

VICE PRESIDENT FOR FINANCE & PLANNING Division Newsletter



APRIL 2025

Recent Budget Update

VPFP Glen Nelson delivers an FY25 budget update in addition to important guidance for the FY26 budget process and general approach to FY27 revenue allocations. Please visit the [VPFP website](#) for more detailed information and to view Dr. Nelson's video explaining these important updates.

New Budget Director Announced

Amanda Hendrix, Associate Vice President for Budgeting and Planning provided the following message on the recent search for a new Budget Office Director/University Budget Officer: "I'm very pleased to announce that Letisha Trepac has accepted the position of Budget Office Director/University Budget Officer for Illinois State University. Letisha comes to the University with nearly 25 years of experience in higher ed. After spending 21 years at Western Illinois University, she served as CFO for Heartland Community College for three years and is currently the Assistant Finance Director for the Town of Normal. Letisha's first day at ISU will be May 6th and I hope you will join me in welcoming her to campus."

"Thank you to those who had the opportunity to participate in the search process and to Rendi Cottrell for chairing the search. I would also like to thank Janis Langdon for her tireless work and dedication serving as Acting Director over the last year."



Signs of Spring



**ILLINOIS STATE
UNIVERSITY**
Illinois' first public university

Emerging technologies focus at 2025 CITx Conference

On Thursday, February 27, campus information technology (IT) professionals gathered for the half-day Continuous Improvement in Technology (CIT) Conference, known as CITx. As MC Jeff Grabb mentioned in his closing remarks, the theme for the day appeared to be “outstanding work and opportunities—from students to research to what all is going on on campus right now.” Highlights of the day included a keynote from Director of Emerging Technologies for Instruction and Research Roy Magnuson and the awarding of the CIT Student MVP Award.

Link to full article:

<https://news.illinoisstate.edu/2025/03/emerging-technologies-focus-at-2025-citx-conference/>



Taxability of Tuition Remission for Employees

Illinois State University offers employees the exceptional benefits associated with pursuing higher education, covering portions of both undergraduate and graduate coursework. However, the tax implications of this benefit vary depending on the level of education and the employee's affiliation with an educational institution.

When is Tuition Remission Taxed?

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) considers any value provided to an employee by an employer as a form of compensation, which must be reported as taxable wages unless specifically excluded by the Internal Revenue Code.

Undergraduate Tuition Remission:

- **Educational Institutions:** Section 117(d) of the Internal Revenue Code allows educational institutions to exclude the value of undergraduate tuition remission from employees' taxable wages. This exclusion also applies to the employees' spouses and dependent children.
- **Non-Educational Institutions:** Employees who do not work for educational institutions are not eligible for this exclusion.

Graduate Tuition Remission:

- **Educational Institutions:** The IRS does not exclude graduate tuition remission from taxable income for employees of educational institutions.
- **All Employers:** Section 127 of the Code allows all employers to provide up to \$5,250 of educational assistance per year on a tax-free basis for both undergraduate and graduate work. This benefit applies only to employees, not their spouses or dependents.

Tax Implications

Graduate-level tuition remission received by employees of educational institutions and all tuition remission received by employees of non-educational institutions is taxable once the value exceeds

\$5,250 per tax year. Additionally, all tuition remission received by spouses and dependents of employees who are not employees of educational institutions is fully taxable.

Withholding and Reporting Taxes

The additional taxable income and taxes withheld are reported on the W-2 form, which the University issues by January 31st. Educational assistance exceeding the excludable amount is subject to federal, Social Security, and Medicare taxes.

Paycheck Impact

To minimize the impact on net pay, additional tax withholding will be spread out evenly across select paychecks issued during the current semester. If some paychecks have already been issued, the additional taxes will be spread out across the remaining paychecks.

Semester Programs:

- Spring: April and May
- Summer: August
- Fall: November and December

Employees are encouraged to track their tuition remission benefits and verify receipt at the beginning of each term to ensure proper tax withholding.



Did you know that employees can receive University bills too?

A couple of examples include parking tickets and lost work keys.

For parking tickets, if you do not pay the parking ticket to Parking on a timely basis, the charge will be posted to Student Accounts for billing and collections. When the charge is posted to your account, you will receive an email telling you how to make a payment with Student Accounts.

For lost keys, Facilities will ask if you would like to pay via check to them or if you would like it billed to you. If you choose to have it billed to you, then it will be sent to Student Accounts for billing and collections. Payment can be made by using the 'Employee Payment Login' button on the [Student Accounts Website](#).

Failure to pay these charges results in the charges being sent to the State of Illinois Offset system and a collection agency. This results in the State of Illinois garnishing your paycheck for the funds or taking your Illinois State tax refund and sending it to the University. The State will also charge an additional \$15.00 for each time that the pull money to cover their services. Having your account sent to a collection agency results in a percentage that they collect from you going to pay for their services. These are expensive endeavors for both you and the University.

If you have questions about either of these types of charges that may have been posted to your account, please contact Parking or Facilities. Student Accounts has no authority to remove these charges if you believe they are incorrect.

