

## 16.0 PAYROLL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Payroll Office works under the supervision of the Vice President of Fiscal Affairs and is accountable for ensuring that the payroll subsystems are operated and reported on the basis consistent with University procedures, policies and other guidelines applicable to fund expenditures.

The University utilizes the Banner System Payroll/Human Resources to maintain employee payroll information and to process the University's various payrolls: biweekly, monthly and student payrolls. The Payroll Office is responsible for maintaining accurate payroll information on each employee to be paid by the payroll system. This information takes several forms, with some of the data elements being maintained by the University's Office of Human Resources. The Payroll Office must have accurate salary or hourly rate data, withholding data, and benefit data for each employee on the system's database; this information may change periodically between payrolls during the year.

Certain departments on campus cannot observe the standard work schedule due to the nature of the service they render. Some examples include Public Safety, Facilities Management, Agriculture, etc. Employees in these departments may have extended work schedules. Employees in these areas may have work schedule variations to meet the departmental demands, but in no case should such variations result in a work week in excess of 40 hours on a regular basis.

### 16.1 PAYROLL PERIODS

The University has established 3 payroll periods for salaried, hourly-paid personnel and students.

- **Biweekly Payroll.** The biweekly payroll is for hourly-paid employees who are on timecards/timesheets. The payroll period for biweekly begins at 12:01 a.m. Saturdays and runs fourteen consecutive days. Employees on a biweekly payroll are paid on alternate Fridays by their departments. Timesheets are due in the Payroll Office by 12 noon on the Monday following the pay period end date. Late timesheet submissions will be processed and paid on the next scheduled pay date. The Payroll Office performs the following steps for all timesheets: ensures each timesheet has been signed by the employee and the department head; checks the time card for verification of the time checked in and out; compares the hours recorded on the timesheet to the punched time cards to ensure accuracy; separates the hours for off-time, vacation and sick leave, using the codes provided in the system; and ensures that the time off slips agree to the time listed on the timesheets. Time for hourly paid employees are computed weekly and rounded to the nearest quarter hour, 7 minutes. For example, an employee having 22 minutes work time would receive .50 hours credit; an employee having 21 minutes work time would receive .25 hours credit.

- **Monthly Payroll.** The monthly payroll includes those employees who are considered exempt by the Fair Labor Standards Acts. The Payroll Office does not have to request or process timesheets on these employees. The Payroll Office does not change the salaried employees pay types to reflect the amount of sick leave and vacation which the salaried employees may have taken during that period. The salaried employees' sick leave and vacation balances are maintained by the Human Resources Office. Monthly checks are issued on the last working day of each month, unless otherwise specified by official memorandum. Employees in the Professional and Administrative-Exempt category are paid monthly and are not eligible for overtime premium. The only time records are those to indicate time off (annual leave, sick leave, etc.).
- **Student Payroll.** The student payroll is split between two types: work-study and research. The Financial Aid Office handles the timesheets and accumulation of hours for work-study students and sends the information to payroll for payment. The Payroll Office handles the timesheets for research students. The student payroll is paid on the 10<sup>th</sup> of every month with pay day being the Friday if the 10<sup>th</sup> falls on a Saturday and Monday if the 10<sup>th</sup> falls on a Sunday. A cover letter, schedule and timesheets should be submitted to the Payroll Office for research students and to Financial Aid for work-study students. Timesheets are due on the last working day of each month. Late submission of timesheets will be processed and paid on the next scheduled pay date. The Payroll Office reconciles the research students' hours for payment against their class schedules to ensure they are working the proper times and not while they should be in class. Work-study and research students are not allowed to work when they are scheduled for class or when the University is closed unless justified. As described for hourly bi-weekly employees, the timesheets are completed to record the students' hours worked. The timesheets are signed by the students and their supervisor.

## 16.2 DIRECT DEPOSIT

The Payroll Office uses a system for electronically placing an employee's earnings in a checking or savings account at the Federal Reserve affiliated bank or financial institution of the employee's choice. The system is known as Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT).

Direct deposit benefits both the employee and the University. The benefits to the employee of direct deposit include: no lost or stolen checks; no unclaimed or uncashed checks; elimination of long payroll and banking lines and wasted time cashing checks; and the assurance that payments will be automatically deposited when the employee is on vacation, sick leave or off campus.

