



ALMA COLLEGE

Announcement – May 2018

As the college looks for strategies to improve effectiveness and cost control, we have been reviewing our employment practices to identify initiatives that would support those goals. The Policy on Voluntary Reduction in Work Schedule outlined below will not only help to balance the budget, it will also provide a more family-friendly work environment for our employees.

Policy on Voluntary Reduction in Work Schedule

The college often receives requests from employees to reduce their work schedule to meet personal goals or family needs. Examples include, but are not limited to, additional weeks off during the summer to spend more time with their families or a reduced weekly work schedule to accommodate course work toward an advanced degree.

The Voluntary Reduction in Work Schedule (VRWS) program will permit regular non-instructional employees, exempt or non-exempt, to submit a request for a reduced work schedule. Reductions may be requested for a specific period of time (such as between 4-12 weeks during the summer) or as a reduced workweek throughout the year (i.e. reducing one full work day each week or reducing hours for each work day). A minimum reduction of 4 hours/week or 4 weeks/year is required to participate in this program.

This policy will also address one-time requests for unpaid personal leave.

How do I apply?

Interested staff should complete the VRWS application. This must be signed by the employee and approved by the immediate supervisor and the appropriate President's Cabinet executive. Approval of participation in the program will be based upon each department's workload and schedule throughout the year.

Not all positions are suitable for a reduced work schedule. In addition, there are a limited number of reduced schedules that can be accommodated within a given department. Therefore, some requests will be denied to ensure that the department has adequate staffing to fulfill the job duties and accommodate vacation schedules. (Supervisors cannot approve overtime pay for nonexempt staff to compensate for a co-worker's reduced work hours.)

The decision regarding availability and continuation of a reduced work schedule rests with the senior staff member in that sector. Also, after a reduced schedule has been approved, the college reserves the right to deny an employee's subsequent request to increase their hours to return to the previous FTE as well as to rescind approval of an employee's participation in the VRWS program if college or departmental needs change.

How will a reduction in work schedule affect my compensation?

Salary or wages – Compensation will be reduced on a pro-rated basis as determined by the new full time equivalency (FTE).

- For example, a full-time salaried employee (1 FTE) earning \$40,000/year who is approved for a reduction of 4 weeks during the summer, will now earn \$36,920/year (4 weeks/52 weeks = 7.7% reduction in pay). The new FTE will be .923.
- An hourly employee who had previously worked 40 hours per week at \$14.00 per hour, earning approximately \$29,120 over the course of the year, who requested a reduction to 35 hours per week would now earn approximately \$25,480 for the year. The new FTE will be .875.

Pay Schedule – Exempt salaried employees who are approved for a schedule of less than 12 months will still be paid over a 12-month period. Consistent with the Fair Labor Standards Act, non-exempt hourly employees who work less than 12 months will be paid on the next regular pay date following any pay periods during which they worked; compensation cannot be spread over twelve months.

Health, Dental and Vision Employee Contributions – As long as the reduction in hours does not reduce the employee FTE to less than .75, the employee will remain eligible for health, dental or vision insurance and there will be no change in the employee's contribution to those coverages.

Other benefits will be pro-rated consistent with the new FTE and minimums required by existing Alma College policy.

One-Time Request for Unpaid Leave

Employees may also request a one-time unpaid leave of up to 4 weeks without impacting their existing benefits. Employees must request leave in full weekly increments. The approval process for this leave will be the same as that for the Voluntary Reduction in Work Schedule.

Approval Process

The employee will complete the VRWS application and submit it to the immediate supervisor. The supervisor will review the plan, make a recommendation for approval or disapproval. The application will be sent to the senior staff member (President's Cabinet member) for that sector for final approval or denial. If the request to participate in the Voluntary Reduction Program is denied, a written statement of the reason for denial will be included on the application, provided by the individual who denied the request.

The supervisor will provide a copy of the completed document to the employee reflecting the management decision regarding the request. The completed document will be forwarded to the Human Resource Office for implementation and will be maintained in the employee's personnel file.

May 4, 2018