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DEPT. OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES



Jim Pillen, Governor

MEMORANDUM

May 3, 2023

TO: All Code and Non-Code Agency Heads and Personnel Contacts

FROM: Kevin Workman
State Personnel Director, Department of Administrative Services

Kevin Workman

SUBJECT: Rules Teammates: Mentorship Leave and TRICARE Insurance Incentive

NOTICE

This guidance document is advisory in nature but is binding on the Nebraska Department of Administrative Services until amended. A guidance document does not include internal procedural documents that only affect the internal operations of the Department of Administrative Services and does not impose additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties or include confidential information or rules and regulations made in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act. If you believe that this guidance document imposes additional requirements or penalties on regulated parties, you may request a review of the document. See Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-901.03

As a result of the collective bargaining agreement reached recently with the four labor unions, there have been additions made to the labor contracts for a new type of mentorship leave and an insurance incentive for military veterans. Neb. Rev. Stat. § 81-1317 grants the State Personnel Director authority to establish programs and otherwise adjust terms and conditions of employment for teammates not covered by collective bargaining agreements, in order to make such terms and conditions of employment more consistent with those of such covered teammates or otherwise address changes arising out of collective bargaining.

Through this statute, I am exercising my authority to implement the following change for teammates covered by the Classified System Personnel Rules and Regulations:

Mentorship Leave

Effective May 8, 2023, up to one hour per week of paid leave may be granted to employees upon request for participation in the State of Nebraska Youth Mentoring Program. All provisions of Mentorship Leave are to be in accordance with the State of Nebraska Youth Mentoring Program. Mentorship Leave is not considered as work time for the purposes of calculating overtime.

In order to be eligible for Mentorship Leave, employees must meet the following requirements:

- a) The employee's current performance review is satisfactory and the employee is not currently on a performance improvement plan;
- b) The mentoring program is on the list of approved youth mentoring programs maintained by Mentor Nebraska;
- c) The employee follows agency guidelines in submitting Mentorship Leave requests;
- d) The employee meets all background checks and additional requirements of the mentoring program;
- e) The employee signs the "Accident Waiver and Release of Liability" form

Employees must provide their supervisor with proof (email, confirmation letter, etc.) that they meet all background checks and additional requirements of the mentoring program they choose or any other documentation requested by their supervisor in relation to Mentorship Leave. Each agency is responsible for verifying the youth mentoring program that the teammate is volunteering for is on the approved mentoring list maintained by and available on the website of Mentor Nebraska.

An agency may deny a request or withdraw approval for Mentorship Leave if the employee's absence is not in the best interest of the State, interferes with agency operations and/or services, or the employee does not meet the eligibility requirements. In addition, employees must obtain the prior approval of their supervisor related to the time and date of the week that Mentorship Leave is to be utilized.

Employees must follow the State of Nebraska's Acceptable Use Policy. Employees are allowed to review the mentoring options on the database using a state computer, however, must do it on lunch or breaks. Any additional use of State Equipment must be in alignment with the State's and his/her agency's acceptable use policy.

All participation in volunteer mentoring activities is done on the employee's personal time and should not be considered work time. The "Accident Waiver and Release of Liability Form" must be signed prior to participating in volunteer mentoring activities.

TRICARE Insurance Incentive

Effective July 1, 2023, retired military service members who are eligible for TRICARE and are currently employed by the State of Nebraska may elect to receive their health insurance coverage through TRICARE and forego participation in a group insurance plan offered by the Employer. Individuals who do so will receive a flat, monthly stipend paid by the Employer.

For those with individual plans the flat, monthly stipend would be in the amount of five-hundred dollars (\$500.00). For those with family plans the flat, monthly stipend would be in the amount of one-thousand dollars (\$1,000.00). It is the bargaining unit member's responsibility to submit supporting documentation to show eligibility for the payment.