

## Recognizing State employees extends beyond one week



**Neal Alexander**  
Director,  
Office of State  
Human Resources

Dear State Employees,

As North Carolina's largest employer, North Carolina has approximately 130,000 State employees working in various branches and agencies. Without you, government would not be able to function effectively,

and the services that everyday citizens rely on would come to a halt. The work that you do and the services that you provide are invaluable.

Each year, the State of North Carolina sets aside one week to formally recognize the efforts and contributions of State employees. This year, "State Employee Recognition Week" takes place this week, September 21-25, 2015. Agencies and universities across the state are holding events and activities to thank you for all that you do. State leaders recognize that employees are the State's most valuable assets. We appreciate your hard work and contributions, and we look for ways to show our gratitude year-round.

Recognizing and rewarding State employees has been an ongoing effort. It started well before the \$21.7 billion budget was passed last week and it will continue well beyond the budget cycle. Since Governor Pat McCrory took office

in 2013, his administration has taken thoughtful and proactive steps to implement programs to protect State workers. For example, he established the Health & Safety Leadership Team, which encourages us all to be proactive in identifying hazards to protect ourselves and our co-workers from preventable accidents. As a result, workplace injuries have dropped 17% over the past two years!

The newly minted budget contains initiatives that invest in State employees, such as:

- Raises starting teacher pay and provides funding to support teacher assistants
- Covers "step" pay increases for several job classifications
- Grants State employees a \$750 bonus
- Provides funding for State workers' compensation reform, which increases efficiency in the administration of workers' compensation
- Encourages employee excellence and career advancement with funding to sustain a new Performance Management System

The new budget is a common sense approach to funding State Government. It includes important funding for programs that acknowledge the tremendous talents, efforts, and dedication that State employees provide.

I applaud the Governor's leadership and echo his sentiments of thankfulness for all that you do to make North Carolina such a great state!



Governor Pat McCrory's thank you message to State employees.



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## New Classification/ Compensation System progresses

In the last issue of *The Resource* we provided an introduction and overview of the Statewide Compensation System Project. To review, some goals include:

- Aligning salary structures with labor market data
- Updating the classification/ occupational structure
- Collecting current position descriptions in order to make classification decisions in the new system

There is a good deal of work happening. In August, the project team submitted a general, market-based pay structure to the State Human Resources Commission for their review. Separate occupational pay structures are also under development for certain jobs that fall outside of the new general structure.

Meanwhile, teams of agency experts are completing the first round of draft classification specifications.

Once new classifications and position descriptions are in place, allocations begin. Project teams will make initial allocation decisions to “slot” individual positions into the new classifications.

New salary administration policies are also being developed. Training will occur in Spring 2016, and the target date for full implementation is June 2016.

Go to [oshr.nc.gov/compsysproject.htm](http://oshr.nc.gov/compsysproject.htm) or contact your agency’s Human Resources office for more information.

# SECC: Your pledge will help “Make it Grow”

Have you made a pledge yet to support the charities participating in the 2015 State Employees Combined Campaign (SECC)?

## Hundreds of Vetted Charities

There are nearly 1,000 organizations listed in the SECC Giving Guide. The SECC is counting on you to “Make it Grow.” Donate to help those in need and to help communities thrive.

This year’s campaign officially launched in August, with a statewide kick-off at Bicentennial Mall in downtown Raleigh. The campaign ends in early December, so please don’t delay in making a contribution. In addition to the big statewide event, each state agency and university will host their own events to raise awareness about the campaign and to give all employees an opportunity to donate.

OSHR held a carnival in August, complete with a donut-eating contest and a suitcase race to raise



SECC funds. This event raised nearly \$500 for the Combined Campaign. The Department of Administration (DOA) will host a Charity Fair on Thursday, Oct. 8, from 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. at the corner of Jones and Salisbury streets. DOA expects to have 20 different charities, a food truck, prize drawings and free ice cream.

To learn more about the participating charities, visit [www.ncsecc.org](http://www.ncsecc.org).

**give**  
Make It Grow



CHECK OUT THE NEW LOOK OF THE [OSHR](http://OSHR) WEBSITE AND READ THE NEW RESOURCE BLOG!





