**NCCE COSS TIME MANAGEMENT**

Purpose- The charge of NC Cooperative Extension employees is to extend the educational mission of the land-grant universities in North Carolina to the people across the state. Often, the availability of these clients and/or nature of the programs dictate the need for Extension employees to work during non-routine office hours (i.e. lunch hours, evenings and/or weekends). Extension employees must be flexible to schedule these times to enable successful programming. It is also desirable that employees achieve a balance in work, home and community life.

All employee positions are classified as to their exempt or non-exempt status in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The Exempt or Non-Exempt status of any particular employee must be determined on the basis of whether duties, responsibilities and salary meet the requirements for exemption.

County Extension offices need to be sufficiently staffed to serve the public during established office hours per government expectations. As such, supervisors are responsible for coordinating schedules of all employees to ensure effective office coverage.

**COSS Employees** (County Operations Support Staff)

COSS employees are subject to the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and are considered “subject” or “non-exempt” employees. COSS employees must keep a daily record of hours worked via WolfTime. They receive compensatory time for weeks exceeding 40 working hours. The following principles apply to COSS time management:

* Supervisors should monitor hours worked on a weekly basis and recommend schedule alternatives to prevent overtime and burnout.
* Time management can be looked at as a form of flexible scheduling to avoid excessive hours over 40 when possible.
* All requests for time management should be requested and approved in advance.
* Time management for COSS employees is hour for hour and should be arranged in the same time reporting period. The work week for COSS employees starts at 12:01 a.m. on Saturday and runs until midnight Friday.

Implementation- North Carolina Cooperative Extension (NCCE) expects employees to do what must be done to enable successful programming while practicing time management.

In order to ensure that time management is implemented equitably through the organization, the following points should serve as a guide:

1. Extension employees are accountable for fulfilling their job responsibilities and commitments and for maintaining their professional online calendars. County Directors and support staff should have access to the online calendars, with details, for each employee in the office.
2. All employees should keep support staff apprised of their work schedules and should be reasonably responsive to phone calls, texts and emails when working away from the office during regular office hours. Professional courtesy requires that Extension personnel communicate with their office team in advance about their work schedule and when they will be taking vacation. The taking of sick leave should be communicated as timely as possible.
3. Time management should be taken at the mutual convenience of the organization and the individual. Time management is the responsibility of the employee with advanced agreement from their immediate supervisor or designee. If the request for time management would negatively affect the unit’s program or function, the supervisor can deny that request.
4. Time management does not negate the need to use vacation or sick leave consistent with university policies.
5. All employees should understand the concepts of managed scheduling and time management, be informed when others are using it to take time off, and develop an informed, professional, sensitive and considerate response if asked where employees are or what they are doing. The office should develop a plan that describes how to respond to walk-ins and phone calls intended for employees who are using managed scheduling.
6. If an employee feels their requests for time management are continually being denied for inappropriate reasons, they are encouraged to contact the next level supervisor.

We recognize that there can sometimes be a conflict between the above time management program and rules/policies/regulations imposed by county government. In these cases, it is the responsibility of the County Extension Director and, when needed, District Extension Director to clarify the expectations with county government. It’s important to demonstrate why time management is critical to the success of our employees.