

# 2021-2022 ESU #17 Employee Handbook

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## **Opening Day of ESU #17**

All Employees are required to attend ESU #17 Opening Day at the start of each school year unless prior arrangements have been made with the Administrator.

## **Purchases Made by ESU #17 Staff**

ALL purchases made by ESU #17 staff must have Administrator approval prior to purchase. Requisition forms must be filled out and submitted for Administrator consideration.

## **Smoke-Free Facility**

Effective May 1, 1993, smoking is prohibited in all ESU #17 facilities.

## **Employee Benefits**

ESU #17 offers its employees access to a variety of insurance programs. All insurance benefits begin on the first day of the month, following the date of employment and end on the last day of the month at termination.

## **Change of Status/Qualifying Event**

Changes to benefits must occur within 30 days of the date the event occurred. The employee is responsible for notifying the ESU #17 Business Manager within those 30 days.

## **Health Insurance**

ESU #17 is part of the Educators Health Alliance through Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Nebraska.

The comprehensive health insurance includes: \$650 deductible, with a maximum of \$4,600 per individual or \$9,200 for two or more covered members enrolled on the employee's plan.

The high-deductible health insurance includes \$3,600 deductible, with a maximum of \$4,250 per individual or \$8,150 for two or more covered members enrolled on the employees plan. There is an 80/20 co-pay on medical services provided inside the Network Blue Provider network and a 60/40 co-pay on services provided outside the Network blue Provider network.

### Health Insurance Cont'd...

In-and Out-of-Network cost shares no longer cross-accumulate. Cost shares for services provided in-network will only satisfy the in-network deductibles and out-of-pocket limits. Cost shares for services provided out-of-network will only satisfy the out-of-network deductibles and out-of-pocket limits.

Other benefits and restrictions are outlined in the insurance policy information, which can be found at [www.bcbsne.com](http://www.bcbsne.com) or at the ESU 17 Administration Building.

### Dental Insurance

Single membership coverage is automatically included under all Educators Health Alliance health plans. Employee plus spouse, employee plus children, or family coverage is available at an additional cost.

### Aflac

ESU #17 offers a section 125 Flexible Spending Account Plan. Employees may have pre-tax deductions deferred to one or both of the following categories:

1. Unreimbursed Medical Expenses (cannot exceed \$2,750 per year)
2. Dependent Care Expenses (cannot exceed \$10,500 per year)

Aflac offers a variety of additional policies including: accident, cancer, dental, life, personal short-term disability, and hospital indemnity policy.

Deduction amounts can only be changed once a year at enrollment time, except when circumstances change status of benefits. Enrollment will be conducted on Opening Day.

### Insurance Only Cafeteria Plan

ESU # 17 offers a Section 125 Plan to provide employees the opportunity to use pre-tax dollars to purchase health and dental insurance according to their individual needs.

### **VSP**

Effective September 1, 2011, ESU #17 has made available to its employees an affordable eye care plan through VSP. Employee only, employee plus spouse, employee plus children, and employee plus family plans may be purchased.

### **Long Term Disability Insurance Plan**

Long-term disability insurance is a condition of employment for all eligible employees.

### **Retirement**

All employees of ESU #17 are covered by the Federal Social Security Act. In addition, all employees working an average of 20 hours per week and hired after July 1, 1978, must belong to the Nebraska state Teachers Retirement System.

### **403(b) Retirement Plan**

Because ESU #17 is a political subdivision involved in education, you are eligible to participate in an IRS qualified 403(b) (invested with pre-tax dollars) retirement plan. ESU #17 will deduct your specified amount from your check each month and forward this contribution to the plan administrator. The employee must complete the Enrollment Agreement, and the company selected for investment must meet the IRS requirements. The third-party administrator will be 403(b) Consultants, LLC.

