AACPS benefits. Documents can be uploaded into our “file cabinet” in the employee benefits portal (Benelogic), or sent to HR/Benefits via fax to 443-458-0669.

Eligible dependents can also be added during Open Enrollment each year (for January 1 of the following year) or within 31 days of a lifestyle change (e.g., marriage, birth, divorce). Appropriate documentation is always required to add a dependent. **Failure to provide dependent documentation within 31 days of enrollment will result in termination of dependent coverage.**

Lifestyle Change Forms

When completing a lifestyle change form, please be sure to indicate what plans the dependent(s) is being added to by checking the appropriate boxes for each plan type (medical, dental, vision). If no boxes are checked the dependent will be added to the plans in which the employee is currently enrolled.

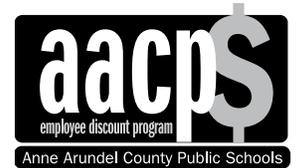
Note: In the case of divorce, the Benefits Office must be notified immediately as a divorced spouse is not eligible to be covered by AACPS benefits. Documentation of the divorce should be submitted to the Benefits Office immediately upon receipt.

Flexible Spending Accounts

Often, your healthcare flexible spending account claims are for co-pays recognized by our administrator, Discovery Benefits. However, this is not always the case. Remember to respond to requests for amounts not properly substantiated. Unsubstantiated expenses can become included in your W-2 as taxable income and your debit card could be suspended.

The Employee Discount Program

The Employee Discount Program connects AACPS employees with special discounts and offers from local businesses. Available to all AACPS employees, these discounts are usually greater than those offered to the general public. The Employee Discount Program includes partnerships with a wide range of services including retail, finance, fitness, travel, technology, and more.



For information about this program, check out our AACPS Employee Discount website at: www.aacps.org/employeediscount.

AACPS assumes no responsibility for any arrangements, contracts, purchases, or disputes between individual employees and the discount vendor. All arrangements are strictly between the employees, as a consumer, and the vendor.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

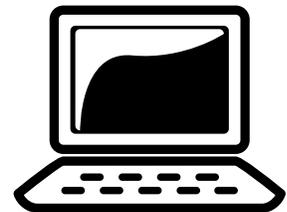
Remember to take advantage of your free, confidential Employee Assistance Program through **BHS**. They can help you and your household members with short-term counseling for personal or work-related issues. The EAP also provides support for financial and legal concerns and assistance finding child care or elder care. Video counseling is also available.

Call 800-327-2251 any time. Look for the “BHS Focus” Newsletter in your email inbox once a month, courtesy of BHS. Access the EAP portal on the **Intranet > Benefits > Employee Assistance Program > MyBHS portal** (user name aacps).

Unified Talent: Learn, Grow, Succeed

All professional development provided in AACPS will continue to be aligned with system priorities and indicated in course descriptions on the Unified Talent: Learn, Grow, Succeed platform. All historical course and transcript information can be found in Unified Talent LGS. Questions? Contact Jen Westcott, Accountability Specialist, at jwestcott@aacps.org or Dan Sheckells, PGD Teacher Specialist, at dsheckells@aacps.org.

You can access Unified Talent LGS via Classlink or through the **Intranet > Unified Talent Learn. Grow. Succeed.** (under Applications).





What Every Employee Must Know

The Employee Handbook and the brochure entitled “What Every Employee Must Know” are online and can be accessed at

www.aacps.org/employeehandbook. The brochure outlines the complete list of charges, arrests, or convictions that **must be reported by any employee, regardless of status, within 24 hours** in accordance with the Self-Reporting Charge/Arrest/Conviction Administrative Regulation (GANN-RA) available at www.aacps.org/boardpolicies.

Staff can call within 24 hours of a charge, arrest, or conviction to 410-222-5286 (day) or 410-222-5998 (after hours) or email: employeeselfreporting@aacps.org.

All staff must acquaint themselves with Policies and Regulations associated with their position and job requirements. In particular, employees should familiarize themselves with the following Board Policies and Regulations.

