



Division of Human Resources



Employee Handbook

April 2014

The intention of this handbook is to simply provide information. It does not constitute any part of any employment contract, nor does it supersede any law, board policy, or procedure. It should be used only as a guide.

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is prepared by the Division of Human Resources solely as a guide to inform employees of some of the policies, procedures, and benefits of the Mobile County Public School System (MCPSS). It outlines various employment policies, procedures and practices that affect employees. It is intended only as a quick reference. Employees may access the Mobile County Public School System web site for more information on both the system and Human Resources. Visit <http://www.mcpss.com/>.

THIS HANDBOOK DOES NOT CONSTITUTE ANY PART OF ANY EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

MCPSS policies and procedures conform to local, state, and federal requirements in addition to recognized principles of human resource management. Employees should contact the Office of Human Resources for assistance in obtaining up to date information on policies and procedures.

It is our desire that all employees of MCPSS find their employment to be personally and professionally rewarding. As such, our objective is to create a work environment that is conducive to these goals. This in turn will create an atmosphere of excellence in supporting our educational mission. We ask that all employees be dedicated to providing the very best educational experience for the students of Mobile County.

Through its personnel policies, the MCPSS endeavors to establish conditions that attract and hold the highest quality employees who are willing to devote themselves to the education and welfare of the students. The Board is committed to hiring and retaining employees who are capable, interested, and motivated to accomplish the desired goals of the school system.

The Board does not believe that it should employ or retain employees who are either incapable of satisfactory job performance or those who are capable of satisfactory work but continually perform at an unacceptable level.

Rights and Responsibilities

As an employee of the Mobile County Public School System, you are due certain treatment:

- You deserve fair, equitable, professional, and courteous treatment from your supervisors and co-workers.
- You deserve to be free from discrimination, prejudice and ill will.
- You deserve to not be singled out of a group and treated differently because of personality conflicts.
- You deserve to have your performance evaluated honestly.
- You may have the right, as a tenured or non-probationary employee, to due process in regard to certain instances of a transfer or termination from your position.

As an employee of the Mobile County Public School System, you have certain responsibilities:

- You have the responsibility to treat your supervisors and co-workers in a fair, equitable, professional, and courteous manner.
- You have the responsibility to refrain from any discriminatory actions, prejudice, or ill will towards any other employee.
- You have the responsibility to satisfactorily perform the duties that are assigned to you in exchange for your wages.
- You have the responsibility to obey the lawful directives of your supervisors.
- You have the responsibility not to engage in or encourage others to engage in rude, disruptive or insubordinate behavior.

BENEFITS FOR FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES

All full-time employees of the Mobile County Public School System will receive the following annual benefits.

Health Insurance: Employees may choose between the following health insurance plans:

- PEEHIP

1. Blue Cross/Blue Shield

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- HMO
 1. Viva Health Plan HMO
- Supplemental plans are available through Southland National Insurance Company
 1. Dental
 2. Hospital Indemnity
 3. Cancer
 4. Vision
- Prescription plans are available through MedImpact.

Life Insurance: \$ 8,000 Free Life Insurance from MCPSS
 \$15,000 Free Life Insurance from the Teacher's Retirement Systems
 of Alabama

Retirement: All employees of the MCPSS will have a percentage of their wages deducted each month and deposited into the Teacher's Retirement System:

- Benefits:
- Member is vested after 10 years of service
 - Tier 1 Members (Member before January 1, 2013)
 - Retirement at age 60 with 10-24 years of service
 - Retirement at any age after 25 years of service
 - Tier 2 Members (Member on or after January 1, 2013)
 - Retirement at age 62 with 10 years of service

Additional retirement service credit will be given by the Teachers Retirement System (TRS) based on the number of Accumulated Sick Days the employee has at the time of retirement or at the time of termination from the system.

Credit for Military Service: An employee has one year from the date he/she enrolled in the TRS to make a lump sum payment in order to gain credit for up to four years of eligible military service. Weekend service and summer camp service with the National Guard and the Reserves are not eligible for creditable service.

Employee Assistance Program: Confidential assistance and referral for treatment are available to employees and their family members through the Division of Human Resources.

Payroll Deductions: (Voluntary) Partial listing:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Direct Deposit (Required) | Association Dues |
| Mobile Educators Credit Union | Tax Sheltered Annuities |
| 457's | Life Insurance |
| US Savings Bonds | Cafeteria Plan |
| Disability Insurance | Cancer Insurance |
| United Fund Contributions | Critical Care Insurance |
| Long Term Care Insurance | AD & D Insurance |

Personal Leave: Full-time employees will receive two personal leave days per year. New employees starting work after December 31st will receive only one personal leave day for that year. Employees starting work after March 31st will receive no personal leave days for that year.

Accumulated Sick Days: Full-time employees receive one Sick Day for each month worked.

Sick Leave Bank: Employees are eligible to join the Sick Leave Bank, which enables them to borrow up to fifteen sick days for illnesses. These borrowed days are repaid from future accumulated days earned each month. Employees may also receive or donate Accumulated Sick Days from or to other employees who are members of a SLB in Alabama. These days are not repaid.

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Vacation: All full-time twelve month employees will receive vacation days based on the number of months consecutively worked in a twelve month position. These days are accrued monthly on a prorated basis as listed below.

- Hired in or transferred to a twelve month position prior to July 1, 1999:
 - a. 10 days vacation – working in a twelve month position less than 120 months.
 - b. 15 days vacation – working in a twelve month position at least 120 months.
- Hired in or transferred to a twelve month position on or after July 1, 1999.
 - a. 5 days vacation – working in a twelve month position for first 12 months.
 - b. 10 days vacation – working in a twelve month position from 13 to 120 months.
 - c. 15 days vacation – working in a twelve month position from 121 to 240 months.
 - d. 20 days vacation – working in a twelve month position for 241 or more months.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY

Certified employees shall meet minimum requirements such as a degree and professional certification, and demonstrate efficient performance skills in the area of assignment along with satisfactory accomplishment of their job requirements.

