

# ESSENTIAL NEWS FOR RF EMPLOYEES / RESEARCHERS



April 2015

## **Essential News for RF Employees/Researchers**

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## **New Fringe Benefit Rates**

The Fringe Benefit/Indirect Cost rate schedule has been updated on the Research and Sponsored Programs Website as of 3/31/2015. The updated chart can be viewed at this [link](#) on the website. Effective immediately, these new rates should be utilized in all proposal budgets. The new rates will be charged on your grants effective 7/1/2015. Annually, standardized rates are established and approved by the US Department of Health and Human Services for the Research Foundation for SUNY.

## **New Uniform Guidance**

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has combined many federal circulars into a single guidance document known as Uniform Guidance (Guidance, UG), or 2 CFR 200, that must be used by Federal agencies. These new regulations became effective December 26, 2014.

A **PI Quick Guide to Uniform Guidance** has been posted to the Research and Sponsored Programs website. To learn more about

major changes in the uniform guidance affecting Proposal Budgets and Charging of Direct Costs on Federal and Federal Flow-through Projects, view the quick guide at this [link](#). If you have any questions, contact Donna Scuto at [scutodl@buffalostate.edu](mailto:scutodl@buffalostate.edu) or at 878-6700, #5.

## **Cost Transfers – New Request Form Effective April 2015**

Occasionally, there are circumstances where it may be necessary to transfer expenditures to a sponsored project. Cost transfers should be timely (within 90 days of the cost being incurred), fully documented, conform to institution and sponsor standards of what is allowable and allocable, and include appropriate approvals. A new cost transfer request form is in place at Buffalo State and must be used to move a paid expense from one account to another. View the [form](#) and [policy](#) to learn more. Contact Donna Scuto at [scutodl@buffalostate.edu](mailto:scutodl@buffalostate.edu) or at 878-6700, #5 with any questions.

## **Minority / Women-owned Business Enterprises – M/WBE**

The Research Foundation for SUNY is committed to promoting the growth and development of Minority / Women-owned Businesses in New York State. SUNY and the Research Foundation are encouraged to make purchases using certified M/WBE entities where feasible and in the best interest of the institution. There is an increased emphasis in NYS proposal applications on meeting required levels of M/WBE participation. NY State maintains a directory of

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Certified M/WBE firms on its [website](#). For additional information, contact Carol Darstein, [darsteca@buffalostate.edu](mailto:darsteca@buffalostate.edu) when preparing proposals (pre-award) OR Carol Julian, [julianca@buffalostate.edu](mailto:julianca@buffalostate.edu) when making purchases (post-award).

### **Attention RF employees:**

#### ***VIRGIN PULSE -part of the RF Enterprise wide Wellness Initiative***

The RF kicked off its first ever enterprise-wide wellness program, administered by Virgin Pulse. Participants can earn up to \$100 in cash or gift cards each quarter for healthy behaviors like:

- 12,000 steps in one day – 80 points
- 30 minutes of cardio activity – 80 points
- Enter weight and/or blood pressure – 250 points (once per month)

Here's how the plan works. After you register for the program, you earn points called HealthMiles for exercise, nutrition, wellness challenges and quizzes. You can enter your activities yourself on the Virgin Pulse website, or upload information from your FitBit or apps like Endomondo and RunKeeper. (These are free for your tablet or smartphone.) If you don't have a FitBit and want to buy a similar wearable device to track your activity, you can purchase a Virgin Pulse Max through the program for a discounted price.

For every 2,000 HealthMiles you earn, you reach a new award level for that quarter. You can earn up to \$400 every 12 months!\* (*The IRS considers these payments as taxable income, so tax-withholding rules will be applied.*) You can use the money you earn to purchase gift cards, or you can have the money deposited directly into your bank account or use it to purchase wearable devices like Polar and Virgin Pulse Max. To get you off to a running start, you can earn 2,000 HealthMiles – enough to reach the first reward level – just for completing an online Health Risk Assessment! You can enroll in the wellness program any time by going online to [join.virginpulse.com/rfsuny](http://join.virginpulse.com/rfsuny).

