



October 2026

Monthly Meeting Topics

Important information you need to know



HEADS UP!! Open Enrollment Dates are different this year! CLOSING EARLY—NOV 24th

Open Enrollment for 2026 will be from October 27th–November 24th.

Employees can review their current benefit enrollments in Workday by following these steps:

Log into Workday -> Select Menu -> Select Benefits and Pay Resources -> Select the Benefits tab -> Select the Benefit Elections sub-tab

October is Fire Prevention Month

All team members should review basic fire safety procedures, including evacuation plans and tips (Don't use elevators! Know where fire alarm stations and extinguishers are located! Take your essential personal items with you!). In the event of a fire, GET OUT of the building, and STAY OUT!

Learn more at: <https://www.washington.edu/uwem/>

Winter is Coming

UW Facilities team members provide essential services to the University, and most UWF positions are considered essential and must report to work regardless of campus closure or suspension of operations. Because students live on campus, and due to the nature of our work, our efforts are important and many folks rely on us to keep the campus operational.

When inclement weather strikes, whether during the work day or not, always check in with your supervisor. Follow all call in procedures. Dress appropriately, know your hazards, and prepare yourself and your family for these situations in advance. Learn more at:

<https://www.washington.edu/uwem/be-prepared/>



Stay home if you're sick!

Fall is around the corner, and this is a good time to remind you that you have sick time, and we want you to use it when you are not feeling well. If you feel sick or have symptoms of any illness, protect your co-workers by staying home, and we hope you get better.

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It gets windy around here

Fall storms bring wind, rain, and falling leaves to our campus, which means it's a good time to remember a few important work practices.

No UWF staff can work on scaffolding, boson's chairs, or aerial lifts in sustained winds over 25 mph. Ladder work should also be postponed. Roofing work in winds over 25 mph require site specific work plans that address hazards, and should be avoided if possible.

Make sure to secure any scaffolding, wind susceptible materials (plywood, piping, cardboard boxes, etc.), and lift equipment in the field, including tools and job boxes. Bring materials inside whenever possible (excluding hazardous waste, of course), and secure them whenever they must remain outside. Secure all gates and waste containers.

Mind the doors on vehicles. It is a best practice to park vehicles so that doors are away from the wind, allowing for better control of the door.



Weapons on Campus

Possession or use of firearms or other dangerous weapons is prohibited on campus/university premises unless authorized by UWPD. This includes storing weapons in your personal vehicle if it is parked on campus, unless prior written approval is granted by the University Chief of Police.

If you have a concealed pistol permit, you must still obtain written approval from the University Chief of Police before bringing a firearm or other weapons on campus.

Help us create a safe and welcoming environment for everyone on campus: leave the weapons at home.

Politics in the Workplace

To help maintain a respectful, inclusive, and distraction free workplace, employees are asked to avoid political debates during work time or in shared workspaces. These conversations can unintentionally cause tension or discomfort, and our goal is to keep the focus on maintaining a professional and collaborative environment for everyone.



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Supervisor Job Aid

UWF Leadership requires you to cover all relevant topics with your employees.

Talking points and notes to help you lead this discussion with your team. Please print & post or hand out the other attached document labeled 'Flyer'. Use this as your guide for the following topics.



Do not forget to start your team meetings off with a **Safety Moment**. What's a Safety Moment? It's an opportunity to talk about safety—something that went right, or something we could be doing better, or a hazard to watch out for. Anything to get your team thinking and talking about safety.

Open Enrollment—ENDS EARLY

- Remind your team that open enrollment dates are different this year. They start early, and **end early**.
- Remind your team that the dates are October 27th to November 24th.
- If you or your team need access to computers, reach out to the Training Center.
- Any questions or explanations about benefit choices must be directed to the Benefits Office. Team Members can contact the Benefits Office at: <https://hr.uw.edu/benefits/>

Fire Prevention Month

- All employees who are expected to be able to use a fire extinguisher must receive annual training. It is your responsibility as a supervisor to ensure they complete this training.
- Review your Fire Safety and Evacuation Plan (FSEP) with your staff.
- Remind your team that they may not be able to re-enter buildings after leaving and to bring with them any *essential* personal belongings.
- Refer to UW Facilities Fire Safety & Evacuation Plan (FSEP) for additional tips on fire and building evacuation: <https://facilities.uw.edu/partner-resources/safety/fire-safety-evacuation-plans>

Inclement Weather/Suspended Operations

- All employees need to be notified if they are essential staff or not. Essential service staff are those that are required to work during suspended operations and/or inclement weather. Work with your department to determine who on your team is considered essential, and communicate that to your employees.
- Discuss your expectations with your employees so that all of your team has a clear understanding of whether they are expected to report to work during suspended operations.



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- Be aware, and inform your team that Sick Time Off is not an available option for suspended operations/inclement weather (other leave types, such as comp, vacation, holiday credit or personal holiday can be used).
- As a supervisor, please read and review UW policy on inclement weather/suspended operations at the following links:
 - <http://hr.uw.edu/policies/inclement-weather/>
 - <http://hr.uw.edu/policies/suspended-operations/>
- We encourage you to highlight the unique role we play at UW Facilities in getting the campus back on its feet after extreme weather events.

High Wind Warnings

- As a supervisor, you are responsible for ensuring your employees are following requirements during high wind conditions (above 25mph).
- As high wind often accompanies inclement weather, please ensure that all your employees are aware of their status as essential personnel or not, and your reporting expectations.
- *Recommended Practice:* Unexpected changes to job assignments due to inclement weather or high winds may be a good time for employees to complete individual online trainings or other similar work.

Weapons on Campus

- Weapons are not allowed on campus unless with prior approval from the UW Chief of Police, per WAC code 478-124-020.
- Remind your team members that when parking on University property that this prohibition includes weapons in their personal vehicles.
- This prohibition includes weapons that are licensed and/or individuals with a concealed pistol permit.

Contact your Partner Resources if you have any questions or concerns.

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