# Workers' Comp Core Team makes improvements

The Workers' Compensation Core Team has been working hard to plan exciting new training classes, job aids, standard operating procedures, and other resource materials that will be introduced over the next several months and in 2016.

## Training and Resources

Training classes will include comprehensive workers' compensation administrator training focused on:

- First notice of loss reporting
- Return to work (before and after maximum medical improvement)
- Handling critical claim progression points
- Closing claims
- Identifying red flags for potential fraud and abuse

Resources and training modules will address both basic and advanced workers' compensation topics.

## Overarching Project Goals

These trainings and resources are part of overarching goals that the Core Team has adopted. These goals will help:

1. Increase employee hazard recognition to prevent injuries
2. Get employees the best medical treatment possible
3. Facilitate return to work
4. Close claims timely and fairly

Check the [new State Workers' Compensation Program website](#) regularly for new and updated resources.



# Campaign urges families to "Talk It Out"

Underage drinking is a problem that affects many people from all walks of life. It's a sensitive topic that many feel uncomfortable discussing. But Governor McCrory and the Talk It Out Campaign encourage all State employees to start this conversation with their families.



Research shows that too many underage children are drinking, and many parents are either unaware or don't understand how serious the problem can be.

Start the discussion and educate children about the devastating consequences of underage drinking. Research also shows that these conversations encourage children to think twice about trying alcohol.

The Talk It Out Campaign was launched last year. Already, this campaign has created awareness and sparked important conversations.

Parents should visit [TalkItOutNC.org](http://TalkItOutNC.org) to find out more about the campaign and understand the true impact of underage drinking.



**Are you a WeSave member? ... If not, you're missing out.**

With thousands of money-saving offers for State employees, this absolutely FREE membership is a no-brainer.

Join now at [www.wesave.com](http://www.wesave.com).

# NCFlex introduces new interactive tool to educate employees

ALEX is the host of a new series of interactive, online tools that helps State employees learn about the wide variety of NCFlex benefits available to all full-time State employees. The best part? It feels as though you are having a conversation with a real, live benefits expert!

## How It Works

ALEX asks a series of simple questions and based on your answers, he will highlight the plans that might be the best fit for your needs.

Interact with ALEX at [www.ncflex.org](http://www.ncflex.org).

**alex**<sup>®</sup>



## Don't miss the NCFlex Enrollment Kickoff Event!

If you work in the Downtown Raleigh area, join us Oct. 1, 2015, at Halifax Mall behind the Education Building from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. to talk with plan representatives. Enjoy \$2 lunches from Backyard Bisto and free ice cream!

## No Fuss, No Confusion

ALEX uses plain English to help you answer some complicated questions, such as:

- What is a pre-tax benefit? How can it save me money?
- How does an FSA work?
- Do I need high-option dental?
- What kind of vision coverage does my family need?
- Why does my family need Critical Illness coverage?

## Conference updates HR employees

On September 14-16, 2015, 300 of the State's human resources and safety professionals gathered to "Look Beyond the Present," the theme for the three-day OSHR HR Conference. Attendees received updates on:

- Benefits
- Financial Success
- Performance Management
- Employee Relations
- Recruitment and Retention
- Compensation
- Safety and Workers' Compensation

Highlights of these topics are covered in this newsletter, but you can also read more by visiting [The Resource Blog](#).

mark your calendar

**NORTH CAROLINA STATE FAIR**  
**Thursday, Oct. 15, thru**  
**Sunday, Oct. 25, 2015**

The annual fair and agricultural exposition is held at the fairgrounds in Raleigh.

**NCFLEX ANNUAL OPEN ENROLLMENT**  
**Thursday, Oct. 15 thru**  
**Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2015**

Sign up for benefits or change your benefits during this once-a-year window. Check out the NCFlex website to learn more: [ncflex.org](http://ncflex.org).





# Have you registered your M4W team yet?

The challenge begins Oct. 5 and runs through Nov. 29, 2015.

Miles for Wellness Challenge 12 celebrates the first Thanksgiving celebration in America and the famed town of Plymouth Rock, Mass. The trail begins in our own Plymouth, NC, and will stop in many Plymouth towns throughout the country.

Registration ends Oct. 1. Register your team today at [MilesforWellness.nc.gov](http://MilesforWellness.nc.gov).

