

AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE ACT (ACA)

March 18, 2014 Update: OAA Business Managers' Meeting

A. FACTS

- a. The AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE ACT (ACA) is scheduled to go into effect January 1, 2015.
- b. Campus leadership is preparing, once again, to monitor anticipated expenses (monthly) and help address questions and concerns regarding implementation.
- c. Cost is currently \$5377 per person that the employer will pay for eligible employees that accept the coverage opportunity.
- d. Eligibility = .75 FTE
 1. All temporary student/non-student at .75 or above (watch for multiple assignments) whom work 3 or more months consecutively;
 2. 10 credit hours or more for PT faculty as defined by UNC General Administration:
 1. A standard of two (2) hours of work outside the classroom for every one (1) "in-class" credit hour;
 2. Example: an adjunct teaching one, 3-hour class, would be calculated as working nine (9) hours in that week;
 3. Example: an adjunct that teaches nine (9) credit hours would be calculated as working twenty-seven (27) hours in a given week (less than .75/not eligible);
 4. Example: an adjunct that teaches ten (10) credit hours would be calculated as working thirty (30) hours in a given week (at .75/eligible).
- e. Eric Lanier, HR Benefits Manager, elanier@uncc.edu; x70649, King Building – campus contact.

If you or an employee has any questions regarding eligibility or related questions please contact Eric Lanier directly and do not try to interpret an individual's hiring circumstances. HR is maintaining a master list of all employment types/instances and in some (limited) cases, an employee may be contracted in more than one department on campus and you may be unaware of the number of instances or start/end dates for each. Eric can also discuss making the switch to COBRA for coverage (and back) with an employee, as needed.

B. COMMUNICATION

1. An ACA FAQs website will be established as a campus resource through Eric Lanier's leadership.
2. An email will be distributed directly to all campus supervisors with ACA key points each Fall, Spring and Summer term to serve as important reminders for hiring decisions
3. An annual update will be given at an Admin Forum and a Business Managers Forum.
4. Business Managers should ensure that an ACA benefits impact discussion be placed on a Dean's Meeting agenda with Chairs and Program Directors early in the Fall and Spring semesters. It would be helpful for business managers to meet with their Administrative Assistants each semester as well to discuss the budgeting impact to hiring of PT Faculty, Student, and Non-Student workers since they assist in contracting and appointments with Chairs, Directors and other hiring managers (faculty for research, lab, studio or other assignments).

C. ACA INSTANCES TO “WATCH” -- More than one assignment for a single employee—

- a) *Example -- TEMP POOL HIRES.* A department hires a shorter-term non-student TEMP hire and purposely limited the term to under 3 consecutive months at .75%, and then, that same TEMP is hired in another role on campus upon completion of this first appointment. This creates an instance of potential cost-sharing of ACA benefits between both hiring departments.

Solution – HR will review all non-student temp hiring appointments to notify both the first and second hiring department of the potential need to cost-share so they can work out an agreement should the second appointment truly go forward after discussions.

- b) *Example – STUDENT TEMP HIRES.* A student is initially hired in one department and works 20 hours a week for the assignment. That same student is hired by another department and HR notifies both departments regarding the requirement for keeping hours at 20 per week, or less. The student confirms that s/he is ‘working reduced hours’ (and does for a few weeks) to provide assurance to the second hiring department that s/he can be appointed for a second job. Web-time entry hours are approved by the two different departments. The initial appointment begins to creep back to 20 hours per week and the student does not reduce his/her hours in the second appointment and as such reaches a 30-hour/week basis for 6 consecutive months. The student now becomes eligible for ACA benefits and a cost-share is involved after-the-fact. This instance would be rare on campus, but it could occur if not monitored carefully. And, some students actually waive their right to be designated as a student so they can work beyond the 20-hr/wk limit, and in these cases, there is more potential for unanticipated ACA benefits cost share.

Solution -- HR will conduct a scan of web-time entry reporting to flag the (few) instances in which a single student employee exceeds the 20-hr/week limit and contacts both hiring departments.

- c) *Example – PT TEACHING HIRES.* A PT faculty member is contracted to teach 2 courses in one department and is also contracted to teach 2 more courses in a different department in another college. Neither department is aware of the ‘other’ contract and the PT faculty member becomes eligible for ACA benefits and a cost-share is created.

Solution – OAA will generate a monthly report and analyze the overall hiring list to identify the instances where multiple appointments in different departments or colleges occur. An email will be sent out periodically to Business Managers to distribute to hiring units and their administrative assistants as a friendly reminder to ask about potential multiple assignments when contracting any PT Faculty. Eventually this friendly reminder will become a part of the confirmation of contracting dates sent out by Franci.

- d) *Example – Research Associates, J-1 Scholars, others?... still discussing with HR*

Solution –

- e) Example – POST-DOC GRAD STUDENTS. Because the health care provided to Post-Docs is a different negotiated rate from the State, the total annual health care payout is \$3239. Contact Margo Gross in Grants and Contracts administration for all breakdowns and details. In general:
- Faculty/Pis pay only for the months the postdoc fellow is employed and not on a semester basis.
 - Postdoc fellows can obtain dependent coverage for a more reasonable rate and pay for this on a monthly basis via the up-front semester basis payment from Blue cross and Blue Shield.
 - The BCBS insurance coverage is a very competitive plan in the market place and therefore adds to the recruitment and retention of good postdoc fellows.
 - When a Postdoc fellow's appointment ends s/he will be eligible for COBRA coverage.
- f) *Example* – EPA PT FACULTY and NON-STUDENT TEMP Assignments. There are a few instances on campus in which a single employee is contracted as an EPA PT Faculty member to teach courses while also working as a Non-Student Temp in another area (*e.g., Dance courses and a non-academic fitness class*).

Solution – In this instance it would be difficult to 'discover' the employee's multiple commitments. Both OAA and HR staff will need to carefully review the monthly appointments lists to check for these unusual exceptions and contact the hiring departments.