

Optional benefits open enrollment available for September

During this annual open enrollment period, Virginia Tech employees have the opportunity to enroll in various optional benefits or make changes to their existing coverage without experiencing a qualifying event. These benefits are available to enhance employees' benefits package with Virginia Tech.

The open enrollment period for both Legal Resources and Aflac is Sept. 1 - 30, with an effective date of Oct. 1. No action is required for employees who are already enrolled unless they wish to discontinue or make changes. Legal resources, Aflac and NY Life will provide information sessions on the Blacksburg campus (no registration required) on the following dates:

Blacksburg, North End Center - Raksha Sharma (Dept. Contact)

- Aflac: Friday, Sept. 6, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Room 2440
- Aflac: Thursday, Sept. 19, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Room 2440
- Aflac: Friday, Sept. 20, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Room 2440
- Legal Resources: Wednesday, Sept. 11, 1 - 4 p.m., Room 2440
- Legal Resources: Thursday, Sept. 12, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., Room 2470
- Legal Resources: Monday, Sept. 23, 1 p.m. - 4 p.m., Room 2440
- Legal Resources: Tuesday, Sept. 24, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., Room 3600

Now is also a good time to consider signing up for New York Life's whole life coverage or Securian's term life insurance. There is no open enrollment period for either of these benefits – employees may enroll at any time.

New this year, the Commonwealth of Virginia is offering Genworth (long-term care). Open enrollment will be held Sept. 16 – Oct. 11, with an effective date of Dec. 1. Informational training sessions about the long-term care benefit will be held at the North End Center Room 2420 and via Zoom on Oct. 1 at 9 a.m., noon, and 2 p.m. Employees may sign up for one of those sessions by going to training.vt.edu, searching under the Human Resources category, and selecting the session they want to attend.

This information is also available on the Benefits Open Enrollment webpage at hr.vt.edu/benefits/optional-benefits-open-enrollment.html. Please contact the contact the HR Service Center at hrservicecenter@vt.edu or 540-231-9331 with questions or for additional information.

Human Resources to host American Red Cross blood drive

Help the Red Cross save lives by donating at the Human Resources Blood drive on Tuesday, Oct. 8, at the North End Center.

Every day, blood donors help patients of all ages: accident and burn victims, heart surgery and organ transplant patients, and those battling cancer. In fact, every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood. The local chapter of the American Red Cross has a great need for donations at this time.

Virginia Tech's goal to ease this burden is to collect 30 pints of blood. In order to hold the drive, we must have at least 30 donors pledge to give blood by Sept. 30. The time of the drive has not been finalized yet. Those who pledge to donate will be advised of the time of the drive once determined.

For more information, contact Ana Agud in Hokie Wellness at aagud@vt.edu.

Virginia Tech parking and transportation efforts meet ongoing demands

At its recent meeting members of the Virginia Tech Board of Visitors were briefed on the university's current parking and alternative transportation strategies. Such efforts will position Virginia Tech favorably for future university growth and development as well as potential parking offsets associated with planned construction projects.

Assistant Vice President for Business Services Heidi Myers and Parking and Transportation Director Jeri Baker led the presentation on the current state of parking/transportation on the Blacksburg campus.

Central to Virginia Tech Parking and Transportation Department's (parking.vt.edu) approach is a tiered permit pricing system offering a range of on-campus and affordable remote lot parking options for students, employees, and visitors. This system, along with strong Blacksburg Transit (BT) ridership, and a commitment to bolstering alternative transportation, contribute to meet the parking and mobility needs of the campus community. More information about BT can be found at ridebt.org.

Parking and Transportation manages more than 16,000 parking spaces on the Blacksburg campus, serving 33,000 students, 13,000 employees, and an estimated 60,000 alumni, parents, and visitors that travel to campus each year. Virginia Tech Parking Services, by state statute, is a fully self-funded university auxiliary that must recover all expenses from

customers that use its services.

In addition, Virginia Tech seeks to support a range of alternative transportation programs. Doing so will help decrease the number of single-occupancy vehicles that park on campus while delaying the need to build more parking structures.

According to Baker, there are nearly 2,000 open parking spaces available in on-campus and remote lots every day. Currently, less than 30 percent of students park on-campus.

Virginia Tech's strong partnership with BT, the nationally recognized public transportation system serving the Virginia Tech community, is another major factor in enhancing campus mobility. BT serves Blacksburg and Christiansburg with 69 buses. The service is pre-paid for all Virginia Tech students and employees who present their Hokie Passport upon boarding. Virginia Tech Parking and Transportation and BT are in constant collaboration in adapting and augmenting service to meet the transportation needs of the university community.

"Affordability, accessibility, and a sustained focus on alternative transportation programs will continue to shape and enhance parking and transportation at Virginia Tech," Baker said.

Hokie Wellness student list offers employees a resource for babysitting, pet sitting, household tasks, and more

Hokie Wellness maintains a list of Virginia Tech students who are interested in working as part-time childcare providers, pet sitters, tutors and more.

Among the services students offer are child care, elder care, pet sitting, light housekeeping, yard work, household tasks and running errands. Students provide information about their availability, experience and references as well. Each semester the list is updated and the fall student list is now available. To request a copy of the list, contact Hokie Wellness at hokiewellness@vt.edu.

Hokie Wellness offers program on the legal and financial concerns as we age

Join Hokie Wellness and Ann Green, from Anderson, Desimone and Green, PC, attorneys, for the "Legal and Financial Concerns as We Age" on Thursday, Sept. 26, from 12:15-1:30 p.m. in room 2410 at the North End Center.

Our concerns change as we age and begin to anticipate our senior years. Information you will need to begin planning for those senior years will be provided. Registration is required. For more information, contact Hokie Wellness at hokiewellness@vt.edu or 540-231-8878.

Faculty, staff can take free foreign language classes

The Language and Culture Institute is offering free foreign language conversation classes for all Virginia Tech faculty and staff. We offer classes in American Sign Language, Chinese, French, German, and Spanish; other languages may also be available.

Participation is free, though course books must be purchased separately. Classes take place at the Language and Culture Institute, at 840 University City Blvd., behind the former Rite Aid. Parking is readily available and does not require a permit.

Classes are available in three levels, from beginner to advanced. There is no formal registration, but you may sign up by contacting the instructor directly. For contact information and class schedules, go to lci.vt.edu/languages.

Hokie Wellness to offer Koru Mindfulness program for employees

Interested in improving sleep, decreasing stress, and increasing self-compassion? The Koru Mindfulness program introduces the practice of mindfulness and several skills, including meditation, for managing stress and enriching your life. Mindfulness is about developing the ability to be fully attentive to all the moments of your life, reducing the amount of time you spend worrying about the future or fretting about the past.

The four-session program will be held on a number of different dates in the Graduate Life Center, McComas Hall, and the North End Center. The first program this semester begins Sept. 18 until Oct. 8. For additional information, and to register, visit the Koru Mindfulness and Meditation web page at hokiewellness.vt.edu/Employees/services/programs/koru.html.

For more information, contact Hokie Wellness at hokiewellness@vt.edu or 540-231-8878.