

### Information regarding the 2018 tax changes

As many of you have heard the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act impacting federal income tax withholding rates was signed into law in Dec. 2017 and effective Jan. 1, 2018. The new tax rates and tables were published in mid-January and employers were advised to implement as quickly as possible.

Virginia Tech implemented the new withholding for the Feb. 1, 2018 paychecks. As a result employees will notice a change in federal income tax withheld on the upcoming payment. The new tables reflect the increase in the standard deduction, repeal of personal exemptions and changes in tax rates and brackets; and are designed to work with the existing withholding elections (established by the latest W-4 submitted either by paper or online). Please note the new rates will not be applied retroactively, so the payments issued for the Jan. 16, 2018 pay will not be adjusted to account for the changes.

The major modifications to federal income tax withholding are as follows:

- The withholding allowance per exemption increased from \$4,050 to \$4,150 (annually).
- The Single (including Head of Household) and Married tax tables changed.
- The annual amount to add to a nonresident alien's taxable wages prior to calculating withholding increased from \$2,300 to \$7,850.
- The flat tax rate on supplemental wages up to \$1 million reduced from 25 percent to 22 percent.

Additional information from the IRS is available at:

- <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/n1036.pdf>
- <http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/updated-2018-withholding-tables-now-available-taxpayers-could-see-paycheck-changes-by-february>.

The IRS is working to revise the Form W-4 to reflect the tax changes, but instructs employers to use the 2017 Form until the 2018 version is issued. The IRS also plans to publish a new online federal income tax calculator. This is estimated to be available by the end of February.

The IRS will most likely recommend (but not require) that employees complete a new W-4. The new IRS calculator, when available, can be used by employees to assist with determining the impact of the changes to withholding resulting from the tax changes and/or changes in personal circumstances for 2018. Soon after the new W-4 Form is available from the IRS, the Payroll website will be updated with the new Form W-4 and the changes will be accounted for in the online W-4 process as well.

Following are a few examples of additional changes that could impact many taxpayers:

- Changes to itemized deductions allowed on the income tax return.
- Moving/relocation expenses reimbursed to or paid on behalf of employees on or after Jan. 1, 2018 are now taxable.

All employees are encouraged to periodically (at least annually), review their withholding status, which is reflected at the bottom of the pay stub). Payments and corresponding withholdings/ deductions should be reviewed each pay period. Everyone's situation is different; taking the time to review is extremely important. Payroll cannot answer specific tax questions or provide individual tax advice, so employees with specific questions related to personal tax liability should seek guidance from a tax professional.

As official information becomes available, the Payroll website, <http://www.controller.vt.edu/resources/payroll.html>, will be updated and additional communication will be distributed to the university community. Please direct general questions to [payroll@vt.edu](mailto:payroll@vt.edu).

**VT Alerts test scheduled for Feb. 20 at all six Virginia Tech regions, locations** Virginia Tech will conduct a full-scale test of its VT Alerts system Tuesday, Feb. 20 on the Blacksburg campus as well as university facilities located in six regions across Virginia. **The test will occur between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.**

VT Alerts is Virginia Tech's emergency notification system. When a situation arises in which the university determines that immediate action is required on the part of students, employees, and others, a VT Alert is issued to the impacted region(s).

In addition to Blacksburg, VT Alert regions also include Abingdon, Danville, Hampton Roads, National Capital Region (Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Falls Church, Leesburg, Manassas, and Middleburg), Richmond, and Roanoke.

Individuals with a Virginia Tech email address will automatically receive an email each time a VT Alert is sent out. If you are not signed up for VT alerts, Virginia Tech strongly recommends that all employees:

- Sign up to receive VT Alerts through phone calls, text messages, or emails to non-vt.edu accounts. To sign up go to <http://www.alerts.vt.edu>
- Subscribe to @VTAlerts through Twitter
- Download a program to receive VT Alerts through desktop notifications

Those who have subscribed but do not receive a phone alert during the test on Feb. 20 should first verify that their information is correct in our system then contact 4Help at **540-231-HELP (4357)**.

