



## **MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Northern Illinois University Employees

**FROM:** Steve Cunningham, Associate Vice President  
Administration and Human Resources

**DATE:** October 20, 2009

**RE:** **State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (SOEEA) - 2009 Mandatory Ethics Training Notification (October 20 – November 18)**

Pursuant to the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (PA 93-0617), the State of Illinois mandates that all employees on the payroll of State agencies and universities must complete an annual mandatory Internet-based ethics training program. All regular and temporary, part-time and full-time faculty, administrative/supportive professional staff, operating staff/civil service employees, graduate assistants, student employees, affiliates, and extra help employees working at Northern Illinois University are required by the State to take the on-line training.

Additional information is available on the Human Resource Services (HRS) web site [www.hr.niu.edu](http://www.hr.niu.edu) under Ethics Training. Employees requiring technical assistance or accommodation with workstation utilization should refer to the last section of this correspondence. Detailed information is provided below concerning the ethics training program.

### **Training Format**

Ethics training is an interactive, self-administered, training module accessible through any computer connected to the Internet. This training method is required by the State of Illinois. Experience has shown that most employees complete the training within approximately one hour. However, employees should be aware that the State may be monitoring the time employees spend on the training. Employees are urged to spend an adequate amount of time in reading the training materials.

### **Ethics Training Participants**

All regular and temporary, part-time and full-time faculty, administrative/supportive professional staff, operating staff/civil service employees, graduate assistants, student employees, affiliates, and extra help employees must complete the training. Additionally, according to the Office of the Executive Inspector General, employees on leaves of absence including sabbaticals, educational, and unpaid leaves are required to participate in the on-line training process. Exceptions are made for employees on approved FMLA or disability leave that lasts through the entire training period. These employees will be required to complete an alternative ethics training process upon their return. Employees whose names were in the HRS database on or after September 25, 2009, will be contacted to take the training at a future date through a paper-based format. If you are unsure whether you are required to participate this year, contact the Ethics Training Administrator at 815-753-6039 or via email at [EthicsTraining@niu.edu](mailto:EthicsTraining@niu.edu).

## **Ethics Training Schedule**

- **All employees will be required to complete the training between 8:00 a.m. on October 20 and 7:00 p.m. on November 18, 2009.**
- The Internet site is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, during this period except for occasional system maintenance activities.
- Information and assistance will be available from Human Resource Services, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at 815-753-6039 or 815-753-6000.
- Those who do not comply with the requirements of the SOEEA by completing this training are subject to the possibility of substantial fines and disciplinary action as determined by the State of Illinois. All training must be completed by the last date of the training period which is 7:00 p.m. on November 18, 2009. There will be no extensions available. Any employees who have not completed this training requirement by the deadline must be reported to the State and will also receive notifications from the university.
- Many departments require their employees to complete Ethics Training by an earlier deadline. Employees are encouraged to check with your department for any other specific procedures.

## **Ethics Training Internet Access (NOTE: This is a new training Web site).**

Employees should access the State of Illinois Universities Ethics Training Web site at <http://www.workplaceanswers.com/uillinois> from their computer at work (or a computer workstation made available by their department) during normally scheduled work hours to complete the training. As necessary, employees should coordinate training time frames with their supervisor in order to balance departmental operations and schedules. Supervisors are responsible for assuring their employees fulfill this training requirement. Employees may also complete the training any time during the 30-day period from the computer of their choice. The training site can also be accessed from any home or office computer that has Internet capability. Employees who choose to complete the Ethics Training outside of normal work time, will not be compensated or granted overtime pay for that time.

Employees without normal access to computers should confer with their supervisor about workstation availability. Certain departments, lacking computer access, will be directed to designated computer labs for open lab sessions to complete the training. Contact Human Resource Services (753-6000) for information on lab resources.

Student workers should be given time and workstation access to complete the training during their normal work schedule. Student workers can also access the training at any campus student computer lab.

## **User Identification for Ethics Training**

Each employee will log on to the State Universities Internet Ethics Training site using the following formula involving name and the month/day of birth for their **User ID**:

- Example: John L. Smith, birthday is June 5 of any given year
- User ID: johnlsmith0605

The **year** of birth is not included in the formula. No spaces, punctuation, hyphens or other symbols should be used. If you have difficulty with your User ID, contact the Ethics Training Administrator. If you have any difficulties with the training program, contact [EthicsTraining@niu.edu](mailto:EthicsTraining@niu.edu) or call 753-6039.

When asked to enter a password, **all** employees must use the following default password to log on:

**ethics#123** (After entering this default password, you must enter a **new** personal password with at least six characters that include at least one number). **The password is case sensitive.**

Select a password that is easy to remember. This password will be required to access the training site if the training is not completed in one session and there is a need to return to the site, or if there is a subsequent need to print a certificate. **We strongly recommend that employees print a copy of the completion certificate for their records.** The password will not need to be retained for next year's training. Do not use your Novell or student ID.

### **Ethics Training Content**

The training program presents information for employees to read, along with review questions and interactive activities to assist with understanding the material. Employees can go back and review material as necessary. The training module contains informational material, scenarios, and questions within the text. If an interruption occurs during the training, the "Bookmark" function should be utilized to mark the place before logging out and returning to the site to complete the training. (Note: The employee-created password will be required to re-enter the site).

Upon successful completion of the training, a certificate of completion should be printed. Employees should print this certificate and retain a copy for their records. Many departments may also require their staff to provide a copy of their certificate. All employees who complete the training program will be recorded in a State database. The university will receive reports identifying employees who have completed the training.

### **Ethics Training Assistance**

- The designated Ethics Training Administrator is Deborah Haliczzer. She, or her assistant, Karen Smith, may be contacted at 815-753-6039.
- Many departments have their own technical support staff. Follow the procedures established in your own department for help with passwords and technical questions.
- If you do not have technical support in your department, contact the ITS Help Desk at 815-753-8100.
- For information on the dates, times, resources, and to register for open computer labs, contact Human Resource Services at 753-6000 or email [EthicsTraining@niu.edu](mailto:EthicsTraining@niu.edu).
- For assistance with language, accommodation of disabilities, or any other individual questions or difficulties, contact the Ethics Training Administrator at 753-6039.
- For questions about collective bargaining agreements, contact Karen Baker, Human Resource Services at 753-6017 or 753-6000.
- Employees are reminded that State law requires employees to complete this mandatory ethics training. Those who do not comply are subject to the possibility of substantial fines and disciplinary action as required by the Office of the Executive Inspector General.

### **NIU Ethics Officer**

- The university's Ethics Officer is Kenneth L. Davidson (815-753-8364) and his Deputy Ethics Officer is Greg Brady (815-753-2621). They may be reached at these numbers for questions on the Ethics Act.

We appreciate the cooperation of all employees in completing this mandatory training during the period October 20 through November 18, 2009.

SC/bjr

Via E-mail and Printed Copies