The purpose of HR Intercom is to reinforce the partnership of the Office of Human Resources with all University departments by keeping the University community informed of HR policies, programs, issues, and points of interest.

News

Preparing for Severe Weather
Generally, the University will remain in operations and continue regular services regardless of adverse weather. In rare instances, services can be curtailed only with the approval of senior leadership (President, Provost, SR VP for Administration and Finance or Sr. VP for Health Affairs).

Under Policy 115, all URMC employees are considered essential and should expect to report to work. Employees in other divisions should discuss with their managers their essential/non-essential category and if they are expected to report to work if services are curtailed.

Supervisors may use the EXC code for hourly paid employees who are being excused because of a University or division-wide curtailment. Those who are released to go home when there is NOT an official curtailment or who are unable to report to work, have the flexibility to make up the time within the workweek or use vacation or PTO (if appropriate).

Questions about Policy 115 should be directed to your HR Business Partner.

Holiday Decoration Guidelines
The Fire Marshal's Office reminds us all that holiday decorations must adhere to certain guidelines during the upcoming holiday season. Please use the guides below to see regulations in your work area:
- Medical Center-Patient Care Area Holiday and Seasonal Decorations Display Guidelines
- River Campus and Off-Site Housing Guidelines for Holiday Decorations
- Eastman School of Music Guidelines for Holiday Decorations
- Memorial Art Gallery Guidelines for Holiday Decorations

Open Enrollment Closes November 22
Open Enrollment for 2020 benefits will close this Friday, November 22. This is the only time, outside of qualifying events to make changes to your benefits and below are some helpful tools as we approach the final two days:

- Review your 2020 benefit options by using the Open Enrollment website.
- Take notice of which benefits continue with no action and which benefits require action
- Read the new FSA rollover eligibility rules.
- Use the ALEX tool to help with your benefits decisions.
- Enroll in your 2020 benefits! Use the helpful links on your HRMS homepage to make your elections.

Manager’s Tip

Early Payroll Deadlines
Because of the University’s observance of the Thanksgiving holiday on November 28–29, the pay date for biweekly hourly-paid and salaried employees will be Wednesday, November 27. The change affects payroll processing submission deadlines. Monthly and semimonthly payroll must have all time entered and approved by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, November 19. For biweekly hourly payroll for the pay period ending November 23, all time must be entered and approved by 10 a.m. on Monday, November 25. If your department is in need of additional timekeepers due to vacation, there are upcoming training sessions available. Registration is available in MyPath.

Learning & Development

Annual Performance Evaluations
With the New Year approaching, managers and staff at the Medical Center are beginning to prepare for
annual performance evaluations. Medical Center staff and leadership can anticipate the launch of performance evaluations in early January with a due date of mid-April. This timeline is consistent with that of 2019. Non-Medical Center staff evaluations are anticipated to launch in March.

Resources are available for managers to assist them in navigating the performance review and performance management processes. Start preparing now - classes to support leaders in this process include:

Conducting the Performance Review (Instructor-Led or NOW AVAILABLE Online!)

This class will explore the phase of the performance management cycle involving the writing and delivery of the employee performance review. Overviews of the performance review components, rating scales, properly written comments, and common performance review pitfalls will be provided. This class is presented by members of the HR Business Partner team. (Please note this is a recurring class that has been offered throughout 2019; it is not necessary to attend, but welcome, if you have already participated a prior class- or considering using the online module as a refresher)

Creating and Managing Performance Goals (NEW!)

Effectively written performance goals can engage staff, foster collaboration, and improve outcomes. Performance goals that are aligned with the organizational strategy will keep your team working toward our common goals. Managers should ensure that their individual goals – as well as those of their direct reports- are in line with the overarching strategy. This session will review the key concepts behind writing SMART, aligned performance goals and keeping the focus throughout the year. Led by leaders in Learning & Development.

To assist you with goal setting and career development conversations:

Developing Your Direct Reports

Developing Your Direct Reports is an online course in which participants will learn "development coaching". So what's the difference between performance management and development coaching? Performance management is focused on eliminating the weaknesses of the past and present. Development coaching, on the other hand, targets employee strengths as the basis for future performance and the achievement of long-term goals. And the other major difference? It requires the direct and regular involvement of the manager.