Classified employees (support employees) shall meet the minimum qualifications of their job description and demonstrate satisfactory performance of their job duties.

All employees are hired to perform certain tasks in exchange for their salary. These duties are determined by the job description and as directed by their supervisor. If you are unable or unwilling to satisfactorily perform the assigned tasks in the allotted time, then the system feels no obligation to retain you as an employee.

Requirements of each employee:

1. Perform satisfactory work.
 - a. Carry out and complete your job duties in an acceptable manner and in a timely fashion.
2. Behavior - Act in a professional manner and be courteous to children, parents, supervisors and all other employees.
 - a. Behavior which is rude, obnoxious or showing an attitude is unacceptable.
 - b. You are not expected to like your supervisors or co-workers and they are not expected to like you, but both are expected to be professional and courteous.
 - c. You are expected to treat everyone in a professional manner and with courtesy, regardless of your personal feelings towards that individual.
 - d. Do not show unwelcome familiarity with co-workers. The best advice to follow is to keep your hands to yourself and do not hug, kiss or touch co-workers.
 - e. Open disrespect or unprofessional conduct may lead to termination.
3. Drug and Alcohol - Report to work both drug and alcohol free.
 - a. All employees who drive school system vehicles are subject to random drug tests. Results that are positive will lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
 - b. All employees are subject to drug and alcohol testing for reasonable suspicion of impairment. Results that are positive for either drugs or alcohol will lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
4. Attendance and Absences - Work the days that you are scheduled to work.
 - a. Continual unpaid absences are unacceptable and may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
 - b. Constant absences on Monday/Fridays or before/after holidays are suspect for abuse and may be subject to disciplinary actions.
 - c. You must also notify the Employee Absence Reporting System (SubFinder) of absences.
5. Tardiness - Be at work when scheduled and on time, without tardiness.
 - a. Excessive late arrivals will result in progressive discipline and may lead to termination.

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- b. Notify your supervisor of any absences or of any extreme tardiness.
6. Schedule - Work the hours of your schedule.
- a. Report to work on time.
 - b. Do not leave work early unless authorized by your supervisor.
 - c. Do not clock-in early or clock-out late unless authorized by your supervisor.
7. Time Reporting - Missed punches and time worked. Fill out all forms relating to time worked accurately and honestly.
- a. If you do not work a full day, do not state or indicate that you did.
8. Computer and Internet access is provided for MCPSS operations only. However, should there be an urgent need; minimal (no more than ten minutes a day) personal use is allowed.
- a. Surfing the internet is strictly prohibited for non-educational purposes.
 - b. Audio/Video streaming is strictly prohibited for non-educational purposes.
 - c. Posting to personal web pages, bulletin boards, blogs or other similar personal message sites is strictly prohibited.
 - d. Accessing a racist, sexist, pornographic or other questionable site is strictly prohibited.
 - e. Employees will be provided a copy of the MCPSS acceptable use guidelines and sign a statement that they agree to the terms.
 - f. Internet usage will be monitored and violators will be subject to disciplinary action up to termination.
9. Social Media - Although social media sites such as Facebook are personal in nature, they (along with personal texts and emails brought to the administrations attention) can be considered public discourse or public comments.
- a. The posting or texting or emailing of comments or images about students, parents, employees, supervisors, departments, schools, the system or your job that are of extremely poor taste, unprofessional, demeaning, derogatory, racist, offensive, insulting, inflammatory, hateful, insubordinate or celebrating immoral, improper or illegal actions is unacceptable and may lead to disciplinary action up to termination as those postings may cause a disruption in the workplace.
10. Personal calls - Keep personal calls to an absolute minimum during work time.
- a. At some point in time, most everyone needs to make a personal call from work. However, these calls need to be kept to a minimum, as they not only adversely affect your work, they can also adversely affect the work of the other employees around you.
11. Cell Phone use - The use of personal cell phones is prohibited unless it is a true emergency.
- a. Leave your cell phones in your car or turn them off during work hours.
 - b. Advise your family and friends that you can not receive personal calls on your cell phone during the work day unless a true emergency has occurred.
12. Personal conversations - Keep personal conversations during work hours to a minimum.
- a. Even if your work is caught up enough to allow you some time to talk, the person you are talking to is probably neglecting his/her work by talking to you.
 - b. If you travel between sites, being friendly is expected, but to keep other employees from his/her work by engaging them in personal conversations is not acceptable.
 - c. We encourage camaraderie, but not at the expense of either your work or the work of other employees.
13. Compliance with directives - Obey the orders of your supervisor, except as stated in 13(b) below.
- a. If you disagree, do not argue with the supervisor, simply state your objections in a concise and professional way and then carry out your supervisor's directions.
14. Insubordination to your supervisor or any other administrator is prohibited.
- a. Insubordination may include:
 - i. Refusal or failure to obey orders or perform a job assignment given by a supervisor or any authorized employee or system representative;

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- ii. Disrespect, publicly displayed on system premises, toward a supervisor or the system;
 - iii. Threatening, intimidating, coercing, or interfering with a supervisor;
 - iv. Abusive language to any supervisor;
 - v. Openly making or publishing false, vicious, or malicious statements concerning supervisors; and
 - vi. Countermanding the order of a supervisor.
- b. Insubordination does not include a refusal to comply with:
- i. Orders that endanger the health, welfare, or safety of the employee, other employees, students, or anyone else;
 - ii. Orders requiring the performance of an illegal, improper, or immoral act;
 - iii. Orders that require action that is beyond the employee's capability; and
 - iv. Orders having a nature of unlawful harassment; for example, orders accompanied by a racial, religious or sexist slur.
15. Firearms and weapons prohibition.
- a. The possession of a firearm by an individual, employee, visitor, or student inside or on any property owned, leased, or operated by the Mobile County Public School System is strictly prohibited except for those individuals who lease undeveloped system property for hunting or sporting activities. Otherwise, possession of a firearm is strictly prohibited whether or not those individuals, employees, visitors, or students possess a legal permit to carry said firearm or if the individual possessing the firearm is licensed to do so by the state of Alabama or any other state. Duly sworn and trained peace officers in the performance of their duties are excluded from this prohibition.
 - b. Possession and/or use of weapons shall be prohibited on school property, including buses and at school sponsored activities. Possession and/or use of weapons shall also be prohibited in any vehicle brought onto school property or to a school sponsored activity. Violation of this prohibition shall be considered a serious act of misconduct and subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

If you are unable to comply with these general expectations, then the system will be compelled to terminate your employment.