### **Calendar**

Certified staff working at only one district will follow the school calendar of the district where they work. Certified staff working at more than one district will follow the ESU calendar. Staff at any of the three office locations will follow the ESU #17 calendar. ESUCC staff will follow the ESU 17 calendar.

## Holidays

The ESU #17 Calendar of holidays is as follows:

### 2021-2022 School Year

July 5	Independence Day (Observed)
September 6	Labor Day
October 5	Fall Break
November 24-26	Thanksgiving Break
December 23- Jan 3	Christmas Break
March 4 & 11	Spring Break
April 15-18	Easter Break
May 30	Memorial Day

When a holiday occurs on a Saturday, usually the preceding Friday will be observed as the holiday. When a holiday occurs on Sunday, usually the following Monday will be observed as the holiday.

## Vacation

All requests for vacation must be in writing (using appropriate form) prior to the day leave is taken.

## Vacation Days

1. Paid Vacation is available to employees when the following specific conditions are met:
  - The employee is currently employed by the ESU
  - The leave day is taken on a day the employee would otherwise be expected to be at work
  - The employee has met the other conditions that are applicable to the use of paid vacation leave.
2. Classified staff employed pursuant to 12-month contracts shall have available paid vacation days each year. See attachment for details.
3. Period of employment must be continuous from year-to-year to have vacation days available after the first year of employment.

### Personal Days

Certified employees who work under a teaching contract shall be guaranteed three personal days with full pay during the school year. Unused personal leave shall be paid at the rate of \$100 per day at the end of the current school year. Notice of intent to use personal leave shall be given to the employee's immediate supervisor prior to the leave date except in cases of emergencies.

### Sick Leave

Employees must notify the central office prior to or as soon as possible after the day(s) are missed. Absence forms may be completed online by using the absence report on the ESU #17 staff forms page.

Full time certificated employees will receive 9 sick days annually. Part-time employees will receive sick days on a prorated basis. Sick days are cumulative to 60 days.

Full-time at-will staff will receive 9 sick days annually. Part time at-will staff will receive sick days on a pro-rated basis. Sick days are cumulative to 60 days.

ESU #17 employees are entitled to sick bank membership. See attachment for more details.

### Inclement Weather

ESU #17 staff members are to follow the schedule of the educational institution(s) where they live. The ESU #17 Administration Building and Training Center will follow the Ainsworth Community Schools weather schedule and the Valentine SPED Office will follow the Valentine Community Schools weather schedule.

When the school and/or Unit have a late start, such as 10:00 AM, staff will be expected to be at the school/Unit at start time. Staff members will not be subjected to loss of pay due to hours missed for the late start of the Unit.

It is recommended that staff be put on the calling lists of the schools in the communities in which they live in order to receive prompt notification of school closings.



**Under the Family and Medical Leave act of 1993, employees may be entitled to a total of up to 12 workweeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period for the following purposes:**

- Birth of a son or daughter of the employee and care of such son or daughter;
- The placement of a son or daughter with the employee for adoption or foster care;
- The care of spouse, son, daughter, or parent of the employee who has a serious health condition; or
- A serious health condition of the employee that makes the employee unable to perform the essential functions of his or her positions.
- Any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that the spouse, or a son, daughter, or parent of the employee is on covered active duty (or has been notified of an impending call or order to covered active duty) in the armed forces.
- To care for a spouse, son, daughter, or next of kin who is a member of the Armed Forces undergoing medical treatment, recuperation, or therapy, is otherwise on outpatient status or is otherwise on a temporary retirement list for seriously injury or illness.