Coaching for Development

In this online course, an excellent companion module to “Developing Your Direct Reports,” participants will learn the key elements of building a successful coaching relationship and how to best implement them using a step-by-step coaching process. Effective strategies for overcoming common coaching challenges are also provided. In addition, participants will learn how to help employees implement a development plan to improve their success.

Coming Soon: Annual Mandatory In-Service Education Program for 2020

The Mandatory In-Service Education Program will be assigned to Medical Center learners in early 2020 with a due date of June 30, 2020. Content and questions have been thoroughly reviewed and updated for relevancy. As in previous years, learners familiar with the content will be able to move directly to the quiz questions. Twenty-four topics have been condensed down to eight to improve the learner experience and reduce the number of clicks required to progress through the training.

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

University Employee Resource Groups

University Employee Resource Groups (UERGs) are representative of all University faculty and staff. UERGs are consistently growing and enhancing their focus to meet the business needs of the organization. There are currently six UERGs; Emerging Leaders, The LatinX Professional Alliance, Pride Alliance, Sankofa, Minority Professional Women in Business, and Veterans Alliance. If you are interested in starting a University Employee Resource Group, please contact Janice M. Holland.

Upcoming University Employee Resource Group events:

LatinX Professional Alliance will host a Meet & Greet Luncheon with Dr. Mercedes Ramírez Fernández on December 9 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in LeChase Assembly Hall (near Flaum Atrium) in the School of Medicine and Dentistry. The LatinX Professional Alliance changed the group name from the Latino Professional Alliance in September 2019 to create a more inclusive group. Latinx is a gender-neutral term that references people of Latin American descent.

The Sankofa University Employee Resource Group presents a “Round Robin,” Thursday, December 5 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The Round Robin is a speed networking opportunity for University folks and community members to introduce themselves, their purpose of attendance, and share their business cards, brochures, resources, and entrepreneurial businesses. The Round Robin is presented in the spirit of One Community with many talents. This is a great way for University members and community members to connect on a social, business, and personal level. Registration is required by contacting Terrell Robinson.
**Health Tip:**
**Stressed Out? Get Out.**

Our environment can play a big role in our stress level, effecting our overall wellbeing. Have you heard about the role of nature in stress relief? It’s all the rage right now, but the ideas and practice are ancient. Here are just a few of the ways nature can help us out:

*Healing.*
Physical changes occur when we spend time in nature: blood pressure, heart rate, muscle tension, and cortisol (stress hormone) production actually decrease. Researchers are finding more time in the forest may even boost immunity and reduce mortality.

*Soothing.*
Trees, plants, water and other natural elements are both enthralling and relaxing, distracting us from pain and discomfort and causing our tense muscles to sigh with relief.

*Restoration.*
Research shows mood shifts from depressed, stressed and anxious to more calm and balanced after spending time outside. Time in nature may even improve attention span and refresh our overactive minds to take on new tasks.

*Connections.*
From trees planted outside our homes to green space around buildings, nature brings us together. Studies show increased green space correlates with reduced street crime, violence and aggression. What's even wilder, viewing nature scenes in a study caused the empathy and love centers in participants brains to light up.

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Get outside in Rochester!

- Lamberton Conservatory - a warm, natural oasis on even the coldest days.
- Genesee Valley Park - a hop skip and jump from the main UR campus, complete with trees, fields, picnic tables and waterfront.
- Mendon Ponds Nature Center - Fairy houses, troll holes, and tree bridges, take your little ones with you to explore the Birdsong Fairy Trail.
- Monroe County Parks - our area is full of parks! Check out the [Monroe County website](http://www.monroecounty.gov) for a full list of parks and trails and start exploring.

Interested in exploring ways to improve your wellbeing? Partner with a wellness coach with the [condition management coaching program](http://well-u.rochester.edu) to learn how to move, eat, sleep and manage your way to better health. Condition management wellness coaching is available to eligible individuals as part of [Well-U](http://well-u.rochester.edu).

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**Contacting HR Intercom:**

HR Intercom is distributed through @Rochester and URMC This Week on a ten-month basis: January through July and September through November. If you have comments or questions about HR Intercom, please contact: Samantha.burkett@rochester.edu