

Frequently Asked Questions

This resource is a compilation of questions regarding the UW's HR/Payroll Modernization (HR/P) project, including the implementation of Workday and redesigned HR and payroll business processes, that have arisen from discussions between the University and the unions representing UW employees. Please check back regularly, as this material will be continually updated.

Background, Project Scope, and Implementation

Who is affected by the UW's HR/P Modernization? Will this implementation include employees at Northwest Hospital and Valley Medical Center?

This project will affect all University of Washington employees, but not those employed by entities that are affiliated with the UW. Harborview and UW Medical Centers will be impacted by this modernization effort, but organizations such as the UW Medicine Neighborhood Clinics, Northwest, and Valley will not.

In addition to payroll, does Workday provide timekeeping functions?

Yes, timekeeping is completely integrated with Workday's other functions. Most of the University will utilize Workday for timekeeping, with a few exceptions. Employees who already use KRONOS, including those at Harborview, UW Medical Center, and potentially Housing and Food Services, will likely continue to use KRONOS instead of Workday for timekeeping.

Will use of KRONOS be expanded to employee populations currently not using KRONOS?

No. Currently there are discussions around possibly maintaining KRONOS as the timekeeping system for employee populations that use it now, but there is no plan to expand KRONOS to new employee populations.

Will in-person training for employees be conducted to ease the transition to Workday?

Yes, several training sessions will be conducted surrounding implementation, with attention to employees who are not native English-speakers. Communications will continue after implementation as well, and are built out at least through June of 2016.

How will Workday handle all of the different payroll practices used by different departments and units?

HR/Payroll Modernization will standardize practices and processes across the University everywhere it makes sense to do so, while accommodating necessary differences. The intention is to apply uniform best practices while remaining in compliance with each of UW's union contracts.

Does the \$750K approximate annual savings from implementing biweekly payroll cycle include money saved from the transition to KRONOS?

The \$750K approximate annual savings from implementing biweekly payroll cycle was calculated after KRONOS was implemented at Harborview and UW Medical Center.

Why is Workday going live in January 2016 instead of coinciding with the beginning of the fiscal year in July?

In short, going live with Workday in January 2016 saves both administrative and financial burden. Payroll history from the calendar year to date must be converted upon implementation, so initiating at the start of a new year allows for a fresh start. Additionally, to delay implementation another six months would increase costs considerably.

How does the biweekly pay cycle compare to the state system?

The biweekly pay cycle differs from the state system, which is still semi-monthly.

Can Workday accommodate staff with multiple appointments?

Yes, Workday can accommodate staff with multiple appointments.

If an employee's former job classification is no longer used and is being eliminated, will their employment history be lost?

HR/P Modernization is not converting employee history, and is instead carrying over a current job profile on employees who are active at the time of the transition. The contents of this job profile have not yet been determined, but will likely include general information such as University hire date. While information such as an employee's past transitions will not be accessible through Workday, UW will be maintaining historical data. Details about how such information will be accessed will be forthcoming.

Will employee information be stored on external servers, and are there any privacy concerns over this?

The security of employee information has been front of mind throughout HR/P Modernization planning. Information in Workday will be stored very securely on Workday's servers. Workday has performed extensive due diligence in the areas of privacy and data security, and has experienced no security breaches. Information in Workday is totally encrypted, and even Workday cannot access the secure data itself.

Will an employee's entire personnel file reside on Workday, including things like disciplinary procedures and evaluations?

While integration of personnel files could potentially have advantages in the future, this is currently not within the scope of UW's HR/P Modernization. For Harborview and UW Medical Center, performance information that is currently kept in Lawson could be incorporated in some form when Lawson is sunsetted, but this has not yet been determined.

Paychecks, Pay Cycles, and Automatic Deductions

Will Workday shorten the current lag-time that exists between when a premium or other special pay is earned and when it is actually paid?

Yes, Workday tracks information such as pay data and leave balances in real-time, meaning that premiums earned will be applied to the subsequent paycheck. Additionally, employee earnings statements will be much easier to understand, with wage components more clearly identified.

How could Workday impact the amount on my paycheck?

Given that Workday tracks real-time data, there is potential for some variance between paychecks depending on the number of hours worked in a given pay period. This aspect of Workday will have implications for some of UW's contract-classified employees, and Labor Relations will work collaboratively with affected unions to ensure a smooth transition.

Will employees earn less as a result of the transition to a biweekly pay cycle?

No, whether on a semi-monthly or biweekly pay cycle, employees will have the same annual take-home pay. On a biweekly pay cycle, employees will receive paychecks more frequently (26 per year instead of the current 24), and therefore each individual check will have a smaller amount. At the same time, Workday will shorten the time it takes for employees to actually receive premiums earned, which could be a favorable mitigating factor.

Will payroll deductions be affected by Workday?

A move to a biweekly pay schedule would increase UW's number of pay periods from 24 to 26 per year, which could impact payroll deduction frequency or the amounts-per-paycheck. This is currently under discussion, and has not yet been determined.

Have similar organizations undergone the change from a semi-monthly to a biweekly pay cycle?

Yes, King County and Brown University have undergone similar transitions, and the HR/P Modernization team at UW has closely studied these cases.

Has UW determined the day of the week on which employees will be paid?

Yes. Employees will be paid every other Friday beginning January 8, 2016.

Why has Friday been chosen as the University's future payday instead of Monday?

