

**Members present:** Tina Altenhofen, Amanda Andrews, Kristi Bishop, Nick Bliven, Chris Bowling, Angela Calhoun, Sara Conwell, Vicki Cooper, Jennifer Davis, Kyle Dorriere, Liz Futscher, Ali Hannig, Mike Irvin, Amy Ishmael, Christina Knight, Aaron Luken, Brenda Maldonado, Michelle Melish, Kara Olding, Pete Rinto, Connie Seiter, Felicia Share, Steve Slone, Terri Smith, Vanessa Steele, Jennifer Stephens, Juliane Stockman, Teresa Walker, Terkerah Washington, Carolyn Wilhoit, Christopher Witt, and Christine Yankovsky

**Members absent:** Beth Lackey, Terri Smith, Jennifer Stephens

- I. Call to Order at 1:01 PM
- II. Voting Items New Members: Brandon Weinel (to replace Dan Jones); Courtney Clark-Rankin (to replace Crystal Schwab)
  - Approval: Voice Vote
- III. Approval of October 9, 2025 Minutes
  - Motion: Jennifer Davis
  - Second: Julie Stockman
  - Approval: Voice Vote
- IV. Liaison Reports
  - President – Dr. Cady Short-Thompson
  - Board of Regents – Staff Regent – Dr. Cori Henderson - [Report](#)
  - Administrative Liaison – Chief Human Resources Officer – Amy Gellen - [Report](#)
  - Faculty Senate – Budget Committee Chair – Dr. Janel Bloch - [Report](#)
  - Student Government Association – Kyah Smith - [Report](#)
  - President's Report – Vicki Cooper - [Report](#)
- V. Standing Committees:
  - Benefits – Ali Hannig
  - Constitution & Bylaws – Chris Witt and Christina Yankovsky – [Report/2<sup>nd</sup> Reading](#)
  - Credentials & Elections – Beth Lackey and Teresa Walker
  - Liaison – Steve Slone and Terkerah Washington
  - Policies – Pete Rinto and Aaron Luken
  - Scholarship – Kristi Bishop and Michelle Melish - [Report](#)
- VI. University Committees:
  - Benevolent Association – Ali Hannig and Steve Slone - [Report](#)
  - Food Service Advisory – Michelle Melish - [Report](#)
  - IT Advisory Committee – Vicki Cooper - [Report](#)
  - Strategic Planning – Amanda Andrews
  - Transportation – Christopher Bowling
  - Parking and Tuition Waiver Task Force – Mike Irvin and Steve Slone - [Report](#)
- VII. Ad-Hoc Committee
  - Outreach – Terri Smith - [Report](#)
  - Roundtable – Amanda Andrews
  - Advocacy – Jennifer Davis - [Report](#)
- VIII. Old Business
- IX. New Business – [Men's Basketball Game](#)
- X. Non-Member Discussion Period
- XI. Norse Appreciation - [Report](#)

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XII. Announcements - [Report](#)

XI. Adjournment at 2:50 PM

- Motion: Ali Hannig
- Second: Jennifer Davis
- Approval: Voice Vote

### [Call to Order](#)

Meeting was called to order at 1:01 PM.

### [Board of Regents – Dr. Cori Henderson](#)

Dr. Cori Henderson shared the following...

- Budget and Finance Committee Meeting
  - Met October 21
  - Discussed FY 2025 final
  - FY 26 and FY 27-31 per forma discussion
- BOR Meeting is November 19 at 8:30am
- Some of the subcommittee meetings have changed due to scheduling conflicts of board members, I will be sure to share these as I hear about them. The website should reflect those changes.

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**Administrative Liaison – Chief Human Resources Officer – Amy Gellen**

Ryan Padgett shared the following...

The questions forwarded from Staff Congress regarding “fraudulent student records” reflect a misunderstanding of these issues. This is not an NKU-specific problem, much less one in which NKU or its employees are “at fault.” In fact, the rise in identity fraud nationwide among university applicants and students is largely a consequence of increased reliance on electronic processes everywhere since the pandemic, coupled with the growing sophistication of AI tools used by fraud rings to generate fake applications and falsified transcripts. This issue affects universities nationwide. In May 2025, the U.S. Department of Education reported \$40 million in Direct Loan payments and \$6 million in Pell Grants were wrongly disbursed to ineligible individuals due to identity fraud. With respect to NKU, in June 2025 and in response to concerns of identity fraud at the University, NKU’s Legal, Admissions, Financial Aid, Student Account Services, and IT departments immediately began collaborating to detect and prevent such incidents and in accordance with compliance obligations under Title IV regulations. To enhance early detection of fraudulent applications, NKU recently implemented a new identity verification solution offered by Slate. Additionally, the rollout of FAFSA’s updated identity verification process should help shift some of the verification responsibilities away from the University. The University is currently in the process of determining the full financial impact of these identity fraud incidents. As of this response, we do not anticipate a material budget impact as a result of these issues.





