

The *Human Factor* July 2005

City of Waco Human Resources Quarterly Publication

July

New Hire Orientation July 11
 Respectful Workplace..... July 12
 Pipes is Pipes..... July 13
 Identity Theft..... July 14

Contact Karen Clark to register.

August

New Hire Orientation..... August 1
 August 16
 Respectful Workplace..... August 9
 August 18
 Individual Preparedness..... August 17

Contact Karen Clark to register.

September

Labor Day Holiday September 5
 New Hire Orientation..... September 12
 September 20
 Respectful Workplace.... September 13
 September 22
 Wellness Strategies..... September 21

Contact Karen Clark to register.

Coming Attractions

Benefits Open EnrollmentOctober 25,26,27
 Employee Recognition
 Nominations Due.....October 15
 Look For:
 Progress Review Training
 Investigating Complaints Training
 AED Training
 Thanksgiving HolidaysNovember 24 & 25
 Christmas Holiday.....December 26

Director's Comments

On behalf of the HR staff, I would like to extend a special thanks to employees who provided feedback on the HR customer satisfaction survey distributed earlier this year. We received a 53% return rate which is practically unheard of in the survey world. A group of Baylor MBA students, along with several faculty members, analyzed the data for us and provided a summary of their findings. One of the recommendations that came from the analysis was to create an information piece for on-going communication with employees. Through this document, we are introducing the Human Factor quarterly flyer.

Our intent is to implement as many of the suggestions from the survey as possible. Below are the top 5 recommendations:

- Designate a privacy room in HR to discuss issues
- Develop a sign-in document for employees visiting the HR department so they can privately share their issues
- Develop a supervisor frequently asked questions list
- Enhance communication of HR issues
- Provide educational seminars related to benefits and supervision

We look forward to bringing you important information through this quarterly flyer. If we can be of assistance, please contact the HR Department.

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Contact HR with suggestions for future issues.

Instructors Wanted: If you have expertise in a particular subject or technical area and would like to share that knowledge with others, please call Karen Clark, Training Administrator at 750-5679. Areas of need include, but are not limited to: Customer Service, Excel, Access, Word, and HTE applications.

Benefits

Qualifying Events

Generally speaking, in order for an employee to make benefit plan election changes, an employee, their spouse or one of their dependents must experience a change in status (also known as a qualifying event). When a change in status occurs, employees have 31 days from the day of the event to contact Human Resources and make a benefit plan change. Below are some examples of events that qualify as changes in status.

- A legal change in marital status (to include legal separation), or a change in the number of dependents - via a birth, adoption or death.
- When an employee, their spouse or dependent experiences a change in employment status, or a substantial change in their work schedule.
- A change that makes a dependent newly qualified or newly disqualified from a benefit plan, such as becoming a full time student or quitting school.
- Changes in residence or work location of a dependent, employee or spouse.

Employee Recognition Program

The City's Employee Recognition Program is designed to recognize employees who have made significant contributions and who have gone above and beyond their assigned job duties. Two award categories exist: teamwork and customer service. The deadline for submitting nominations is October 15, 2005. Other key points include:

- Written nominations should be submitted to HR.
- Nomination forms are found on the S: drive or on the "forms" section on the Employee Intranet.
- Nomination period is from 10/01/04 - 9/30/05.
- Nominations must have specific, detailed descriptions of the activity or accomplishment recognized and should not merely include broad statements related to the employee's normal job duties.
- Two categories of winners exist for departments with less than 75 employees and those with 75+ employees.
- Selection committee reviews and submits nominations to the City Manager. The annual awards ceremony is in December.



Risk Management

- Automated External Defibrillators (AED) are here! There are 18 AED's and you will soon see them placed in City Facilities. Keep a look-out for notices of training on these life-saving devices.

- Great progress is being made on the Departmental Incident Prevention Plans. Thanks to Mr. Groth and department directors and safety coordinators, for moving forward with plans and procedures that will make work environments safe for City employees.

- So far, this year, the number of employee-on-the-job injuries are significantly lower than years past. However, summer and fall months can be dangerous. Remember to use personal protective equipment, watch out for poison ivy, and take proper precautions for working outdoors. Also, extra precautions should be taken while driving. School is out and there are more drivers on the roads during all hours.

EEO - Tips for Effective E-Mail Communications

- Do not type and send a response when angry.
- Be careful with humor - others cannot see you wink or hear your tone of voice over email.
- Avoid the use of typing a message in all capital letters, which may be perceived as SHOUTING.
- Avoid communicating through e-mail on a sensitive subject that should be addressed in person. Communicate confidential information in a form other than e-mail.
- Keep all messages as brief as possible to minimize reading time for recipients and be as complete as possible by using the simple rules of who, what, when, where and why to answer any anticipated questions.
- Check for accuracy (good business writing, correct grammar, spelling and punctuation).
- Make your communications positive, constructive, and factual.

