

## EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Employees who are hired into benefits eligible positions may participate in the programs listed in this section.



## Family Eligibility Requirements

(As defined by the New Mexico Public Schools Insurance Authority NMPSIA)

The NMPSIA provides health insurance coverage to WNMU. The NMPSIA requires that each enrolled employee and each dependent meet the definition of an eligible employee and eligible dependent. An ineligible dependent is one who meets the following criteria:

- Common law relationships (same or opposite sex) which are not recognized by New Mexico State Law
- Dependents while in active military service
- Grandchildren without evidence of legal guardianship
- Parents, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, or any other person not defined as eligible under NMPSIA rules.

The purpose of this criteria is to keep premium costs down, to maintain consistency in applying the NMPSIA Rules and Regulations, to comply with Federal as well as State fraud laws and anti-donation laws, and for accountability to the New Mexico State Auditor's Office and other governmental/legislative agencies that oversee public school/educational entity/NMPSIA funding.

For these reasons, various pieces of supportive documentation **are required** when an eligible employee makes application to cover dependents as follows:

- Original state publicly filed birth certificates and marriage certificates
- Court decrees
- Adoption documents
- Guardianship documents, etc.

For specific information and definitions, please refer to the Employee Benefits Rules and Regulations Summary provided to employees during enrollment and is available online at <https://hr.wnmu.edu/benefits/#benefits>.

## Flexible Benefit Plan

### Cafeteria Plan (Internal Revenue Code Section 125)

Benefits eligible employees have the option to pay for health insurance premiums, dental and vision insurance, health care, and/or dependent care expenses through pre-tax payroll deductions. Since the pre-tax deductions are not subject to income or social security taxes, the result is an increase in net pay. Benefits eligible employees also have the option to pay for life insurance and disability which are post-tax payroll deductions.

## Group Insurance

WNMU provides its benefits-eligible employees with a variety of group insurance policies and contributes (on a sliding scale basis) to the payment of the premiums when an employee elects health insurance coverage. WNMU also pays 100% of the premium for a \$50,000 Basic Life insurance policy for benefits-eligible employees. WNMU does not contribute to the premiums for supplemental voluntary insurance plans.

For specific information about group insurance plans please contact the Department of Human Resources.

## Educational Assistance Program

This program is provided to encourage current and retired employees to take advantage of the educational opportunities available at WNMU.

### Tuition Reduction Program

All regular full-time, regular part-time, and Limited Term benefits-eligible employees are eligible to participate in the Tuition Reduction Program once they have completed their 90-day probationary period. Part-time benefits-eligible employees' tuition waivers are prorated according to their hours of employment.

Retirement-Eligible Employees who work more than 9 hours per week, but less than 30 hours per week, and who are eligible to contribute to the university's 401(a) retirement plan, but not eligible to participate in other employee benefit programs, are eligible to participate in the tuition reduction program.

REF: BA434\_Tuition Reduction Program Policy at <https://policy.wnmu.edu/>.

## Earned Leave

The Payroll Office will maintain proper record keeping of earned leave for all employees. Supervisors are responsible for providing accurate leave information to the Payroll Office in a timely manner. Any employee absence during the first 90 days will be charged to leave without pay (LWOP). Accrued leave will not be paid if the employee terminates before the end of their probationary period.

Upon completion of the probationary period, accrued annual and sick leave will be retroactively applied to the employee's date of hire and will become available for use at the end of the pay period following the conclusion of probation. The Payroll Office will maintain accurate records of all leave balances and make this information available to employees upon request.

## Annual Leave (Vacation)

WNMU provides annual leave for benefits eligible employees as defined below:

### Definition of Earned Annual Leave

1. Annual leave is earned during actual time worked and during paid sick leave, annual leave time taken, holidays and paid leaves of absence.
2. Annual leave is not earned during unpaid leave of absence.

### Accrual Rate

Regular, full-time employees hired prior to August 1, 1992:

Employees hired prior to August 1, 1992 will accumulate annual leave at the rate of 12 hours (1 1/2 days) per month, effective on their date of hire.

Employees may accrue up to a maximum of 168 hours annual leave. Management is encouraged to enable employees to use annual leave prior to reaching maximum accrual allowed. Upon termination of employment, unused leave balance will be paid to the employee up to a maximum amount of 160 hours. Terminating employees still within their probationary period will not be reimbursed for any accrued annual leave balance.