## NC honors long-serving state employees

Congratulations to the 44 employees who were recently recognized with the prestigious Caswell Award in recognition and appreciation for 45 or more years of dedicated, extended service to the State of North Carolina.

The ceremony was held Thursday, Aug. 13, 2015, at the N.C. Museum of History in Raleigh. It was the first statewide ceremony since 2004.

### History of Award's Namesake

The Caswell Award is named after former North Carolina Governor Richard Caswell, who served as clerk of court in Orange County, governor in 1776 – 1780 and 1784 – 1787, state controller, and state senator. Officially named the Richard Caswell Award Program, it was established in 1998 and is administered by the Office of State Human Resources (OSHR).

For more details or to see the full list of honorees, [see the awards program](#) and [view photos of the ceremony](#).

Congratulations to these wonderful employees for their extended years of service!



## State Employees' Credit Union®



# DID YOU KNOW?

The State Employees' Credit Union is a financial institution that provides consumer financial services to State employees and their families *only*.

The SECU offers standard checking and savings accounts as well as a full array of other services.

The small monthly fee for each checking account funds the SEC Foundation, a charity that awards scholarships and donates millions to NC organizations each year.

Stop by any SECU branch or go to [www.ncsecu.org](http://www.ncsecu.org) for more information or to open an account.

# Be Aware – It's time to prepare!

## September is North Carolina Preparedness Month

September and October are peak hurricane season months for North Carolina. While no one can prevent these storms, history has proven that those who are prepared will fare better after disasters strike.

### Be Ready for Anything

Would you know what to do if a hurricane threatened your area? How do you stay safe during severe thunderstorms or tornadoes? A snow or ice storm? Public disturbance? Would you know where to go in your office building if any of these occurred during a work day?

Learning how to get prepared!

This September is North Carolina Preparedness Month, which coincides with National Preparedness Month. The goal is to increase residents' preparedness levels across the state.

Whether at home, work, or play, being prepared is easy: just follow the four steps outlined above.

### Preparedness Means Planning

If you haven't already made a plan, take a few minutes to do so. It's simple: record what you need to do, where to go, and how to get in touch with your family members. Your plan should list any special considerations for older adults, people with functional needs, household pets, and the location of your emergency supply kit. Mold your plan to your family's needs and discuss it with everyone.

*Information provided by NC Emergency Management, Department of Public Safety*

## BE PREPARED IN FOUR STEPS

- 1 Have a plan
- 2 Practice the plan
- 3 Build a kit with emergency supplies
- 4 Talk about it with your family, neighbors, and/or coworkers

An emergency supplies kit should contain enough non-perishable food and bottled water (one gallon per person per day) to last three to seven days. Kits should include: copies of insurance papers and identification, first aid kit, weather radio and batteries, prescription medicines, bedding, weather-appropriate clothing, hygiene items, cash, and supplies for any household pets.

### Plan for Contingencies

Also, know what to do if an emergency occurs while you are at work. Consider: where you would go in your building, how you would get home, and who you would call. If you have children in school, find out what the emergency plan is for your child's school. Once you have a plan, be sure to practice!

For more information or to download an emergency plan, go to [www.ReadyNC.org](http://www.ReadyNC.org). You can also download the free ReadyNC mobile app for real-time traffic and weather.



*Don't forget to report hazards!*

Go to [hazards.nc.gov](http://hazards.nc.gov),  
and be a Hazard Hero!



HURRICANE  
EVACUATION  
ROUTE



# New performance system goes live

North Carolina Valuing Individual Performance (NCVIP), the new statewide performance management (PM) program, officially went live on July 1, 2015.

## What does this mean?

The standard performance cycle for NCVIP is July 1 through June 30. During the first sixty (60) days of the PM cycle, each employee will hold a performance planning discussion with his or her manager/supervisor and will put a Performance Plan in place. This means that your agency is now engaged in Stage 1: Performance Planning. Good news: we now have a technology tool to help automate and support this process!