Abandonment of Job:

Any employee will be considered to have abandoned his/her job and will be terminated as a voluntary resignation, who:

- leaves work and does not report back to work;
- who says he/she quits;
- who says he/she will not return to work or;
- for whatever reason fails to return to work without notification;

Any employee who has been absent from work for more than ten (10) consecutive work days and who has not obtained an approved leave of absence or otherwise accounted for the absences will be considered to have abandoned his/her job. The employee may be recommended for termination.

Any employee who has been absent from work for more than twenty (20) consecutive work days without contacting his/her supervisor, without good cause and without an approved leave of absence will be considered to have voluntarily resigned from his/her position and will be processed as having resigned from the position.

Other Requirements:

In-service education participation is encouraged for all employees, which will promote personal and professional growth. Employees, upon identification and recommendation by the immediate supervisor, shall be given the opportunity to participate in an improvement program coordinated through the Division of Staff Development and designed for improvement in specific areas. Additionally, employees are expected to develop and grow in job performance beyond minimum requirements.

Schedules for professional and support employees are formulated and disseminated by principals and supervisors. All employees shall observe and conform to time schedules furnished by his/her principal or supervisor.

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For professional employees, the school day shall be defined as the time when classes are in session, when faculty and in-service meetings are being held and when student activities are being conducted.

Teachers are required to attend faculty meetings and parent-teacher conferences when deemed necessary by the principal. Also, teachers shall be provided a thirty minute unencumbered time period during the day.

All schools shall have the school doors open for a minimum of eight (8) consecutive hours each workday. The day for professional education employees will include:

- Time assigned for instructional situations
- Time assigned for planning and conference
- Time assigned for student activities
- Time assigned for supervisory activities other than classroom instruction, faculty meetings or in-service meetings after the time students are dismissed and beyond the normal school closing time.

All professional faculty employees are required to be at his/her station of duty no later than fifteen (15) minutes before school begins and to leave no earlier than fifteen (15) minutes after the school day ends. All teachers are to hold parent-student conferences as needed during planning and conference periods and/or after school as determined necessary by the principal. These conferences are to be scheduled with the time necessary for keeping parents apprised of the academic performance of students prior to the time a student's achievement has reached the point of failure in a given grading period.

The primary responsibility and workload of teachers shall be planning and implementing of the instructional program. Teachers shall share in non-teaching responsibilities, which are considered either necessary or desirable to the proper functioning of the total school program. Teachers are expected to share in the responsibility for supervising co-curricular activities. The assigning of extra duty shall be done in an equitable manner.

Teacher workdays are designed to provide days for teachers to prepare grades, complete reports, and perform other tasks essential to teaching. No faculty meeting should be held on a teacher workday unless appropriate and timely. Should it be necessary to call a faculty meeting on a teacher workday, the meeting should not last more than 45 minutes, and no more than one meeting should be held. No in-service should be scheduled on teacher workdays.

Family members and children of an employee do not have a right to visit the employee at work during work hours. Visiting by family members or bringing children to work can be a severe distraction to both the employee being visited and other employees at the same location. This is similar to an employee having excessive personal telephone conversations or personal conversations at work. Before any employee asks a family member to come to his/her work location, he/she needs to clear the visit with the principal or supervisor. If the visits become excessive and are a distraction, then the family members may be banned from system properties.

ALABAMA EDUCATOR CODE OF ETHICS

Introduction

The primary goal of every educator in the state of Alabama must, at all times, be to provide an environment in which all students can learn. In order to accomplish that goal, educators must value the worth and dignity of every person, must have a devotion to excellence in all matters, must actively support the pursuit of knowledge, and must fully participate in the nurturance of a democratic citizenry. To do so requires an adherence to a high ethical standard.

The Alabama Educator Code of Ethics defines the professional behavior of educators in Alabama and serves as a guide to ethical conduct. The code protects the health, safety and general welfare of students and educators; outlines objective standards of conduct for professional educators; and clearly defines actions of an unethical nature for which disciplinary sanctions are justified.

CODE OF ETHICS STANDARDS

Standard 1: Professional Conduct

An educator should demonstrate conduct that follows generally recognized professional standards.

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Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Encouraging and supporting colleagues in the development and maintenance of high standards.
- Respecting fellow educators and participating in the development of a professional and supportive teaching environment.
- Engaging in a variety of individual and collaborative learning experiences essential to developing professionally in order to promote student learning.

Unethical conduct is any conduct that impairs the certificate holder's ability to function in his or her employment position or a pattern of behavior that is detrimental to the health, welfare, discipline, or morals of students.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Harassment of colleagues.
- Misuse or mismanagement of tests or test materials.
- Inappropriate language on school grounds.
- Physical altercations.
- Failure to provide appropriate supervision of students.

Standard 2: Trustworthiness

An educator should exemplify honesty and integrity in the course of professional practice.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Properly representing facts concerning an educational matter in direct or indirect public expression.
- Advocating for fair and equitable opportunities for all children.
- Embodying for students the characteristics of intellectual honesty, diplomacy, tact, and fairness.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting professional qualifications, criminal record, or employment history when applying for employment or certification.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information submitted to federal, state, and/or other governmental agencies.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information regarding the evaluation of students and/or personnel.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting reasons for absences or leaves.
- Falsifying, misrepresenting, omitting, or erroneously reporting information submitted in the course of an official inquiry or investigation.