Employees should set up direct deposit by filling out a **Direct Deposit Authorization form** and submitting it, along with a voided check, to the Payroll Office.

### **16.3 PAYMENTS, WITHHOLDINGS AND DEDUCTIONS**

All new employees complete their tax withholding and deduction forms at the Office of Human Resources. The Office of Human Resources completes the withholding data on the employees in the payroll system, which automatically updates the employees' data in the system.

Existing employees make changes to their withholding deductions in the Payroll Office or through Banner Self Service for federal deductions. For changes to state deductions, employees will have to complete a form and submit it to the Payroll Office. Once forms are received, the Payroll Office makes changes in the Banner system.

### **16.4 PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS**

Deductions for federal and state taxes as well as social security will be withheld from payroll checks as required by law. In addition, required deductions for PERS and Optional Retirement Programs will be withheld where applicable.

Employees are urged to review these deductions each month to make certain they are accurate. Any discrepancies or questions regarding payroll deductions should be addressed to the Payroll Office.

### **16.5 SALARY ADVANCES**

Employees are urged to handle their financial affairs responsibly so that obligations will not become an administrative burden. It is the policy of the University to disallow salary advances for any reason.

### **16.6 GARNISHMENT OF WAGES**

Acceptance and settlement of just and honest debts are considered as marks of personal financial responsibility, and employees are expected to handle such affairs in a manner that will not create adverse reflections upon the reputation of the University.

Should a garnishment subpoena be received by the University, the employee will be contacted, and every effort will be made to have him or her satisfy the creditor and have the garnishment withdrawn. In the event a release of garnishment cannot be obtained, the Payroll Office has no other choice but to precede with the garnishment withholdings as required by law.

An employee might avoid a formal garnishment of salary by agreeing to assign a portion of his or her salary to the appropriate court until the judgment has been paid in full. Such arrangements must be initiated by the employee with the court, and the University must receive the appropriate legal documents prior to commencing withholding.

Alcorn State University will recognize other court ordered wage assignments as defined by Mississippi law and make the necessary remittals to the appropriate agency, etc. An example of this would be child support payments.

### **16.7 FEDERAL AND STATE TAX LEVIES**

If an employee neglects or refuses to pay his federal or state tax liability after notice and demand, the Mississippi Department of Revenue and/or IRS can collect this amount plus expenses and penalties by serving a levy on the said amount to the University.

Upon receipt of a Notice of Levy, the Payroll Office will contact the employee and make every effort to assist in settlement of the obligation. If the employee has not made proper arrangements by the next payday, the required remittal will be withheld and forwarded to the agency. Should salary or wages be insufficient to cover the tax obligation, the employee should realize that said levy will continue until obligations are completely settled.

### **16.8 FALSIFICATION OF TIME RECORDS**

Employees who intentionally falsify office time records may be subject to disciplinary action to include suspension or termination. Employees who “punch” other co-workers in or out are considered to have willingly falsified such records unless they have been instructed to take such action by their immediate supervisor.

### **16.9 FINAL CHECKS**

Employees terminating their employment with the institution will receive their final check on their regular payday. Employees will be paid for all hours worked and up to 240 hours of unused vacation leave (pending verification by the Office of Human Resources) on the subsequent payroll.

### **16.10 WITHHOLDING OF PAY**

Alcorn State University is authorized to withhold paychecks or deduct from paychecks amounts owed by employees to the institution for any fine, fee, penalty or other financial obligation(s).

### **16.11 HOLIDAY PAY**

If a non-exempt employee is required to work on an officially designated University holiday as a result of the operating demands of their department, the University will pay the employee time worked plus holiday pay for all holidays except Christmas Eve and Christmas Day and New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day.

During the Christmas break, employees who are required to work will receive time and a half for any day during the holiday break except Christmas Eve and Christmas Day and New Year’s Eve

and New Year's Day. On Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, employees who work will receive double time plus holiday pay.

All employees receiving holiday pay must have worked the day before the holiday or be on official leave from the University in order to get paid for the holiday.