Having paydays occur on Mondays presents several challenges, including that several holidays fall on a Monday, and that it is much easier from an administrative standpoint to precede a payday with business days as opposed to weekend days.

How will paychecks be affected right before Workday goes live?

Following the second paycheck in December of 2015, employees will likely receive a third “short” check to bridge the end of the old pay cycle and the beginning of the new pay cycle. In addition, because the first paycheck of 2016 will be delivered on the 8th, instead of the 11th (due to the 10th falling on Sunday), employees will receive their regular pay earlier than anticipated.

Which employees will receive a “short” paycheck at the end of December to bridge the final semi-monthly paycheck with the first biweekly paycheck?

Employees working or in a paid leave status on December 16, 17, 18, and/or 19 will receive a paycheck at the end of December reflecting such time.

What is the reason for using a Sunday-Saturday payroll week?

The Sunday-Saturday payroll week was chosen based on input from subject-matter experts from across the University to create standardization and alignment with industry best practices.

How will a Sunday-Saturday payroll week affect things like weekend work and vacation requests for departments that currently schedule on a Monday-Sunday workweek?

This is not yet fully known, as the time-tracking initial design sessions have just begun. As the details become clear, more information will be provided.

Will paychecks in Workday list out accruals such as vacation and sick leave?

The goal is for each paycheck to be a clear and detailed inventory of pertinent pay items, including time worked, amount and types of pay earned, and itemized accruals.

Are possible impacts of HR/P Modernization to employees participating in the Public Employees’ Retirement System (PERS) being considered?

Yes, the UW Benefits Office is working closely with the Department of Retirement Systems (DRS) to ensure a smooth and thoughtful transition. The HR/P Modernization team is also studying King County’s transition from a semi-monthly to a biweekly pay cycle, and what implications this had for King County’s employees participating in PERS.

How will HR/P Modernization impact the unique pay practices for WSNA-represented registered nurses at UW Medical Center?

Because Workday operates on an actual-time, hours-worked basis, reconciling the current “averaging out” of time worked and salaries throughout the year for such RNs will undoubtedly be difficult. UW respects that this is a long-standing practice that is highly valued by employees, and is committed to engaging in collaborative dialogue and problem-solving with WSNA on this matter.

Employee Status, Workload, and Working Conditions

What downstream impacts will HR/Payroll Modernization have on employees whose work involves payroll functions?

For staff with HR/payroll processing responsibilities, some administrative work will likely shift and in some cases go away. While all of the impacts of this transition are not completely known, the way HR and payroll tasks are performed will change. Workday will eliminate duplicative data entry and many manual processes, which will allow more time to focus on higher level duties. Impacts on employees and their work remain a key consideration throughout this process.

Does actual time reporting make everyone an hourly employee?

While actual time reporting tracks and can report data such as time worked, pay items, and accruals in real-time, it does not change an employee's status as hourly or non-hourly, and familiar reports such as earnings statements can still be generated.

Will Workday change whether the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) applies to an employee?

No, the UW cannot change an employee's status under the FLSA by changing its payroll system. Rather, the system must recognize that status as it exists. Provisions in collective bargaining agreements that extend FLSA-like overtime provisions to FL-SA-exempt employees will remain mandatory subjects of bargaining.

Will UW's union-represented employees still be classified employees with HR/Payroll Modernization?

Yes, UW's union-represented employees are still classified under the state system per RCW 41.06, and bargain collectively under either RCW 41.80 or RCW 41.56.

Has the University contemplated how HR/Payroll Modernization could impact existing employee benefits and working conditions?

This is a key consideration for UWHR and Labor Relations, and is a driving reason behind convening informational sessions with labor representatives. These meetings are meant to discuss impacts and concerns surrounding HR/P Modernization, as well as identify any items that will need to be bargained.

When would the parties negotiate over any changes to mandatory subjects of bargaining?

The informational sessions are designed to inform unions of the changes that will come with HR/P Modernization, and to identify any issues and concerns. As issues are identified that are unique to each union, the parties may break out into smaller tables to focus on the specific needs of each contract and engage in any necessary bargaining.

Timekeeping, Leave Requests, and Accruals

How will employees interact with timekeeping functions in Workday?

Employees not using KRONOS will utilize Workday Time Tracking to access and input their timekeeping information. The HR/P Modernization team is exploring methods to enable easy access for employees working in remote or varied locations, including kiosks and even smartphone-based mobile functionality.

What will happen to Lawson at Harborview and UW Medical Center?

Lawson will be replaced by Workday.

On which days does a workweek begin and end in Workday?

The workweek in Workday can be tailored to suit the University's needs, and is not bound to a pre-established workweek. What constitutes a workweek (i.e., Monday - Sunday) will be a topic of discussion in the current design phase, and any changes to an existing workweek will be bargained with affected unions.

What does "simplifies FTE reconciliation" mean?

This means that on average, an employee is working toward a certain FTE percentage. If a nurse works 90% of FTE one month, and 110% another, the average is 100% FTE (or 1 FTE). The current system doesn't allow for easy reconciliation of that average. Workday will simplify reconciliation of an employee against FTE status.

How might HR/P Modernization impact monthly accruals, such as vacation and sick time?

Accruals are currently under discussion, with an overriding goal of making accruals as accurate and understandable as possible.

What will be the basis for earning accruals such as vacation and sick leave?

The goal is for employees to accrue leaves such as vacation and sick time based on their time spent in a paid status (either working or using an accrued paid leave).