DOE Press Release: <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-education-fights-fraud-student-aid-protect-american-taxpayer>

Amy Gellen shared the following...

From Wellness...

## NKU Mental Health Resources

### Supporting Whole-Person Wellness

	<p><b><u>University Wellness Resources</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal Wellness Coaching: Free and Confidential Support from a Registered Dietitian and Wellness Expert</li> <li>• EAP: Free In-person/Virtual/chat therapy, interactive web resources, free legal/financial services, work/life integration tools</li> <li>• Self-care opportunities every semester, including workshops, webinars, and health and well-being classes</li> <li>• Recommended digital resources for mental health, mindfulness, and stress resiliency</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Covered Mental Health Benefits with UMR</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• United Healthcare Comprehensive Behavioral Health Provider Network</li> <li>• Ongoing Condition Care for Depression and Anxiety with Co-morbidity</li> <li>• Inpatient Services</li> <li>• Residential, Day Treatment (Partial Hospitalization), and Outpatient Therapy Services</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Covered Substance Use Disorder and Chemical Dependency Benefits with UMR</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inpatient Services</li> <li>• Residential Treatment</li> <li>• Day Treatment (Partial Hospitalization)</li> <li>• Outpatient Therapy Services</li> </ul>
	<p><b><u>Digital Resources with UMR</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Telepace and Telemental Health Virtual Therapy Options</li> <li>• UMR Care App –</li> <li>• Health Education Library and Healthy U Magazine</li> <li>• MyHealthTools Health and Wellness Platform</li> </ul>

- Humana Dental In Network Providers
  - The additional 60 in network providers were a result of the cigna network merging with the Humana Dental Network. Our representative from Humana Dental announced the expanded network at our open enrollment session. We forwarded the list to employees as we received it, but all providers had not yet received the communication about the cigna network and Humana Dental networks merging. This caused a lot of confusion and frustration as employees started calling these dentists trying to find a dentist taking new patients. The list of new in network dentists is accurate and all dentists should now have received the communication re: the merging networks. We have asked Humana Dental to update the list with which dentists are actively taking on new patients. As soon as we get these updates, we will forward it out.
- Policy Changes – Thank you all for your feedback regarding the updated policies sent out to campus for review. There were changes made to several policies based on feedback received during the comment period. The policy page on the NKU website gives a summary of changes made to each policy. [Fall 2025 Policy Changes: Northern Kentucky University, Greater Cincinnati Region](#)
  - Flex Work Arrangements – Several comments / questions were received about ensuring this policy is administered consistently. All requests for a flexible work arrangement should go to your supervisor. It will then go to

the department head then VP then HR. The VP and HR will ensure that the policy is consistently administered across departments.

- Emergency Closing – We clarified plan A vs Plan B. Instructors have the discretion to determine whether synchronous classes can shift to remote/virtual instruction. Supervisors are responsible to communicate with their employees regarding contingencies and expectations for remote work in the event of a campus closure, to help employees plan for these events.

Other department updates:

Wellness:

Please mention and share the Mental Health infographic and new Mental Health web page with more details and supports to be included in the meeting notes.

<https://inside.nku.edu/hr/wellness/services1/mhresources.html>

Announce Real Appeal program, registration begins on 1/1/26.

Real Appeal is a 52-week healthy lifestyle and weight management online program designed to help you take control of your health, all at no additional cost to you as part of your UMR health plan. The Real Appeal program is designed to promote healthy habits and clinically meaningful weight loss by supporting members in changing lifestyle habits related to healthy eating, physical activity, improved well-being, and a better health outlook. Program includes:

Live, coach-led virtual group classes

Personalized 1:1 coaching

Personalized, evidence-based curriculum Tracking (weight, steps, nutrition, exercise)

Accessible via web & app Success Kit mailed to home: body weight scale, food scale, balanced portion plate, access to online fitness content, access to online food and nutrition guide with meal plans and recipes.