Standard 3: Unlawful Acts

An educator should abide by federal, state, and local laws and statutes.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the commission or conviction of a felony or of any crime involving moral turpitude. As used herein, conviction includes a finding or verdict of guilty, or a plea of *nolo contendere*, regardless of whether an appeal of the conviction has been sought or a situation where first offender treatment without adjudication of guilt pursuant to the charge was granted.

Standard 4: Teacher/Student Relationship

An educator should always maintain a professional relationship with all students, both in and outside the classroom.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Fulfilling the roles of trusted confidante, mentor, and advocate for students' growth.
- Nurturing the intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and civic potential of all students.
- Providing an environment that does not needlessly expose students to unnecessary embarrassment or disparagement.
- Creating, supporting, and maintaining a challenging learning environment for all students.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Committing any act of child abuse, including physical or verbal abuse.
- Committing any act of cruelty to children or any act of child endangerment.
- Committing or soliciting any unlawful sexual act.

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- Engaging in harassing behavior on the basis of race, gender, national origin, religion, or disability.
- Soliciting, encouraging, or consummating an inappropriate written, verbal, or physical relationship with a student.
- Furnishing tobacco, alcohol, or illegal/unauthorized drugs to any student or allowing a student to consume alcohol or illegal/unauthorized drugs.

Standard 5: Alcohol, Drug and Tobacco Use or Possession

An educator should refrain from the use of alcohol and/or tobacco during the course of professional practice and should never use illegal or unauthorized drugs.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Factually representing the dangers of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use and abuse to students during the course of professional practice.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Being under the influence of, possessing, using, or consuming illegal or unauthorized drugs.
- Being on school premises or at a school-related activity involving students while documented as being under the influence of, possessing, or consuming alcoholic beverages or using tobacco. A school-related activity includes, but is not limited to, any activity that is sponsored by a school or a school system or any activity designed to enhance the school curriculum such as club trips, etc., where students are involved.

Standard 6: Public Funds and Property

An educator entrusted with public funds and property should honor that trust with a high level of honesty, accuracy, and responsibility.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Maximizing the positive effect of school funds through judicious use of said funds.
- Modeling for students and colleagues the responsible use of public property.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Misusing public or school-related funds.
- Failing to account for funds collected from students or parents.
- Submitting fraudulent requests for reimbursement of expenses or for pay.
- Co-mingling public or school-related funds with personal funds or checking accounts.
- Using school property without the approval of the local board of education/governing body.

Standard 7: Remunerative Conduct

An educator should maintain integrity with students, colleagues, parents, patrons, or businesses when accepting gifts, gratuities, favors, and additional compensation.

Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Insuring that institutional privileges are not used for personal gain.
- Insuring that school policies or procedures are not impacted by gifts or gratuities from any person or organization.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Soliciting students or parents of students to purchase equipment, supplies, or services from the educator or to participate in activities that financially benefit the educator unless approved by the local governing body.
- Accepting gifts from vendors or potential vendors for personal use or gain where there appears to be a conflict of interest.
- Tutoring students assigned to the educator for remuneration unless approved by the local board of education.

Standard 8: Maintenance of Confidentiality

An educator should comply with state and federal laws and local school board policies relating to confidentiality of student and personnel records, standardized test material, and other information covered by confidentiality agreements.

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Ethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Keeping in confidence information about students that has been obtained in the course of professional service unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.
- Maintaining diligently the security of standardized test supplies and resources.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Sharing confidential information concerning student academic and disciplinary records, health and medical information, family status/income, and assessment/testing results unless disclosure is required or permitted by law.
- Violating confidentiality agreements related to standardized testing including copying or teaching identified test items, publishing or distributing test items or answers, discussing test items, and violating local school system or state directions for the use of tests or test items.
- Violating other confidentiality agreements required by state or local policy.

Standard 9: Abandonment of Contract

An educator should fulfill all of the terms and obligations detailed in the contract with the local board of education or educational agency for the duration of the contract.

Unethical conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Abandoning the contract for professional services without prior release from the contract by the employer;
- Refusing to perform services required by the contract.

Reporting

Educators are required to report a breach of one or more of the Standards in the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics as soon as possible, but no later than sixty (60) days from the date the educator became aware of the alleged breach, unless the law or local procedures require reporting sooner. Educators should be aware of their local school board policies and procedures and/or chain of command for reporting unethical conduct. Complaints filed with the local or state school board's, or with the State Department of Education Teacher Certification Section, must be filed in writing and must include the original signature of the complainant.

Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-2-.05

(1)-5-c Each Superintendent shall submit to the State Superintendent of Education within ten calendar days of the decision, the name and social security number of each employee holding an Alabama certificate or license who is terminated, or non-renewed, resigns, or is placed on administrative leave for cause, and shall indicate the reason for such action.

Disciplinary Action

Disciplinary action shall be defined as the issuance of a reprimand or warning, or the suspension, revocation, or denial of certificates. "Certificate" refers to any teaching, service, or leadership certificate issued by the authority of the Alabama State Department of Education.

Alabama Administrative Code 290-3-2-.05

(1) Authority of the State Superintendent of Education

(a) The Superintendent shall have the authority under existing legal standards to:

1. Revoke any certificate held by a person who has been proven guilty of immoral conduct or unbecoming or indecent behavior in Alabama or any other state or nation in accordance with Ala. Code §16-23-5 (1975).
2. Refuse to issue a certificate to an applicant whose certificate has been subject to adverse action by another state until after the adverse action has been resolved by that state.
3. Suspend or revoke an individual's certificate issued by the Superintendent when a certificate or license issued by another state is subject to adverse action.
4. Refuse to issue, suspend, or recall a certificate for just cause.

Any of the following grounds shall also be considered cause for disciplinary action:

- Unethical conduct as outlined in the Alabama Educator Code of Ethics, Standards 1-9.
- Order from a court of competent jurisdiction.
- Violation of any other laws or rules applicable to the profession.

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- Any other good and sufficient cause.

An individual whose certificate has been revoked, denied, or suspended may not be employed as an educator, paraprofessional, aide, or substitute teacher during the period of his or her revocation, suspension, or denial.

OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FILE

Each employee's official personnel file is maintained in the Division of Human Resources. In general, this file will contain a record of the employee's history with the system, such as documents concerning the employee's hiring, status, work history, and performance.

All information or material placed in the employee's personnel file in Human Resources shall be available to the employee for inspection upon request with a twenty-four (24) hour notice. This does not include former employees. If former employees wish to view their file, they must make a request in writing to the Assistant Superintendent or Executive Manager of Human Resources.

Handling of personnel files shall follow the guidelines set forth below in addition to normal processing and maintenance:

1. Any information or materials which are derogatory shall not be placed in the personnel file unless the employee is aware of the information and is given the opportunity to examine the information.
 - a. The employee has the right to respond in writing to anything placed in the system's personnel file and have the response placed with the material to which it relates.
2. No anonymous, unsigned, or hearsay information may be placed in the employee's official personnel files.
3. All confidential references and information shall be privileged and are not part of employee's official personnel files.

DRESS CODE

The school system has a dress code that must be followed by all employees. In general, all employees (professional, administrative and support personnel) should be professionally and appropriately attired when conducting school system business. The policy is a general guideline established in order to uplift, enhance, and promote the professional image of the school system.

Each school and department supervisor should review these guidelines with their employees each year. Immediate or site supervisors may approve exceptions to this code for special or occasional activities.

In departments where uniforms or uniformity in dress is prescribed by the Board, all affected employees are required to abide by direction and procedure. However, schools or departments may adopt a voluntary dress code for uniforms. Also, reasonable accommodations will be made for religious beliefs if such accommodation would not unduly interfere with the effective functioning of the schools or departments.

Restrictions as set forth in the Dress Code:

- Jeans (except for custodian and bus drivers and as allowed for special occasions or special work as approved by the immediate or site supervisor)
- Overalls
- Shorts (except for P.E. teachers and bus drivers and as allowed for special occasions or special work as approved by the immediate or site supervisor)
- Athletic type shoes (except as allowed for special occasions or special work as approved by the immediate or site supervisor)
- Spandex or bicycling type attire as outer wear
- Visible piercing except to ears
- Clothing that is provocative, revealing, indecent, vulgar or obscene
- Blouses or shirts with low necklines, bare midriffs and excessively tight clothing
- Visibly torn or ragged attire
- Sweat suit-type attire (except for P.E. teachers, bus drivers, and custodians)

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- Footwear that is considered beachwear (flip flops), soft plastic (Crocs), bedroom shoes, or slippers (Any footwear that may cause injury to the wearer or others must not be worn)
- Clothing which promotes alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or the use of controlled substances by words or symbols
- Clothing that contains profanity or nudity, depicts violence, or is sexual in nature by words or symbols
- Undergarments worn as an outer garment or any see-through clothing
- Any item of clothing or jewelry that creates a disruption of the school environment/learning activities or that poses a threat to the safety and well-being of students or staff

Required:

- Collared or dress shirts for males

WAGE & HOUR ISSUES

All employees will be compensated for work performed according to either their contract or their terms of employment. The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) requires overtime pay at time and a half for all eligible employees who work over forty hours (40) in any one workweek. The workweek begins on Sunday and ends on Saturday. Only actual hours worked applies when determining if 40 hours for the work week have been exceeded before overtime pay is due. If there is a holiday, sick, or vacation day during the week, then that period of time does not apply to the 40 hour requirement.

Employees can not make up missed time from one work week to another work week. This means that if the employee works 36 hours during one week and 44 hours during the second week, it does not average out to 40 hours a week and therefore no overtime is due. Each workweek stands as a separate period of time and the employee is due 4 hours overtime for the second week.

An employee is determined to be either Exempt from the overtime provisions of the FLSA or they are Non-Exempt from those same provisions.

If an employee is Exempt, this simply means that he/she is not eligible for overtime pay or compensatory time. If an employee is Non-Exempt, this simply means that he/she is due overtime pay or compensatory time off for hours worked over 40 in any one workweek. Also, any full-time employee, Exempt or Non-Exempt, who makes less than \$23,660 a year, is due overtime compensation at time and a half for any hours worked over forty (40) during any one workweek. If you have a question about whether you are an Exempt or Non-Exempt employee, contact the Employee Relations department.

Non-Exempt employees are eligible for compensatory time in lieu of overtime pay. If agreeable with both the employee and the supervisor, compensatory time may be taken in lieu of overtime compensation in accordance with Board policy. Compensatory time will be at the same rate as overtime earned, time and a half. Compensatory time can not accrue longer than thirty days. You must be given the time off, by Board policy, within thirty days or else you will be paid the equivalent overtime.

Exempt employees are not eligible for compensatory time. This includes administrators and most supervisory employees. Their work week does not necessarily end with just the forty hours worked per week. If required, Exempt employees may work beyond the forty (40) hours for no extra compensation or time off.

If you are a Non-Exempt employee and your supervisor asks you to work past your scheduled time to leave work, then you are due to be paid for that extra time worked or given compensatory time off. You will be compensated at either straight time or time and a half, depending on whether forty work hours were exceeded during the work week.

This holds true whether you work only thirty minutes or two hours. As an example, if you work forty hours and thirty minutes during the week, then you will be paid for forty hours at straight time and thirty minutes at time and a half.

Your work day does not necessarily start the moment you walk on campus, work site, or in your department. If you arrive early to eat breakfast or talk to other employees, then that time is not work time and does not start

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your work day. Your work day starts, and is recorded on Kronos or your time card, when you begin your work routine or are available for work and waiting on orders from your supervisor.

Also, your work day does not necessarily end when you leave the work site; it may end before you leave the premises. Your work day ends when you stop your work process for the day. Any time spent talking to other employees about non-work related issues or taking care of personal business is not counted as work time and is not to be included on Kronos or your time card.