## Title IX

ESU 17 does not discriminate on the basis of sex, disability, race, color, religion, veteran status, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical condition, gender identity or sexual orientation, or any other protected status in its programs and activities and provides equal access to designated youth groups. Reasonable accommodations will be provided to employees with disabilities and to those who are pregnant, have given birth, or have a related medical condition, as required by law. Complaints or concerns involving discrimination, harassment or retaliation should be addressed to:

Jeff McQuistan, Title IX Coordinator, Educational Service Unit #17, 207 N Main St, Ainsworth, NE 69210 (402) 387-2520 [jmcquistan@esu17.org](mailto:jmcquistan@esu17.org)

For information regarding ESU 17's procedure for complaints of sexual harassment, including the complaint process, how to file a report or a complaint of sexual harassment, and how the ESU will respond to such complaints, please refer to the ESU 17 Board Policy on [Equity and Legal Compliance](#) and the [ESU 17 Complaint Form](#).

For further information about anti-discrimination laws and regulations, or to file a complaint of discrimination with the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in the U.S. Department of Education, please contact the OCR at One Petticoat Lane, 1010 Walnut Street, 3rd Floor, Suite 320, Kansas City, MO 64106, (816) 268-0550 (voice), (816) 268-0599 (Fax), (800) 877-8339 (telecommunications device for the deaf), or [ocr.kansascity@ocr.gov](mailto:ocr.kansascity@ocr.gov)  
Phone: 402-387-1420  
Address: 207 N Main Street, Ainsworth, NE 69210



### **Professional Growth/Travel Expenses**

Approved expenses incurred by the staff members from attending conferences, workshops, or business activities are:

- Round trip transportation costs
- Hotel/lodging and expenses (use direct bill if possible)
- Conference registration and other fees
- Meals

Staff must fill out a workshop request form prior to attending and get administrator approval. Staff must also submit an agenda or copy of registration along with reimbursement form to show attendance.

Receipts will be required for reimbursement of the above listed travel expenses. Restaurant receipts must be itemized if the restaurant serves alcohol. ESU #17 will reimburse employees by direct deposit on the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month.

### **Pay Periods**

Staff members of ESU #17 will be paid in monthly installments. Payments will be received via direct deposit on the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month. Should the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month fall on a holiday or non-work day, employees shall be paid the last workday preceding such holiday or non-work day.

All mileage forms, expense reimbursement forms, and time sheets must be delivered to the business office on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month in order to receive payment by the 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **Resignations**

Permission to resign before the conclusion of the contract period will be granted to the employee under contract only if a suitable replacement is found. The suitability of the replacement shall be determined by the ESU #17 Administrator. After April 15<sup>th</sup>, request for release from a contract will be granted only pending board approval.

## Expense Reports

Expense reimbursements must be submitted to the business office on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month for reimbursement on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

If an expense item is to be reimbursed by ESU #17, there must be a receipt attached validating the expense. If you do not have an acceptable receipt for expense reimbursement, ESU #17 will not be able to reimburse for that expense item.

- **Lodging Reimbursement:** Be sure to ask for the government rate when booking your room. Please use direct bills whenever possible.
- **Meal Reimbursement:** Staff will be reimbursed for meals when outside the ESU #17 area. For reimbursement purposes all receipts must be kept and submitted with the Expense Reimbursement Form. Receipts must be itemized if the restaurant serves alcohol. (Alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed. Please pay for such items separately.)
- **Mileage:** Staff will be paid the IRS government rate for mileage reimbursement. Staff will be notified of any rate changes. Please record all mileage for each month on the Mileage Form.
- **Conferences or Meeting Attendance:** Expense reimbursements submitted for conference costs such as hotel, meals, and transportation, etc. must include a copy of the conference brochure/registration form or the meeting agenda.

## Google Calendars

Google Calendars must be completed by the first day of the month for the month prior by each ESU employee on the Nebraska Retirement System. If calendars are not completed by the 1<sup>st</sup> day of every month, ESU #17 reserves the right to withhold payment until the calendar is completed.

## Attachments

2021-2022 ESU Calendar  
Vacation Guidelines  
Negotiated Agreement  
Sick Leave Bank  
Absence Report  
Expense Reimbursement

Per Diem  
21-22 Salary Schedule & Add'l Compensation  
Grievance Procedure  
Title IX