



WELCOME BACK EDITION  
OCTOBER 30, 2009

# HR ON YOUR BEHALF

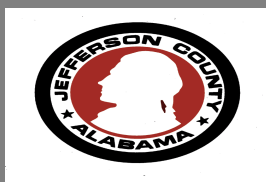
The Official Newsletter of the Jefferson County Commission HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

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### ATTENTION COUNTY EMPLOYEES:

Please remember that the Jefferson County Commission is under a Consent Decree. The decree prohibits discrimination against blacks and females which is also contrary to the County's anti-harassment policy. Please contact your affirmative action officer, Kimberly Webster or Ben Sullen (325-5249), if you have concerns or issues regarding discrimination. You may also review the Consent Decree at your affirmative action officer's office located in the Main Courthouse Annex Room A-630.



Jefferson County Commission  
Human Resources Department  
610-A Courthouse  
716 Richard Arrington Jr. Blvd. N.  
Birmingham, AL 35203  
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## WELCOME BACK JEFFCO EMPLOYEES

The Jefferson County Commission Human Resources Department would like to extend a warm welcome back to all employees returning from Administrative Leave Without Pay (ALWOP). We hope that things are getting back to some form of normalcy in your daily responsibilities at work, as well as at home.

As in Human Resources, we are sure there was a lot of work awaiting your return and hopefully you will use the next few months to feverishly work to make your department as efficient as, or better than, it was pre-ALWOP. Although

your co-workers who remained working during ALWOP absorbed additional responsibilities that allowed the continued operation of the County, your experience, abilities and additional hands were sorely missed.

In this issue of On Your Behalf, Human Resources wants to remind you of services available to you and offer suggestions that might assist you during these difficult economic times. As always, we are available to discuss any concerns you may have.



## BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEMS

Overwhelmed by stress? Now is the time to take advantage of the County's Employee Assistance Plan administered through Behavioral Health Systems. Stress can be targeted by various things, death, marriage, divorce, employment issues and finances. Help is available! Behavioral Health Systems offers Stress Assessment tests and there is also a Stress Self-Assessment test available in the Human Resources Department and online at [www.bhs-inc.com](http://www.bhs-inc.com). Stress management techniques fall into one of four categories: Physical/mental relaxation, Time management/organization skills, Assertiveness skills and Goal Setting and Prioritizing. Let BHS guide you in using these techniques properly to deal with stress. The County's Employee Assistance Plan is a benefit offered to employees enrolled in the County's health plan. BHS strongly believes that just talking about your problems sometimes leads to new solutions and most importantly it will not hurt!



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEMS, INC.

TWO METROPLEX DRIVE  
SUITE 500  
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA 35209  
TOLL FREE: 1-800-245-1150  
BIRMINGHAM: (205) 879-1150  
FAX: (205) 879-1178

## Cost Cutting / Budgeting

**DEBT REDUCTION STRATEGY by: Stewart H. Welch, III CFP, AEP**

*Find this tip and other financial articles at [www.welchgroup.com](http://www.welchgroup.com) in the Resource Center*

Review your debt reduction strategy. If you don't have one, consider this one: Starting with one index card for each debtor, make a list of all of your debtors, how much you owe along with the interest rates. Now, you can sort them one of two ways. Either sort them according to the highest interest rate to the lowest interest rate or sort them according to which debt will be paid off first. My preference is highest interest rate first. Add up the total minimum payments for all your debts together and then determine how much you can afford, through budgeting, to pay 'extra' each month. Take this amount and apply it to your #1 debt while paying the minimums on all other debts. Once your first debt is paid off, apply your 'extra' payment plus the minimum payment you were making on debt #1 to debt #2. Continue this strategy until your debts are paid off. **HR TIP: DO NOT CONTINUE MAKING DEBT DURING THE PROCESS!!!!**

### **JEFFERSON COUNTY EMPLOYEES CREDIT UNION (JCECU) - MEMBER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ("MAP")**

Human Resources would like to thank the Jefferson County Employee Credit Union for its assistance during the recent Administrative Leave Without Pay period. JCECU was able to restructure loans, suspend loan payments for members as well as provide small savings such as free money orders. The JCECU continues to assist those still being effected by the tough economy with its Member Assistance Program ("MAP"). The program includes:

#### **Financial Counseling**

If you are in a situation where you can not meet all of your monthly obligations, JCECU can provide information on confidential and free credit counseling services. We have a certified financial counselor on staff for FREE remedial debt counseling, and also offer debt management and counseling services through the **Accel/GreenPath** programs.

#### **Loan Restructuring**

JCECU offers loan restructuring options to members who may have difficulty making loan payments. If you are in this situation, please contact a member service rep to discuss options that may include lowering or temporarily suspending payments.

#### **FREE Financial Review**

Credit Union representatives are available to help review your debt obligations in order to identify money-saving strategies such as refinancing or debt consolidation.

#### **Budgeting Resources**

Visit the **Resource Center** on line at [www.jcccu.org](http://www.jcccu.org) or stop by any branch for money-saving tips and information on how to cut back on everyday expenses such as groceries, utility bills and more. On the website, you may also download **Budget Smart**, a FREE budgeting software program from the website, or ask for a copy on CD at any branch office.