You are required to accurately enter on your time card both the starting time and ending time of your work day. If the supervisor asks you to work over but not to enter the extra time on your time card, then you must contact Human Resources so that we may correct the situation. If you are finishing something for the day and it runs over ten minutes, then that ten minutes will be added to your time card. You will either be given time off during that week or you will be paid for the overtime or given compensatory time off within the next thirty days.

You are required to accurately account for any lunch time (unpaid) taken in Kronos or on your time card during the work day. If the supervisor asks you to work through lunch but not to enter the extra time on your time card, then you must contact Human Resources so that we may correct the situation. Lunch breaks that are not duty free must be accounted for as compensatory time or paid to the employee.

Work as a volunteer after hours is generally not compensated, unless it is performing the same duties for which you are paid. This normally occurs when the employee volunteers to work at the school as a parent. The volunteer work generally should be in a capacity other than what the employee is paid to do. If the employee volunteers to work doing essentially the same duties that they are paid to do during the day, then that work time will be compensated.

An exception may be volunteer work that is for an organization separate from the school system and paid for out of that organization's funds and not paid through the employee's payroll account. If there are any questions, please call Human Resources to clarify what volunteer activity will and will not be compensated.

Lunch and break periods are not required for any group of employees, either certified or support personnel. If the job responsibilities allow either a lunch and/or a break time, the following guides will be followed.

Lunch period:

Non-Exempt employees

- Lunch periods are 30 minutes
- Lunch periods are duty free
- Lunch periods are not compensated
 - However, if the job responsibilities of Non-Exempt employees require them to work through their lunch period, then they will be compensated for that 30 minute period

Break Period:

Non-Exempt employees

- Break periods are 15 minutes
- Break periods are compensated
- Maximum of 2 per day

Mileage for business use of your personal vehicle will be reimbursed at the prevailing rate as set by the state of Alabama. In general, if your job duties require it or if a supervisor requests or requires you to use your vehicle for school or system related business (except travel to and from your home to the work site), then you are to be reimbursed for this expense.

There are no exceptions; if you are required to use your personal vehicle for system business then you are due to be reimbursed for that use. Some examples are as follows:

- Travel to required meetings. However, if you are taking time off during the day to attend a meeting that is not required, then mileage is not to be reimbursed.
- Travel to make bank deposits. If the deposit is made after leaving school and the bank is not on the route home, then only the mileage for distance deviated from your normal route to the bank is to be reimbursed.

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- Travel to the central office. However, if it is to take care of your personal business and not related to your job duties, then mileage is not to be reimbursed.
- Travel to different work sites. However, if system transportation is offered but refused, then mileage is not to be reimbursed.
- Travel to purchase system supplies.

KRONOS TIME AND ATTENDANCE

The KRONOS Time and Attendance reporting system is used for all employees. It is a biometric recognition system and requires an employee ID number and fingerscan to account for the time or attendance of all employees. The system is designed not only to protect the school system against fraud by unscrupulous employees, it also helps protect the employee should there be a dispute as to whether the employee was where he/she was supposed to be at the time they were supposed to be there.

Each employee has the responsibility to make sure their attendance is reported in KRONOS. All employees will maintain a daily record of time worked by signing in/out at KRONOS terminals and reporting absences in SubFinder.

General Information:

The KRONOS system is designed to allow an approximate six minute period before and after the normal clock-in time that does not affect the total time worked for the employee. Basically, this means that if the normal clock-in time for the employee is 8:00 am, then the employee may clock-in anywhere from five minutes and 59 seconds before the hour to five minutes and 59 seconds after the hour and the start time for the employee will be shown as 8:00 am. The same applies at the end of the work period when the employee is to clock-out.

The reason there is a grace period before and after the hour for clock-ins and clock-outs is that normally the late clock-ins and early clock-outs will offset themselves in the long run for normal employees. However, continually arriving late every day and leaving early every day will result in disciplinary action since you are not fulfilling the requirements for a normal workday.

As explained under the Wage & Hour section, employees are classified under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) as either Exempt or Non-Exempt.

Exempt employees:

1. Exempt employees are ***not*** eligible for overtime pay. They are paid on a salary basis. The general work day is eight hours a day for central office and support personnel and seven to eight hours a day for school based personnel, depending on their job schedule. However, employees are often required to work additional hours without compensation in order to complete the job at hand. By the same token, if they work less than their scheduled hours, it does not make a difference in the amount they are paid, since they are paid on a salary basis (except as noted in item (c) below).
 - a. KRONOS is used for these employees strictly for attendance purposes. It is not to measure whether they are at work exactly eight hours a day.
 - i. However, continually working less than the expected work day will result in disciplinary action, which could eventually lead to termination.
 - b. These employees usually are the administrators, coordinators, supervisors, managers, foremen and professional employees whose primary duty is the performance of administrative, office or non-manual work directly related to the management or general operations of the system.
 - i. Also, by law, teachers are automatically exempt from the overtime provisions of the FLSA.
 - c. Since the school system has established leave policies, should exempt employees work less than one-half of their half day schedule, they will be charged with a half day absence. If they work less than one-quarter of their whole day schedule, then they will be charged with a whole day absence. If they work more than one-quarter and less than three-quarters of their whole day schedule, they will be charged with a half day absence.

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Non-Exempt employees:

1. Non-Exempt employees are eligible for overtime pay. They are paid on an hourly basis and are due overtime pay or compensatory time off. The general work day is eight hours a day and, if required to work additional hours, it will be with additional compensation.
2. This additional compensation will be either straight time up to 40 hours worked a week or time and a half for any hours worked over 40 hours a week.
 - a. KRONOS is used for these employees for time-keeping purposes. It is to first measure (1) whether they are at work and then (2) how much time should be paid to them.
 - i. Normally, the employee must clock-out for non-paid periods, such as lunch. However, this depends on the requirements of the employee's job responsibilities. There are some employees who are on duty from the time they clock-in to when they clock-out at the end of the day. Generally these employees are security personnel and some aides/paraprofessionals.
 - b. Usually the Non-Exempt employees are the clerks, Child Nutrition personnel, custodians, bus drivers, aides/paraprofessionals, trades, craft and manual labor personnel.
3. Non-exempt employees that do not work total hours scheduled each week will be reported as a shortage. It is the employee's responsibility to report shortage code to the timekeepers. If not reported, the timekeeper will use short-unpaid. Shortage time will be reported to payroll in half and whole days. The appropriate shortage will be deducted from the employee's leave.

