

## Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Furloughs

As of August 10, 2009

**1. What is a furlough?**

Answer: A day that an employee is normally scheduled to work, or is in pay status, that is taken as an unpaid day off. The purpose of a furlough day is to lessen the severity of possible layoffs by reducing compensation costs. A furlough day is considered to be eight hours.

**2. What are CSU's guiding principles with respect to this budget crisis?**

Answer: To serve as many students as possible without sacrificing quality, and to preserve as many jobs as possible within the budget constraints under which the CSU is being required to operate.

**3. Who determined the scheduled administrative closure days?**

Answer: The President, in consultation with the Chancellor's Office, Vice Presidents and Human Resources Management, developed the University's 2009-2010 Administrative Closure Calendar. Only the President and/or Vice Presidents can authorize an employee to work on any designated furlough day. When this occurs, the employee's manager shall consult with the employee to consider an alternative furlough day within the constraints of operational needs.

**4. What is the difference between Closed Campus and State Budget Closure Day?**

Answers: *Closed Campus* is the same as for any holiday where the campus is closed. *State Budget Closure Day* is defined as a day of very limited campus services. Most departments and areas will be closed, except those with minimal staff who must be on site such as Public Safety. A limited number of MPPs will be scheduled to work on these days and will provide supervision for employees not subject to furlough or required to work due to operational needs. The President and Vice Presidents have identified which offices will be open, partially open, or closed. Of the 24 scheduled administrative closure days, 6 of them are State Budget Closure Days. On each *State Budget Closure Day* the status of services provided may change as determined by the President or Vice Presidents.

**5. How can furlough days be distributed equally during an 11-month period?**

Answer: Furlough days should be distributed as equally as possible. Because of the contracted agreements, two additional furlough days (from July 2009) are to be taken during the fiscal year 2009/2010. Thus, the President has designated the week of December 14, 2009, as the one week during the 11-month furlough program for which there is more than one (1) furlough day in a week. This is the only time an employee can use more than one (1) furlough day in a week.

**Each employee's pay reduction will be spread evenly over the 11-month period.**

**6. Can an employee work on a furlough day?**

Answer: Only the President and/or Vice Presidents can authorize an employee to work on any designated administrative closure day. When this occurs, the employee's manager shall consult with the employee to consider an alternative furlough day within the constraints of operational needs.

**7. What if an employee does not use all furlough days?**

Answer: The campus must ensure that all employees have taken the required number of furlough days commensurate with the salary reductions that have been

made. The President and Vice Presidents are the only individuals who can require an employee to work on an administrative closure day. Management must ensure that employees use their furlough days as planned during this budget period.

**8. What are the various scheduling issues?**

Answer:

- Because a furlough day has been determined to be eight hours, employees on 4/10 work schedules or other alternative schedules should convert to a 4/8 work schedule during furlough week periods and then revert to their original schedule for the remainder of that monthly pay period. This process will help ensure employees are paid properly and that their furlough days are used in accordance with agreements.
- Employees who in the last twelve (12) months volunteered to reduce their time base (e.g. 10/12 or 11/12) shall be allowed to return to 12/12 status prior to the implementation of any furlough plan.
- *Part-time employees* shall be subject to furloughs on a pro-rated basis. Proration shall be determined consistent with the employee's time base.
- *Per diem or intermittent employees* shall be reduced by two days so that no per diem or intermittent employee shall be allowed to work more than nineteen (19) days in a month with a twenty-one (21) day pay period, or work twenty (20) days in a month with a twenty-two (22) day pay period.

**9. Can employees use vacation days, sick leave, CTO or holiday credits to avoid the furlough reduction?**

Answer: No. Any day previously scheduled as vacation on a day now designated as a furlough day must be changed to record a furlough day.

**10. How is overtime paid?**

Answer: There should be no overtime, because it is the intent of the CSU to avoid overtime during furlough periods. Furlough days do not count as time worked for determining overtime in the workweek. In the event that any employee is authorized to work in excess of thirty-two (32) hours during any furlough week, he/she shall be compensated at the employee's straight time rate up to forty (40) hours. The approval to work in excess of thirty-two (32) hours during any furlough week must be authorized in advance by the President or appropriate Vice President. All hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours in a work week shall be compensated at a rate of one and one-half times the hourly straight time rate.

**11. How are exempt status employees, including MPPs, schedules and pay handled?**

Answer: Exempt employees, including MPPs, are not covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act exemption during the week of a furlough day and are considered non-exempt employees for that week. Workloads need to be adjusted to reduce the need to work on furlough days. It is the expressed intent of the CSU that exempt employees should not be required to work more than thirty-two (32) hours during a furlough week. Since exempt employees and MPPs are viewed as non-exempt employees during a furlough week, all exempt employees and MPPs must account for absences such as vacation and sick leave during those weeks, including partial day absences. With prior approval, they would be eligible for overtime in a furlough week, but only overtime deemed essential will be approved. Overtime would be paid only for authorized time worked in excess of 40 hours in a furlough week.

The President and Vice Presidents are the only individuals who can authorize overtime.

**12. Can the University add new students or MPPs to perform bargaining unit work**

**during a furlough?**

Answer: No. During the period of this furlough (through June 30, 2010), the number of student assistant hours and the number of administrators in a department shall not be increased for the purpose of performing bargaining unit work. Again, workloads need to be adjusted to reduce the need to work on furlough days.

**13. Is there an impact of furlough programs on benefits and retirement?**

Answer: No. There is no impact on the following:

- An employee's anniversary date or seniority credit or a break-in-service;
- On the accrual of vacation and sick leave or the payment of health, dental or vision benefits, or the Flex Cash option;
- On compensation for retirement, death, and disability benefits. These benefits shall be based on the unchanged salary rate that would have been credited had the employee not been furloughed.

**14. Are there any positions exempt from the furlough program?**

Answer: Yes, but only a few.

- Designated employees who perform the work of public safety positions, such as police and dispatchers and unit 11 (academic student employees).
- The furlough program also does not apply to employees who are on a leave of absence without pay or military leave.
- Employees receiving 100% of pay from grants are exempt.
- Employees receiving partial grant money will have furlough days prorated accordingly.

**15. Can an employee receive unemployment benefits to cover the loss of compensation due to furloughs?**

Answer: No. The furlough program is structured so that employees will not be eligible to receive unemployment benefits.

**16. Where do I go to get help to better understand the furlough program?**

Answer:

- Furlough information and updates are available on the Human Resources Management Web page.
- Remit questions to [FurloughHRM@cslanet.calstatela.edu](mailto:FurloughHRM@cslanet.calstatela.edu) or leave a message at x3673.

**17. How can I locate my union's furlough agreement with the CSU?**

Answer: If your union has an agreement with the CSU for a furlough program, you may find the agreement at these links:

[http://www.calstate.edu/LaborRel/Contracts\\_HTML/UAPDFurlough.pdf](http://www.calstate.edu/LaborRel/Contracts_HTML/UAPDFurlough.pdf)

[http://www.calstate.edu/LaborRel/Contracts\\_HTML/CSU-CSUEUFurlough.pdf](http://www.calstate.edu/LaborRel/Contracts_HTML/CSU-CSUEUFurlough.pdf)

[http://www.calstate.edu/LaborRel/Contracts\\_HTML/CFA-Furlough-Agreement.pdf](http://www.calstate.edu/LaborRel/Contracts_HTML/CFA-Furlough-Agreement.pdf)

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