Regular, full-time employees hired on or after August 1, 1992 will accrue hours as follows:

#### Bi-Weekly

- **0 up to 5** years of service: **3.7 hours per pay**
- **5 up to 10** years of service: **4.62 hours per pay**
- **10 or more** years of service: **5.54 hours per pay**

### Semi-Monthly

- **0 up to 5** years of service: **4 hours per pay**
- **5 up to 10** years of service: **5 hours per pay**
- **10 or more** years of service: **6 hours per pay**

### Monthly

- **0 up to 5** years of service: **8 hours per pay**
- **5 up to 10** years of service: **10 hours per pay**
- **10 or more** years of service: **12 hours per pay**

## Sick Leave

Paid sick leave is a privilege provided by WNMU so that employees will not be penalized for a temporary state of ill health. Sick leave is not to be considered as earned annual leave. During initial probationary periods, sick leave taken is charged to leave without pay. Paid sick leave is not “paid out” when staff leave WNMU.

For each day sick leave is used, the employee is expected to notify their supervisor as soon as possible (before the scheduled working time or immediately thereafter) that they will be absent. If the employee is unable to speak with the supervisor personally then they are expected to leave a message with a person who will ensure that the supervisor will receive the message. Abuse of sick leave is grounds for dismissal. The supervisor may require the employee to bring a physician’s statement or a physician’s release before returning to work for any absences of three days or more. Supervisors that have concerns about the abuse of sick leave may require the employee to bring a physician’s statement or a physician’s release for absences less than 3 days with the Department of Human Resources approval.

## Definition of Earned Sick Leave

An employee may elect to charge an illness or injury to annual leave and, unless specified by the employee, sick leave will automatically be charged to accrued annual leave after sick leave accruals are exhausted. If sick and annual leave accruals are exhausted WNMU may elect to allow the employee take leave without pay (see Personal Leave Without Pay information in the Leaves of Absence section). An illness occurring during an employee’s annual leave may be charged to sick leave. In this case, a physician’s statement verifying the period of illness may be required. Illness of an immediate family member (refer to definition of Immediate Family below) may be charged to sick leave and is defined as family illness.

Immediate Family is an individual with any of the following relationships to the employee:

1. Spouse, and parents
2. Sons and daughters, and spouses
3. Parents, and spouses
4. Brothers and sisters, and spouses
5. Grandparents and grandchildren, and spouses
6. Domestic partner, and parents, including domestic partners of any individual in 1 through 5 of this definition
7. Any individual related by blood or affinity whose close association with the employee is the equivalent of a family relationship.

### Accrual Rate

Regular, full-time employees will earn sick leave at the rate of 12 hours per month, to a maximum of 1,040 working hours (26 weeks). Regular, part-time employees will earn sick leave pro-rated according to the number of hours worked, (e.g. 20 hours/week, 6 hours/month). No hours will be accrued beyond 1,040. No sick leave is earned while on Personal Leave Without Pay (LWOP).

Regular, full-time employees will accumulate hours as follows:

#### Sick Leave

- **Bi-Weekly: 5.54 hours per pay**
- **Semi-Monthly: 6 hours per pay**
- **Monthly: 12 hours per pay**

Sick leave is to be used only for the following:

1. Personal illness or injury (includes temporary disability due to pregnancy, childbirth, and other related medical conditions).
2. Reasonable time off for personal medical attention.
3. Transporting member of immediate family for medical services (see definition for Immediate Family).
4. Caring for a member of immediate family who becomes ill or injured and requires personal attention.
5. Partial days not worked when an employee who has been on sick leave returns to work on part-time basis while recovering from the illness or injury.

REF: BA439\_Staff Sick Leave Donation Policy at <https://policy.wnmu.edu/>.

## Holidays

WNMU provides paid holidays for all benefits-eligible employees. Part-time benefits-eligible employees receive this benefit on a pro-rated basis. The following holidays shall be declared and scheduled by the President of the University, in conjunction with the Department of Human Resources, at the WNMU President's discretion, in order to best align with the campus academic schedule:

- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Break
- Winter Holiday
- Martin Luther King Day
- Spring Break
- Spring Holiday
- Memorial Day

The President has the authority to designate additional holidays at their discretion.