Shortage codes available are:

SHORT-UNPD	-Default- Unpaid time and the employee will be docked
SHORT-SCK	-Apply to sick leave and HR124 is required for payroll processing
SHORT-PERS	-Apply to personal leave and HR124 is required for payroll processing
SHORT-VAC	-Apply to vacation leave and HR124 is required for payroll processing (12 month employees only)
SHORT-FLEX	-Apply to FLEX leave and HR124 is required for payroll processing (12 month employees only)

Kronos And Payroll Operating Guidelines And Procedures:

The following operating guidelines are for maintaining time and attendance in KRONOS. The guidelines were approved by the board of commissioners on July 28, 2009.

All employees:

1. All employees are required to maintain attendance by using Kronos.
2. Most employees are required to take a 30-minute break for each worked shift.
3. A six minute delay is configured on the Kronos terminal before and after start/end time.
4. All employees are accountable for days worked as listed in the payroll calendar. Unsupported days will be docked according to service report. Complete Kronos Individual Time Record form (HR4500A) for missed or rejected punches each week and return to timekeeper for entry into Kronos. Provide system error code and/or explanation of missed punched. If you have a missed punch or punched incorrectly, you must complete HR- 4500A form with the correct start/end time and justification for change. The HR-4500As should be completed and signed by the employee, not the clerk, and approved by the principal, department head, or supervisor.
5. Complete Kronos Individual Time Record form (HR4500A) when reporting to or leaving sites without a Kronos terminal. Punch in/out where a terminal is available. Return completed form each week to timekeeper.
6. Complete HR124 (if applicable) each week. Provide the 27-digit account number for professional development when necessary.
7. All applicable forms (HR4500A, HR124, etc) must be submitted to the timekeeper and/or bookkeeper by Tuesday of each week. Missed punches, incorrect punches, absences not reported in SubFinder and not corrected by the above procedures will be submitted to payroll as unpaid days and unsupported days will be docked according to service report. Approved corrections will be paid on the next regular pay period.
8. Report all absences in SubFinder. Each day's absence from work must be reported in SubFinder. If you cannot get through to report an absence in SubFinder, you must complete HR-4500A form with

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the date and type of absence. The HR-4500As should be completed and signed by the employee, not the clerk, and approved by the principal, department head, or supervisor. You must also submit a completed HR-124 form along with the HR- 4500A, if applicable.

9. When leave is depleted and not available, the employee's leave will be unpaid.
10. All substitutes (including interims) must be validated and reported in SubFinder prior to the job assignment.
11. Substitutes are automatically updated in Kronos if entered correctly in SubFinder. Substitutes are required to be scheduled in SubFinder to receive pay as indicated on the Kronos service report.
12. Current leave balance will be maintained in SubFinder. Contact HR System Support at 221-4580 for discrepancies.
13. All employees can review their own time card in Kronos. User name and password is required to view timecard.
14. User Name: First and Last initials + last six of SSN
15. Password: default is "kronos"
16. Contact the timekeeper if there is a discrepancy on the time card.
17. Absences reported in SubFinder will automatically update Kronos with leave taken.
18. All substitutes must be entered in SubFinder for accurate reporting to payroll and Kronos.
19. Ensure each day worked or absence is accounted for in Kronos for payroll processing. Total days and/or hours required for the pay period must balance according to the payroll calendar. Pay will be docked for days not worked in the pay period.
20. Failure to follow procedures for maintaining attendance may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES FOR EXEMPT AND NON-EXEMPT PERSONNEL

Exempt personnel: administrators, managers, teachers, superintendents, etc.

1. Exempt employees will punch-in at a Kronos terminal daily when reporting to work. (Including weekends if applicable). One entry required for full day attendance.
2. Exempt employees will punch out when leaving for a half day. Two entries required if working a half day.
3. Exempt employees will not punch for meals.
4. Exempt employees are not eligible for overtime.
5. Itinerant teachers may have access to multiple schools upon approval from supervisor.

Non-Exempt personnel: clerks, custodians, cafeteria personnel, paraprofessionals, bus drivers, aides, maintenance, etc.

1. Non-exempt employees will punch in/out at a Kronos terminal daily when reporting to work and leaving for the day (including weekends if applicable).
2. Non-exempt employees must punch for lunch.
3. Short Meal – a punched meal of less than 30 minutes will round to 30 minutes. For example: an employee punches for his meal for 21 minutes, it would be considered a 30-minute meal.
4. Medium Meal – a punched meal between 30 minutes and 1 hr will round to 30 minutes. For example: an employee punches for his meal for 45 minutes, it would be considered a 30-minute meal.
5. Long Meal – a punched meal of over 1 hour will include 30 minutes paid and will not round. For example: an employee punches for his meal for 1 hour and 15 minutes, it would be considered a 45-minute meal.
6. Non-exempt employees must work assigned hours each week, not unless leave is taken for time off from work.

GUIDELINES FOR ATTENDANCE IF ABSENCE LESS THAN A HALF DAY

- **Exempt:** For each four hour period, if the employee is off work for **over** two hours, then 1/2 day will be deducted with paid leave or it will be unpaid.
 1. An *exception* to this could be office staff coming in late and then working late for a full four hour period. If leave for this period of missed work has been appropriately approved with an HR-124, then paid leave will be applied, otherwise it will be unpaid.
 2. If the employee misses more than six hours work for one eight hour work day (five hours for a 7 1/2 hour work day), then a full day will be deducted or leave applied as indicated above.