More detailed information can be obtained by viewing these policies and regulations online at: www.aacps.org/boardpolicies.

TOPIC	POLICY	REGULATION
Reporting Child Abuse/Neglect	JEF	JEF-RA
Employee Complaints and Grievances	GAHH	GAHH-RA
Dating Between Employees and Students	GBV	GBV-RA
Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment – Personnel	GAGG	GAGG-RA
Self-Reporting Charge/Arrest/Conviction	GANN	GANN-RA
Drug- Alcohol-, and Tobacco-Free Work Environments	GAC	GAC-RA
Technology Use and Security	DI	DI-RA
Employee Use of Social Media	GAOO	GAOO-RA
Vendor Relations	DEC	DEC-RA

Nepotism

Policy and Regulation GAF and GAF-RA require staff to report if they are related to/have family members that work in Anne Arundel County Public Schools on the form below. If you have already reported this information you do not have to fill out a new form. If your spouse, parent, child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandparent-in-law, grandchild-in-law, uncle-in-law, niece-in-law, nephew-in-law, and all step relationships of those listed work in Anne Arundel County Public Schools and you have not reported that information please use for form below to report such relationship(s) by going to: www.aacps.org/hrforms > **Nepotism Form**.

Online Job Descriptions

All active job descriptions (except Unit IV) are available online in the Job Description Library (JDL). The JDL is located on the Intranet: **Human Resources > Online Job Description Library**.

The JDL is designed to:

- Allow employees to search and view active job descriptions online.
- Allow managers to search, view, edit, and submit changes for existing job descriptions.
- Allow managers to create new job descriptions.
- Allow HR to track and store historical job descriptions.

The JDL contains the following Help Documents:

- Job Aids (How-To Guides: view, edit, or create)
- Job Description Templates (blank, teacher, assistants, specialist, manager)
- Job Level Guidelines (administrative, paraprofessional, professional, management)

Employee Self-Service

Employee Self-Service (ESS) allows employees to view their paystub, pay details, deductions, leave, benefits, dependents, and other personal information.

You can update your address and contact information for ConnectED calls, provide HR with your emergency contact, and change your direct deposit information.

To access the ESS system, go to <https://ess.aacps.org> and enter your network user name (in lower case letters) and password. You **must** log out of the ESS system when you are done. You should keep your password secure and not share

it with anyone. Employees can access ESS User Guides and other resources on the Applications Help page.

Information on ESS is secure and the data is encrypted. Regardless of how you access it, our server controls the security of the data. If you have trouble accessing the ESS system, or need your network login and password, contact the Help Desk at 410-222-5135 or Help-Desk@aacps.org. If you have a question about the information displayed in ESS, contact HR at 410-222-5061.



SafeSchools Training

Please be sure to complete your annual SafeSchools trainings. You may access your account using your AACPS username at <https://aacps-md.safeschools.com/login> or via the link in the weekly reminder email. If you have had a recent name change please forward your previous and current username to Matt Scofield at mscofield@aacps.org.



Wellness Corner

Did you know coaching is available through BHS (the Employee Assistance Program)? The EAP offers coaching in weight management, healthy eating, improving sleep, career development, work life balance and more. If you are looking for a coach, call BHS at 800-327-2251 or email coach@bhsonline.com.

Virtual Yoga is available at no cost every Thursday (except holidays) from 4:30–5:30 p.m. via WebEx. Contact the Benefits office at benefits@aacps.org for the meeting information and access code.

Look for the Wellness Wednesday email every payday. It includes topics and information focused on emotional, physical, and financial well-being.

Stay Healthy and Well



Anne Arundel County Public Schools
Division of Human Resources

George Arlotto, Ed.D., *Superintendent of Schools*

Anne Arundel County Public Schools prohibits discrimination in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, or disability. For more information, contact: Anne Arundel County Public Schools, Division of Human Resources, 2644 Riva Road, Annapolis, MD 21401; 410-222-5286 TDD 410-222-5000. www.aacps.org