



THE STATE OF FLORIDA
JUSTICE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMISSION

Post Office Box 1654 (32302)
227 North Bronough Street, Suite 2100
Tallahassee, Florida 32301



Alton L. "Rip" Colvin, Jr.
Executive Director

(850) 488-2415
Toll Free (866) 355-7902
FAX (850) 488-8944

www.justiceadmin.org

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Brad King, Chair
State Attorney
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Public Defender
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State Attorney
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Public Defender

MEMORANDUM #034-13HR

TO: Agency Administrators
FROM: Carolyn Horwich, J.D., Director of Human Resources
THROUGH: Rip Colvin, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Processing New Hires Online
DATE: November 4, 2013

This year has seen many changes in the Human Resources realm. You have had to deal with Lump Sum Bonus Plans, salary increases, the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act – and have addressed these workload burdens superbly. Another change is coming down the pike, but this change will *lessen* your workload instead of add to it.

A little background . . .

Two years ago, 91% of all open enrollment changes were completed through the People First website. Last year, 95% of all open enrollment changes were completed through the website. Employees are embracing the opportunity to enroll or make the changes to their benefits themselves.

This year, all open enrollment (Oct. 21-Nov. 8) changes will be completed through the website (staff without a computer is able to call People First to make those changes). There are no forms to process by your offices, which saves you time to work on other pressing issues.

The Department of Management Services (DMS) is moving forward with implementing an online system only for new hires, as well. Our relationship with DMS is similar to that of our relationship with the Bureau of State Payrolls – since we use their data systems, we follow their rules. As you know, online enrollment for New Hires has been coming for 2 years.

Change is coming . . .

For coverage beginning January 1, 2014, all newly hired employees will be required to enroll online for any desired benefits. In fact, other than spouse program enrollment, flexible spending accounts termination of employment, and “new” retiree insurance, all QSC changes must be

done online or by telephone to the People First Service Center, as well. JAC understands that for some agencies, moving to an online system without the availability of forms signifies a major change in how you conduct business.

Once a new employee is entered into the People First system, he or she will receive as many as three notices, via the U.S. Postal Service, to sign up for benefits. The first notice arrives shortly after they are entered into the People First system. If the employee has not signed up or declined benefits within 30 days, a second notice will be sent to the employee. The third notice is sent to the employee shortly before the 60 day signup period expires. Employees can go online at any time of day or night, at home or the office, or call the People First Service Center week days up until 6 p.m. ET, to sign up.

Employees will no longer be burdened with having to provide marriage, birth, or adoption certificates and instead will certify the truthfulness of the application. Online enrollment for new hires requires that the *employee* certify the accuracy of the information regarding dependents. This certification should not be made by someone other than the employee. If the certification is inaccurate, the employee will be liable – not the agency. And, since it is the *employee* certifying the accuracy of the information, there will no longer be agency error letters. Only the employee will be able to make changes or corrections.

A good practice may be for the HR Director to request that agency employees provide them with a copy of the Confirmation statement received by the employee within a certain time period so the agency will know that the employee has signed up for benefits.

We're listening. . .

Some agencies have expressed concern that an employee could get lost in the shuffle of this new way of doing business. To assist the agencies we serve, we are offering the opportunity for your HR contact group to be notified via e-mail as soon as a complete new hire authorization has been input to the People First system. In this way, agency HR staff will not only be able to quickly access the new employee's People First I.D. number, but will also have an e-mail message from JAC to serve as a reminder to check on the employee's benefits status.

If you wish to get these confirmation e-mail notifications, please let me know no later than Tuesday, November 12, 2013. In order to receive this service – you must opt in.

And we like visuals. . .

You have already received the PowerPoint presentation that will be discussed through a Webinar on Tuesday, November 5, 2013 and posted to our website under "Benefits". We hope you find these efforts helpful.

Thank you.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 850-488-2415 or Carolyn.Horwich@justiceadmin.org.