Alerts are also shared via the Virginia Tech homepage (<https://vt.edu>); the university status page (<http://vt.edu/status.html>); the weather/emergency hotline (**540-231-6668**); Twitter ([@virginia\\_tech](https://twitter.com/virginia_tech)); digital display boards in classrooms and other common meeting locations and outdoor sirens with voice enunciators on the Blacksburg campus only; and text messages, voice messages, and to non-vt.edu email accounts by subscription.

**Individuals should expect to receive duplicate messages.** This redundancy is intentional to ensure important information reaches as many people as possible in the shortest amount of time. In the event of an actual emergency, individuals must be aware of their surroundings and take immediate responsibility for their personal safety and security. Initial VT Alerts messages will provide basic information on the nature and location of the emergency, as well as instructions for what to do. Subsequent VT Alerts messages or first responders will provide additional instructions and updates about the incident until the all clear is given. Detailed information, when available, will be posted to the university homepage and the university status page.

### **Hokie Wellness News and Programs**

#### **Another flu vaccination clinic to be offered:**

In light of the recent news about the flu epidemic, Hokie Wellness will offer a flu vaccination clinic. The flu vaccination remains the single most effective way to protect against the flu.

The clinic will be **Wednesday, Feb. 14, from 7:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m., at the North End Center, room 2410**. Registration is not required; however, supplies of the vaccine are limited so the clinic is first come, first served.

The vaccination is free for benefitted and wage employees. Benefitted employees must bring their insurance card to the clinic. Wage employees must bring a photo-ID. The cost for others is \$25.

For more important information about the flu vaccine as well as flu resources from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), go to [http://vtnews.vt.edu/notices/hokiewellness\\_notice\\_flu\\_vaccination\\_clinic.html](http://vtnews.vt.edu/notices/hokiewellness_notice_flu_vaccination_clinic.html).

#### **Mobile mammography screening service coming to McComas Hall:**

Mobile mammography screening services will be coming to Virginia Tech, compliments of the University of Virginia Breast Care Program. The mobile service will be at **McComas Hall Friday, Feb. 16, from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.** Appointments are required and may be made by calling **434-243-4704** or **540-661-3082**. Visit this page for more details: [http://vtnews.vt.edu/notices/hokiewellness\\_notice\\_mammogram\\_mccomas\\_hall.html](http://vtnews.vt.edu/notices/hokiewellness_notice_mammogram_mccomas_hall.html)

#### **Hokie Wellness offering free one-on-one nutrition counseling for employees:**

Learn more about making healthy food choices, nutrition for weight loss or weight gain, cooking and meal planning, specialized diets and more. From **Feb. 6 – 22**, a dietetic intern from Human Nutrition, Foods and Exercise, Annie Lloyd, is available to work with employees in a 60-minute session at the North End Center. You must register to attend at <http://www.training.vt.edu>. Upon registration, participants will be contacted by email to complete a brief survey prior to their appointment.

#### **Emotional Preparedness for Retirement session on Feb. 14**

Join Hokie Wellness for a discussion about the emotional aspects of preparing for retirement on **Wednesday, Feb. 14, from 12 – 1:30 p.m., at the North End Center, room 2200**. A light lunch will be provided. The program will include a brief presentation on tips for a successful retirement, followed by a panel discussion with some of Virginia Tech's very own retirees including M. Carole Nickerson, Edward F. Spencer, and J. Wyatt Sasser. Alix Foisy, gerontologist, mental health provider and yoga teacher will facilitate the panel. Register now for this session at <http://www.training.vt.edu>; space is limited.

For more information on these and other services, contact Hokie Wellness at [hokiewellness@vt.edu](mailto:hokiewellness@vt.edu) or by calling **540-231-8878**.

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