

## Staff Town Hall notes

Notes from remarks by UC Merced Chief Human Resources Office Nicole Pollack at the Staff Town Hall virtual meeting Thursday, Aug. 30, 2020.

Here are programs developed since the COVID-19 pandemic was declared. Information about each can be found on the Human Resources website.

- **Federal Qualified Disaster-Relief Payment (QDP) program:** Payments for reasonable and necessary expenses incurred by designated employee after March 13 in connection with their essential, on-site work for the university. Developed for UC Merced in partnership with Human Resources, Travel Management, and Treasury and Disbursements. For more information, email Travel Management at [travel@ucmerced.edu](mailto:travel@ucmerced.edu)
- **Job Exchange Bank:** [A program](#) for represented and non-represented UC Merced staff. Designed to identify staff who have additional capacity and match them with departments and units that can use their abilities for tasks, assignments or projects. Departments that need staff support can complete [this form](#). Departments that have staff available for redeployment can complete [this form](#).
- **Maximum Vacation Accruals:** On June 29, President Napolitano approved a [temporary increase](#) to a four-month extension for eligible staff, effective retroactively from June 1 through Dec. 31, 2020.
- **Catastrophic Leave Bank:** We already had a catastrophic leave program in which employees could donate to an individual. We now have a [Catastrophic Leave Bank](#) where an individual can donate to the general employee population. More information: [benefits@ucmerced.edu](mailto:benefits@ucmerced.edu)
- **Conflict Resolution Coaching:** This program offers a private partner for UC Merced employees to encourage and inspire change and action in times of challenge and conflict. [Go here](#) for more information.
- **Sick Leave:** Through Dec. 31, qualifying staff may use all accrued sick leave if they are unable to work or telework because they are caring for their child while the child is not physically present at a school or place of care (or with a childcare provider) due to COVID-19 precautions. A similar expansion may be available to represented staff, subject to collective bargaining. If you have questions, please email Human Resources at [hr@ucmerced.edu](mailto:hr@ucmerced.edu).
- **Keep Calm and Remote On:** Biweekly online workshops for sharing experiences of working remotely and building a supportive community. [More information](#).
- **Telecommute Resources:** What do you need to get organized, gather tools and stay connected while working from home. [This checklist](#) is a great place to start.
- UC Merced has implemented several employment-leave assistance programs, such as [UC Expanded Paid Administrative Leave \(PAL\)](#), [Emergency Paid Sick Leave \(EPSL\)](#), [Expanded Family and Medical Leave \(EFML\)](#), and [CARES](#).
- [Enhanced telehealth](#) options and benefits
- [Waived cost](#) for coronavirus screening and testing
- [Allowable changes](#) in medical plans, health and dependent care due to COVID.
- **Employee Assistance Program:** EAP now has enhanced resources related to the pandemic. Live webinars are free for all staff. Here are some upcoming webinars, available on each date from noon to 1 p.m. and from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.:
  - Aug. 26: Combating Perfectionism
  - Sept. 23: Coping with Loss

- Oct. 28: Organization for Life
- Nov. 18: Waving Anxiety Goodbye: Strategies to Manage Anxiety
- Dec. 16: Embracing You: The Power of Acceptance
- **Coming Soon**
  - Voluntary Separation Program
  - More resources for working alternate schedules due to childcare needs

Specific FAQs from the town hall fielded by Nicole Pollack and other Staff Town Hall guests can be found in the [Staff section](#) of the Campus Ready website.