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## Jefferson County Human Resources Department Recruitment & Workforce Development Division (RWDD)

In this time of economic uncertainty, RWDD would like to offer a few tips to aid in your future endeavors for employment opportunities with the Jefferson County Commission.

1. It is imperative that your on-line application ([www.jobsquest.org](http://www.jobsquest.org)) is (1) current and (2) lists all of your duties in detail. Adherence to this suggestion can greatly increase your chances of promotion, transfers, and consideration during the Structured Interview Process. Remember: If it's not on paper...you did not do it! It is a good idea to **double check your application** prior to clicking on "apply to this position", **each time you apply to a job**, to ensure the information is accurate and complete.

2. Once you receive the opportunity to interview, remember to be thorough. Even if you are interviewing with your current supervisor or department head, you should answer the questions as if he/she does not know your duties. During the Structured Interview Process, the interviewer asks you the questions, and then records verbatim your responses. So, if you don't **say** it...you cannot receive credit for it! This is critical because **not fully divulging all of your experience during the structured interview could cost you the desired position or promotion!**

3. The Human Resources Recruitment and Workforce Development Division staff is willing and available to provide assistance to you when applying for positions. Feel free to make an appointment by calling (205) 325-5249 and asking for the Recruitment and Workforce Development Division.

**Let us help you achieve your goals!**



# SAFETY & YOU - Halloween Safety

Halloween is a fun time for children and adults young at heart. Trick or Treating, Costume Parties, Haunted Houses are all fun but they all have potential risk for incidents and injuries. Following these safety tips can help ensure a safe and fun Halloween for everyone.



## Tips for Trick-or-Treaters

- An adult should always accompany children under 12 years of age.
- Older children should travel in a group.
- Children should NEVER enter a home without prior permission from their parents or guardians.
- Children should NEVER approach a vehicle, occupied or not, unless they are accompanied by a parent or guardian.
- Make sure costumes are flame-retardant.
- Make sure all children wear reflective clothing and carry a glow stick/flashlight at night.
- Avoid wearing long, baggy, or loose clothing/costumes or oversized shoes (to prevent tripping).
- Avoid short cuts through backyards, alleys, or parks.
- Set time limits/curfews for children to trick or treat.
- Children should eat only unopened candy or treats in original wrappers.
- Teach children to stay alert for any suspicious activity and report them to their parents, guardians and/or the proper authority.

## Tips for Making Your Home and Neighborhood Safe

- Turn on exterior lights to welcome trick-or-treaters and guests.
- Clear items from lawns, steps and porches to eliminate tripping hazards.
- Have your Neighborhood Watch or citizen's group assist in patrolling the neighborhood.
- Ask for volunteers to act as crossing guards.
- If you operate a motor vehicle, drive slowly and be observant for children.
- Report suspicious activity or criminal activity to police.

## HR CORNER

### ATTENTION DEPARTMENT HEADS

#### Be on the look out for:

- Amended Critical Need Request Procedures
- Amended Performance Appraisal Procedures
- FMLA Updates

### JOB OPPORTUNITIES!!

- Stadium Maintenance Supervisor

Classified position (s) listed above will close Nov. 6, 2009

Please visit the Personnel Board of Jefferson County's job site at [www.jobsquest.org](http://www.jobsquest.org) for more information and updates on Classified positions.

## PERSONNEL & EMPLOYEE SERVICES Q & A

- Q:** I was on ALWOP, will the benefits I had before leave, such as AFLAC, Deferred Comp, etc. automatically start being deducted from my paycheck?
- A:** When an employee returns from any type of LOA, any deductions that they had prior to leaving will resume.
- Q:** I was off on ALWOP and returned to work October 10. Are my benefits current?
- A:** August health premium was deducted from the last pay check after employees were put on ALWOP. Employees should have paid premiums for all voluntary benefits (vision, dental, life, AD&D) the month of August. Premiums for both health and voluntary benefits were due by the 15<sup>th</sup> of September for the month of September. Employees called to report back to work Monday, October 12 missed the first pay period of the month for the health insurance deduction. Because employees would not have accrued enough time to be deducted premiums the second pay period for voluntary benefits, this/these premium(s) became due. Employees had until the end of October to bring all premiums current.
- Q:** What is the maximum age of coverage for a college student?
- A:** Unmarried dependent children, from age 19 until their 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday, who are enrolled as full-time students at accredited schools can be covered on the health, dental and vision insurance.
- Q:** If I want to make a change to my insurance how many days do I have to contact Human Resources?
- A:** HR must receive a completed application for each benefit to be changed as well as supporting documentation within 30 days of the qualifying event.
- Q:** How do I change the beneficiaries of my life insurance?
- A:** An employee can change their life insurance beneficiaries by completing a new form in the Human Resources office.
- Q:** How do I update my mailing address?
- A:** To update your mailing address, an employee must complete a new income withholding form with the Payroll Department. That will update the employee's mailing address with the health, dental and vision insurance carriers.