Please help us to save time and money by paying these types of charges on a timely basis. If you have other questions in regards to billing and collections please send an email to stuaccts@ilstu.edu.

Leadership Development program completes 2024-2025 cohort

The 2024-2025 Human Resources sponsored Leadership Development program titled “Leading from the Middle” concluded on Friday, April 17th. This year’s cohort included leaders from 15 different departments across all campus divisions. Congratulations to the graduating members from the VPFP Division:

- Laura Gossett – Comptroller’s Office
- Courtney Grose – Office of Tech Solutions
- Jackie Gunderson – Comptroller’s Office
- Janis Langdon – Budget Office
- Josh Staton – Client Services



Link to full article:

<https://news.illinoisstate.edu/2025/04/leadership-development-program-completes-2024-2025-cohort/>

Benefit Choice Fair and upcoming enrollment period (FY26)

The annual **CMS** (Department of Central Management Services) **Benefit Choice Open Enrollment Period** is quickly approaching. The Open Enrollment (impacting health, dental, and other plans) for fiscal 2026 will run for the period **May 1 through June 2** with **elections effective on July 1, 2025**, with a link inside of iPeople to access the portal of information and choices at that time.

A **Benefit Choice Fair** will be held on **Monday, May 12, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.**, in the **Prairie Room** (second floor) of the Bone Student Center. During the fair, representatives will be available from the following groups to answer questions:

- CMS-provided vendors (Aetna, Blue Cross Blue Shield, HealthLink, Delta Dental, EyeMed, MetLife, CVS, ComPsych, and Optum Financial)
- CMS and MyBenefits representatives
- Retirement planning (TIAA, Fidelity, Voya, SURS, and CMS)
- Human Resources Benefit Services
- Payroll Office
- Health Promotion and Wellness

CMS will be presenting an overview of Benefit Choice changes and options for fiscal 2026 at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. in the Brown Ballroom I during the fair.

For more information, please review the [Human Resources Benefit Choice page](#).

Tuition waiver requests open June 1 for faculty/staff dependents

Faculty and staff who have a dependent child attending Illinois State University or any other eligible reciprocal institution in summer of 2025 or for the 2025-26 academic year should start submitting a tuition waiver application to Human Resources on June 1. This will help to ensure that a credit is received on the first tuition bill.

The **tuition waiver application** is located on the [Human Resources website](#) along with additional information about educational benefits and qualifying. One application needs to be filed each academic year in which this benefit is being used.

If you have questions, please contact Teresa Fultz (last name A-L) or Michele Pedler (last name M-Z) at (309) 438-8311. ALL final waiver requests should be attached and submitted directly to HRTuitionWaivers@IllinoisState.edu.

ISU's Heating and Cooling Plant Staff Featured in Local Media Segment

“TV-10 News interviewed Daniel Kane (Assistant Director of Heating Plant Operations), Brady Mann (Director of Energy Management), and Josh Wiechman (Assistant Superintendent of Heating Plant Operations) to discuss how the Heating and Cooling Plant maintains stable indoor temperatures year-round.

We are grateful for the dedicated Energy Management unit working behind the scenes to keep our campus running safely and efficiently.”(See photos)

Link to full video: <https://isu10news.com/heating-and-cooling-plant/>



Inside the Heating Plant Operations Building



Brady Mann – Director of Energy Management



Daniel Kane – Assistant Director of Heating Plant Operations



Exterior view of Heating Plant Operations Building

Enhancement to Pay Statements: Earnings Ordered by Employee Record

We are excited to announce an enhancement to our pay statements that will make it easier for you to understand your earnings. Starting in May 2025, your pay statements will now display earnings ordered by employee record. This improvement aims to provide greater clarity and transparency regarding your compensation.

Key Changes:

- **Earnings by Employee Record:** Your earnings will be categorized and displayed according to each employee record. This will help you easily track your income from different employee records.
- **Detailed Breakdown:** Each employee record will include a detailed breakdown of hours worked, pay rate, and total earnings.
- **Improved Layout:** The new layout is designed to be more user-friendly, making it simpler to review and understand your pay statement.

Before:

HOURS AND EARNINGS					
<u>Description</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>YTD</u>		<u>Earnings</u>
			<u>Earnings</u>	<u>Hours</u>	
Regular Pay			4,849.00		43,641.00
Contract Pay - FY 2025			2,434.00		3,651.00
Contract Pay - FY 2024			0.00		5,476.50
TOTAL:			7,283.00		52,768.50

After:

HOURS AND EARNINGS					
<u>Description</u>	<u>Rate</u>	<u>Current</u>	<u>YTD</u>		<u>Earnings</u>
			<u>Earnings</u>	<u>Hours</u>	
Regular Pay			2,174.00		19,566.00
Regular Pay			2,675.00		24,075.00
Contract Pay - FY 2025			1,217.00		1,825.50
Contract Pay - FY 2024			0.00		5,476.50
Contract Pay - FY 2025			1,217.00		1,825.50
TOTAL:			7,283.00		52,768.50