

## Merit Employee Changes – Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. Who is considered a merit employee?**

All current AFSCME-covered and Supervisory & Confidential (S&C) employees are considered merit employees or merit staff.
- 2. What happens between now and July 1<sup>st</sup>?**

The current AFSCME collective bargaining agreement is in place until June 30, 2017. No procedural changes are effective before July 1; however, supervisors and staff will begin to learn about upcoming changes.
- 3. Who is my main point of contact?**

As always, your first point of contact is your direct supervisor. Supervisors will have the opportunity to attend training in June and will be asked to share the information with you in partnership with your unit.
- 4. Will my position be eliminated as a result of these changes?**

Iowa State University does not intend to eliminate positions as a result of the changes to Chapter 20 for merit staff.

Reduction in Force procedures are governed by the Regents Merit System Rules.
- 5. Is everyone becoming “at-will”?**

No. The “just cause” standard continues to apply to all merit-covered disciplinary actions.
- 6. What will happen to my holiday pay?**

If you are a full-time merit employee, you will receive 8 hours of holiday pay for each University holiday in which you are not scheduled to work. If you are a part-time merit employee and not scheduled to work on the holiday, you will receive holiday pay equivalent to your fraction (.5 FTE=4 hours holiday pay). Should you work the holiday, you will receive holiday premium pay at one and one-half times your rate of pay. Holiday hours (worked or not worked) are not included in hours worked for the purposes of calculating overtime.
- 7. Can I still contract transfer for positions?**

Should you be interested in another merit position, we encourage you to submit your application. Applicants will competitively apply for positions as the contract transfer process no longer applies and positions will be offered to the best-qualified candidate.
- 8. Will I still be able to bank up to 160 hours of comp time?**

Yes. We encourage employees to work with their supervisors/units and plan comp time leave during slower times or when a business need may not be as pressing. Comp time should be used before vacation leave unless the employee’s vacation balance is maxed out.

**9. How will my performance be evaluated?**

In the past, you may have participated in an annual performance evaluation with the rest of your unit – at one given time during the year. Although you will still receive a performance evaluation, it will now occur simultaneously with your merit review date.

**10. What counts toward the calculation of overtime?**

What counts toward the calculation of overtime is actual hours worked – time you spent on the job performing the duties and responsibilities of your position. All vacation (annual) leave, sick leave, holiday and comp time will not be included in hours worked for the purposes of calculating overtime.

**11. Will my vacation (annual) or sick leave accruals be impacted?**

Sick and vacation (annual) leave accruals will remain unchanged.

**12. Are there changes to shift differential or standby pay?**

Shift differential hours associated with being eligible for shift differential remain unchanged. Merit employees will continue to be eligible for standby and callback. It is anticipated that employees in standby status will receive 10 percent of their hourly rate of pay for each hour in standby status. An employee called back to work receives a minimum of three hours of pay.

The shift differential rate and standby pay rate await final approval by the merit system director. Check back for updates when the information has been approved.

**13. What happens to my seniority date?**

The date you began employment with Iowa State University will continue to be important. There will be no changes to an employee's designated seniority in UHR systems; however, the use of seniority as a factor in determining leave, and other issues may change depending on your unit's procedures.

**14. Will my pay change?**

For employees covered by collective bargaining agreements, base wages are negotiated as part of the collective bargaining process. Any base wage changes, including across-the-board increases, are governed by those agreements.

**15. Will pay increases be tied to performance evaluations?**

Yes. As of July 1, merit increases will not be automatic AND will be tied to performance. For an eligible employee to receive a within-grade increase, a performance evaluation must be on file and completed with the last 12 months. The evaluation must indicate the employee achieved an overall satisfactory rating.

**Questions below added June 21st.**

**16. Will merit employees continue to receive 40- or 70-minute meal periods as was practice in many units?**

ISU is no longer required to provide meal periods of 40 or 70 minutes. Meal periods of 30 or more minutes will remain unpaid if the employee is fully relieved from duty. Employees should visit with their supervisors to discuss expectations for lunch breaks.

**17. Can my supervisor change my schedule to avoid overtime within the work week?**

While there was no guarantee of hours worked, supervisors will have the flexibility to change an employee's schedule to avoid overtime. Supervisors should give employees as much notice as possible and clearly communicate the business needs.

**18. Will overtime continue to be distributed equally amongst employees or in a particular manner?**

Overtime equalization is no longer required. Supervisors may distribute overtime based on their business needs and appropriate business rationale.

**19. Can I receive compensatory time for hours worked over 40 in a workweek after July 1?**

Yes. Comp time banks will remain in place up to 160 hours. Employees may request a payout of comp time banked in cash at any time. All comp time banked will be paid out annually on June 30 at the employee's pay rate on June 30.

**20. How will vacation be approved as of July 1?**

Departments are no longer required to approve/deny vacation requests based on seniority and/or within specified timeframes. Departments are urged to set parameters for employees to request and be approved to be consistent and base decisions on business needs related to approval/denial of leave.

**21. What happens to my current transfer request that is on file?**

As of July 1, 2017, transfer requests on file will no longer be applicable. If you would like to transfer to another position, you will need to apply for the open vacancy.