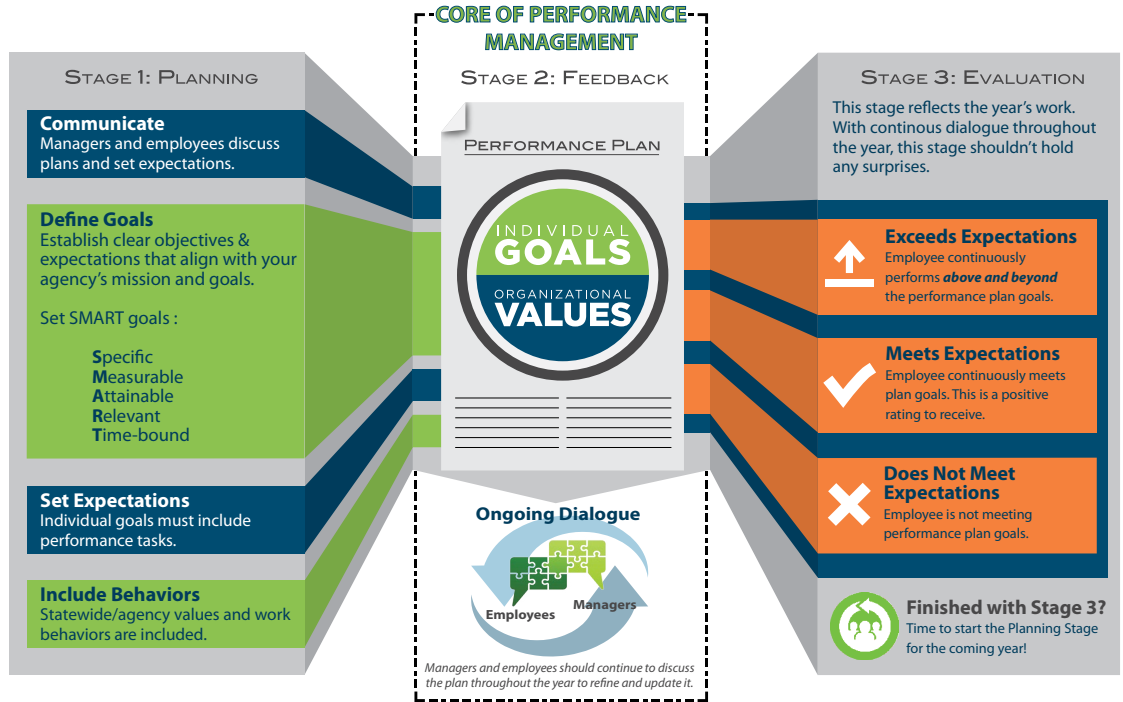
As of August 2015, over 20 agencies have implemented the Performance Planning task assignment. Overall, 30,357 State employees have received this task, and 95% of these Performance Plans are in a "complete" or "in progress" status. That's a huge accomplishment!

If you haven't received an e-mail with the Performance Planning task, you soon will. In the meantime, you should meet with your supervisor to put a Performance Plan in place which includes 3-5 individual SMART goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound.

Your Performance Plan will also include Organizational Values, which relate to how you accomplish your responsibilities and goals. For this cycle, there will be three Statewide Core Values: Customer Service, Safety & Health, and Diversity & Inclusion. We encourage you to discuss with your manager or supervisor the ways in which you can demonstrate each value during this PM cycle.

## As an employee, what should I do during Stage 1?

- Understand the NCVIP process and what's expected of you
- Establish work priorities and discuss with manager/supervisor
- Understand how your personal goals connect with agency goals



- Understand the values and how you can meet or exceed expectations
- Complete assigned NCVIP training

## As a manager, what should I do during Stage 1?

Determine priorities and goals for both the team and individual employees, and then discuss these priorities with employees

- Discuss how the NCVIP process will work for the year and outline what employees can expect
- Clarify the NCVIP process and answer employees' questions
- Ensure each employee has 3-5 goals
- Understand assigned values and how they tie into agency and statewide missions
- Communicate what meeting or exceeding goals would look like for individual employees
- Complete assigned NCVIP training

To read more about NCVIP, go to [ncvip.nc.gov](http://ncvip.nc.gov).

**DO YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS OR STORY IDEAS?  
EMAIL US AT [THE.RESOURCE@NC.GOV](mailto:THE.RESOURCE@NC.GOV).**