Access to Fitness on Demand

Webpage with details and registration

instructions: <https://inside.nku.edu/hr/wellness/services1/umrrealappeal.html>. Contact Kim Baker with questions.

IT:

- NKU's **Change Champion Network** is made up of 33 colleagues from 29 departments helping lead our transition to Workday! They're sharing updates, promoting readiness, and keeping everyone connected as we prepare for go-live in June 2026. The [workday.nku.edu](https://workday.nku.edu) website has more information: <https://www.nku.edu/workday/change-champions.html>
- **Lab and classroom software requests** for Winter and Spring semesters are due by November 15. Please provide licensing information for new software. Late requests may delay availability. Submit your

requests: <https://servicedesk.nku.edu/TDClient/2436/Portal/Requests/ServiceDesk?ID=46782>

- On Friday, November 21, **Adobe** services may be temporarily unavailable as IT transitions licenses to the new Adobe products. After the transition, all faculty and staff will have access to Adobe Acrobat and Adobe Sign.
- On Wednesday, November 26, while NKU is closed for the Thanksgiving holiday, NKU IT will be performing scheduled maintenance and system upgrades from 6 AM to 8 PM. Upgrades to the network and core switches will result in **brief outages of approximately 15 minutes affecting all NKU servers and systems, including SAP**. Additional minor network interruptions may occur intermittently throughout the day.
- Also on Wednesday, November 26 **Callahan Hall and Northern Terrace** will experience a complete network outage for the full duration of the maintenance period (6 AM to 8 PM).
- **View vCenter** will be unavailable for a maintenance upgrade Friday, November 28, from 8 AM through 11 AM, while NKU is closed for the Thanksgiving break.
- The annual **SAP upgrade** is scheduled for Friday, December 5 at 5 PM through Saturday, December 6. This upgrade will result in the myNKU system being completely unavailable during this time.

#### Benefits:

Open Enrollment officially closed on Monday—thank you to everyone who participated. If you have any questions or encounter issues with your elections, please contact the Benefits Team asap. (enrollment data has to be sent to the vendors very soon.)

#### Medical

All employees enrolled in the medical plan will receive new UMR ID cards before January 1.

If your card does not arrive by then, you may continue using your current UMR card until the new one arrives.

Please note that the new cards will arrive in a plain, unmarked envelope—be careful not to discard it by mistake.

UMR/UHC Tri Health Negotiations. No major breakthrough to announce at this time. However, we remain optimistic that a resolution will be reached before January 1.

UMR/UHC has recently provided us with a "Fact vs Myth" response to some of TriHealth's public statements. We have made the document available to your benefit committee leadership and will put the document on the HR website. You can also contact the NKU benefits team for a copy. Basically UMR/UHC again reiterates that

their top priority is to reach an agreement that is affordable for Ohio families and employers. Unfortunately, TriHealth is demanding a 45% price hike that would increase health care costs by \$123 million for consumers and local companies.

#### Dental

We are happy to report that Humana Dental has announced the addition of 60 new in-network dentists who are now accepting new patients.

The updated provider list is available on the HR Benefits webpage or by contacting the Benefits Team. We are hopeful that these additional providers will alleviate some of the in-network provider issues with Humana Dental.

#### Retirement plans

As a reminder, you may make changes to your voluntary retirement contributions at any time (these are not tied to Open Enrollment).

Contact the Benefits Team if you'd like to adjust your contributions for 2026. (Or even for the remainder of 2025 if you notify the benefits team before the payroll deadlines.)