Complete the registration steps and you're on your way to earning rewards! Be sure to enter your name exactly as it appears on your RF direct deposit or paycheck so that the Virgin Pulse system will recognize you. Speak with Chris Goff, [goffce@buffalostate.edu](mailto:goffce@buffalostate.edu) or Stephanie Gruarin, [gruarise@buffalostate.edu](mailto:gruarise@buffalostate.edu) for more information.

### **Leave Accruals to be Restored for November 19 2014, Snowstorm**

Due to technical failures in the new communication systems at the Governor's Office of Employee Relations (GOER), Buffalo State did not receive timely notification of the governor's authorization to close state offices on November 19, 2014. At that time, GOER determined that employees must charge accruals for absences on that day. Upon further review, GOER reconsidered its initial determination and decided that accruals will be restored for employees who were absent because of the storm on November 19.

The accrual restoration applies only to absences that were directly related to the storm. It does not apply to employees who were out on approved absences that were not storm related, such as sick leave or scheduled

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vacation. The Human Resources office of Sponsored Program Operations has communicated with all individuals to whom this applies. Contact Chris Goff, [goffice@buffalostate.edu](mailto:goffice@buffalostate.edu) with any additional questions.

### **The Research Foundation for SUNY- Buffalo State EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY STATEMENT**

It is the policy of The Research Foundation for SUNY - Buffalo State not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of his or her race, color, religion, sex, or national origin or because he or she is an individual with a disability or disabled veteran, Armed Forces service medal veteran, recently separated veteran, or active duty wartime or campaign badge veteran, or thereafter referred collectively as "protected veterans." It is also the policy of The Research Foundation for SUNY- Buffalo State to take affirmative action to employ and to advance in employment, all persons regardless of their status as individuals with disabilities or protected veterans, and to base all employment decisions only on valid job requirements. This policy shall apply to all employment actions, including but not limited to recruitment, hiring, upgrading, promotion, transfer, demotion, layoff, recall, termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation and selection for training, including apprenticeship, at all levels of employment.

### **CYBER CRIME- Yes, You Actually Are a Target**

If you have a computer, mobile device, an online account, email address, credit card, or engage in other types of online activity, you are worth money to cyber criminals.

#### **Why You Are Targeted**

Cyber criminals can easily target almost everyone in the world, with little or no cost, and at very little risk. Additionally, cyber criminals have become highly organized and efficient, enabling them to be more effective than ever.

#### **Protecting Yourself**

When cyber criminals attempt to hack people around the world, they are typically using relatively simple methods. By following some equally simple steps you can go a long way towards protecting yourself. Some steps we recommend include the following:

**Yourself:** You are the first line of defense against any cyber attackers. Many attacks begin with a cyber-criminal trying to trick or fool you, such as tricking you into opening an infected email attachment or fooling you into giving up your password over the phone. Common sense is your best defense: if something seems odd, suspicious or too good to be true, it is most likely an attack.

**Updating:** Make sure that any computer or mobile device you use is fully updated and has all the latest patches. This is important for your operating system, and any applications or plugins you are using. This will help protect yourself against the most common attacks.

**Passwords:** Use a strong, unique password for each of your accounts. That way when a website you use gets hacked and passwords are compromised your other accounts are safe. Also ensure that all your different devices

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are protected by a strong, unique password, PIN or some other type of locking mechanism. It is recommended that you use a Password Manager to keep track of all your different passwords.

**Credit Cards:** Check your financial statements often, we recommend at least weekly (monthly is not enough). As soon as you see any unauthorized transactions on your credit card, report it immediately to your card issuer. If your bank allows, set email or text message alerts for unusually large or odd transactions.

**Your Network:** Secure your home network Wi-Fi access point with a strong administrator password and ensure your Wi-Fi network requires a password for anyone to join it.

**Social Media:** The more Information you post online the more likely you may put yourself at risk. Not only can any information you post make it easier for cyber criminals to target and fool or trick you, but any information you post may actually identify you as a more valuable target.

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Your feedback is welcomed. Please share thoughts/comments at [rftcomm@buffalostate.edu](mailto:rftcomm@buffalostate.edu)