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- **Non-exempt:** Leave or unpaid time will be as actual missed work. If leave for this period of missed work as been appropriately approved with an HR-124, then paid leave will be applied, otherwise it will be unpaid.
 1. Absences are required to be approved by a HR-124 and input into the Subfinder system. If not approved by a HR-124, then it will be unpaid.
 2. Day to day sick leave is not required to be approved on a HR-124. The employee must report the sick leave in Subfinder.

CORRECTING LEAVE CHANGES IN PAYROLL

1. Leave submitted to payroll will be processed according to the service report.
2. Corrections will not be made after 30 days. The principal, department head, or supervisor must send a request in writing to the Payroll Supervisor within the 30-day period asking that their service report be changed. The memo must state the reasons for this request including a copy of the timecard and leave form.
3. Approved corrections will be processed on the next regular pay day.
4. It is the EMPLOYEE'S responsibility to submit an HR-124 form for AVAILABLE leave. Adjustments will not
5. Be made when an employee requests leave that is not available. The HR-124s should be completed and signed by the employee, not the clerk, and approved by the principal, department head, or supervisor.
6. All applicable leave forms MUST be submitted each week in order for the employee to use the leave requested.

PAYROLL

All Board employees shall be paid in accordance with the salary schedule adopted for the particular budget year. All regular employees of the Board will be paid either monthly or semi-monthly. Those employees paid on a monthly basis are paid on the last day of the month. Semi-monthly employees will be paid on the 15th of the month and the last day of the month.

With the exceptions of deductions for absences not covered by paid leave and those required by law, all categories of deductions from salary shall be subject to Board approval and/or voluntary on the part of the individual employee.

Pay increases mandated by state law shall be implemented on the date dictated by said law. No mandated pay raises shall be implemented retroactively unless the Board takes affirmative steps to do so.

Full-time employees work a set number of days during the year for which he/she is compensated. Different groups of employees have different lengths of employment based on what they do. The length of the employment year can range from 182 days to 260 days, depending on the type employee and whether he/she works in the central office, elementary school, middle school, high school, or with support services.

Twelve month employees will either work 240 or 260 days a year, depending on their date of hire. Unless covered by Annual Leave, Personal Days, or Accumulated Sick Days for illnesses, employees will not be paid for days not worked.

Example of some, not all, scheduled work days:

- 260 days Principals, Central Office staff, etc.
- 202 days Resource Teachers, Vocational Teachers, School staff, etc
- 197 days Custodians, etc.
- 191 days Cafeteria Managers
- 192 days Attendance Officers, etc.
- 187 days Teachers, Paraprofessionals/Aides, CNP Assistants, etc.

School based employees, who are not twelve month employees, do not work during parts of the summer months; however, we pay all full-time employees on a twelve month basis. Each pay period a certain number of

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days are set aside to pay for the months during the summer that the employees do not work. These summer payout checks are for time worked during the year but withheld to pay employees during the summer months.

Those employees hired for less than twelve months and who are hired at the beginning of the contract year should receive their full pay during each month worked. However, employees who start work after the start of their contract year will receive a lower salary for the months worked during the first year because they will not work their full contracted number of days. All employees who do not work their entire contract period will receive a prorated salary.

This same type of calculation will also occur if the employee is on an unpaid leave of absence for an extended period of time. A significant amount of unpaid leave will change the total of your monthly pay for the remainder of the contract period.

After the employee returns to work from the leave of absence, the payroll department will recalculate the monthly rate of pay depending on how many days are left in the contract year. Contact the payroll department if you have concerns about your pay after an extended unpaid leave of absence.

- Salary Example 1: 187 day employee is hired at a salary of \$18,000 a year and starts work at the beginning of the contract year. He/she will be paid \$1,500 per month. ($\$18,000/12=\$1,500$)
- Salary Example 2: 187 day employee is hired at a salary of \$18,000 a year. He/she is hired after the beginning of the year and starts work during October. He/she will only work 140 days for the year, therefore he/she will be paid only \$1,347.59 per month. ($((\$18,000 / 187 = \$96.26 \text{ daily rate }) \times 140 \text{ days} = \$13,475.94 \text{ for the year }) / 10 \text{ months that checks are due} = \$1,347.59$) The following year the monthly salary will become the regular salary of \$1,500 as the employee will start work at the beginning of the contract year.

INSURANCE

The following are some general guidelines from the Public Education Employees' Health Insurance Plan (PEEHIP) as found in their Handbook. If there are any questions regarding coverage, call or write the PEEHIP office in Montgomery at 201 South Union Street, Montgomery, AL 36104. The mailing address is P. O. Box 302150, Montgomery, AL 36130-2150, (334) 517-7000 or Toll Free (877) 517-0020.

Full-time employees and permanent part-time employees are eligible for coverage with PEEHIP. A permanent part-time employee is also eligible for PEEHIP if he/she agrees to payroll deduction for a pro rata portion of the premium cost for a full-time employee. The amount of the deduction is based on the percentage of time the permanent part-time worker is employed.

The Open Enrollment period usually begins on July 1st and ends on August 31st in order for the changes to be effective October 1. All open enrollment forms and written requests must be postmarked no later than August 31st for the PEEHIP office to accept the request. Members can add new types of coverage, dependent coverage or change coverage types during this open enrollment period.

The PEEHIP office will be determining and managing the premium deductions; therefore, active and retired members will be required to send all insurance changes to the PEEHIP office. Active employees will no longer go through their employer to make insurance changes. Prior to the payroll cutoff date, the PEEHIP office will send an electronic file to each employer authorizing the payroll deductions for each employee. The payroll deduction amount will be based on the insurance plan(s) you have selected. If the payroll deduction is incorrect, you will need to contact the PEEHIP office instead of your employer.

Summary of Coverage is available on the web at <http://www.rsa-al.gov/PEEHIP/peehip.html>

Insurance Premiums and Enrollments

The PEEHIP office determines and manages the premium deductions; therefore, active and retired members will be required to send all insurance changes to the PEEHIP office. Members will no longer go to their employer to make insurance changes. Prior to the payroll cutoff date, the PEEHIP office will send an electronic file to each employer authorizing the payroll deductions for each employer. The payroll deduction amount will