Inclement Weather/Emergency Closing Policy Reminder (Part 1 of an Intermittent Series)

Given the recent snow and ice, this is a good time to remind your faculty and staff about the Inclement Weather/Emergency Closing Policy at http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/inclement-weatheremergency-closure/ and suggest they call 703-993-1000 or visit the Mason homepage on days when the weather is inclement to receive guidance on Mason's schedule for that day. Please also remind department heads that they must communicate with their designated employees so they know they need to report to work on days when Mason cancels classes and closes administrative offices.

It's also a good opportunity to remind your faculty and staff there may be people who could benefit from having a formal telework agreement on file. Arrangements can be made in advance to have remote access to Mason through a Virtual Private Network (VPN) if needed.

Teleworkers (if it is their scheduled telework day) and remote workers continue to work even if the University is closed or on a modified schedule unless the weather or emergency impacts the alternate location of the flexible worker (e.g. a regional power outage). Having telework agreements and technology in place in advance can come in handy if Mason experiences an extended weather event or other emergency. Details are available on the Flexible Work site. Stay tuned for additional information in future Instant HR/Payrolls on inclement weather/emergency plans and designated employees.
Reminder: SelectPlus  A reminder that during inclement weather and other challenges that can alter your caregiving routine, Select Plus may be a helpful resource for you. Mason faculty, staff, and graduate students have free access to this database of all types of caregivers. As we head into snow and flu season, lining up your backup care may be on your "to-do" list. Let SelectPlus help. Mason's program page is at http://www.selectplus.com/georgemasonu.

   Important note: Mason does not own, sponsor, or endorse SelectPlus.com. It is your responsibility to carefully screen and check the references of any caregivers, including those who are listed on SelectPlus.com, before you retain their services.

2014 Mason DMV2Go Schedule
Take care of your DMV business at a convenient Mason location. The 2014 schedule is at DMV2Go.

VRS Changes Record Keepers for 457 Defined Compensation Plan
In January 2014, the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) will change record keepers for the Virginia 457 Deferred Compensation Plan from ING to ICMA-RC. For current faculty and staff who have supplemental 457 accounts, their investment options will not change; only the vendor who manages the account. There will be a blackout period as the vendors change over which will run from December 31, 2013 until around January 10, 2014. During this blackout period, participants may review their accounts by going online or by calling ING at 1-VRS-DC-PLAN1 (1-877-327-5261). However, they won’t be able to conduct transactions such as fund transfers or withdrawals. Funds will remain invested throughout the period, and the review-only function on the website will reflect daily changes in the market value of each account.

457 participants do not need to take any action during this record-keeping transition. The changeover will be handled electronically. Participating employees will not need to re-enroll or make any changes
to their accounts, and investment options remain the same. At the end of January, participants will receive a closing statement from ING showing the amount transitioned to ICMA-RC and a zero ending balance for ING.

After the transition is complete, participants will need to create a user ID and password to access their accounts with ICMA-RC through the VRS website (select the Defined Contributions tab and Account Log-in).

Faculty and staff can learn more about the transition to ICMA-RC including key dates, on the transition website for VRS members. If you have any questions please contact benefits at benefits@gmu.edu or 703-993-7756. This same information can also be found on the Benefits homepage at http://hr.gmu.edu/benefits.

VRS Hybrid Retirement Plan Information Summary
During the recent HR Liaison Meeting, there was a request to have a summary of the new VRS Hybrid Plan to assist HR liaisons with new hires. You can find this summary at http://hr.gmu.edu/benefits/retire/docs/VRSHybridInformation.pdf. If you have any questions about new hires or questions about the opt-in period for current VRS participants, additional information is available on the VRS website. The Benefits Team is also available to assist; please call 3.2600 or email them directly at benefits@gmu.edu.