#### Payroll:

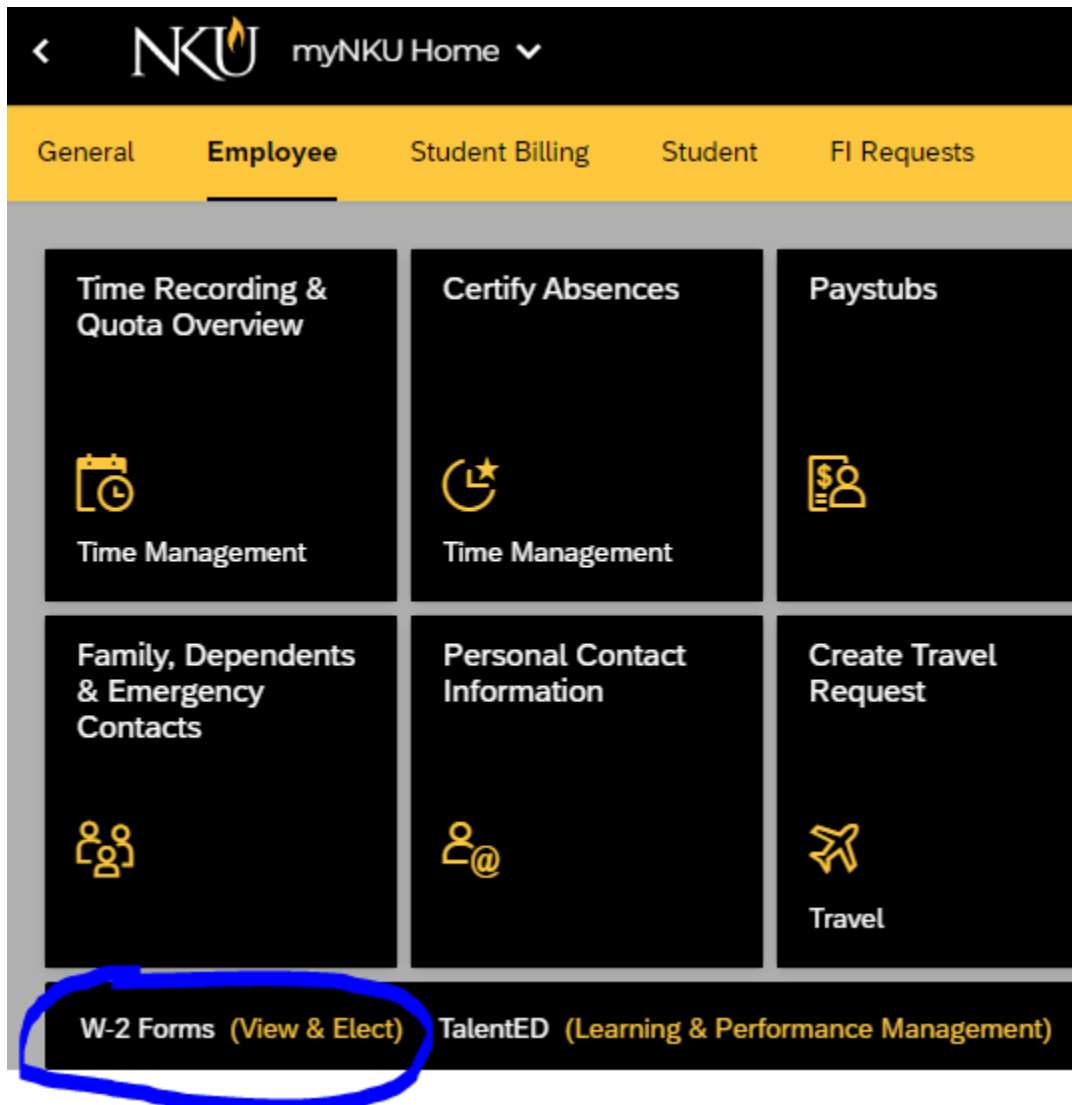
##### **Online W2 Statement**

The end of 2025 is almost here and NKU has again partnered with ADP to prepare the 2025 W-2 statements. We encourage all active employees to enroll through employee self-service to receive an online W-2 statement. Enrollment for online delivery is the quickest way to receive your W-2 statement, but **you must enroll by December 31<sup>st</sup>. If you previously enrolled to receive an online W2 statement, you are not required to enroll again in online delivery for the 2025 W-2 statement.**

**Online Access:** You must enroll by December 31<sup>st</sup> to receive a 2025 electronic W-2 statement

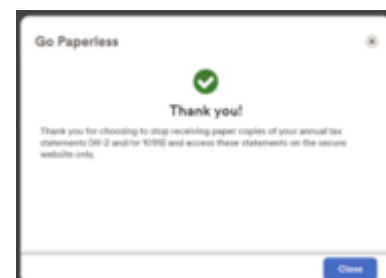
**Step 1:** log into MyNKU employee self-service tab, clicking on the W2 Forms (View& Elect) Bar at the bottom of the employee tile display. You will then be redirected to the ADP website to follow additional prompts.





**Step 2:** Once you are on the ADP website, click “yes” to go paperless (1), review your email address for submission (2), and review confirmation message (3).

**1. Click Yes and read disclaimer    2. Review email address and submit    3. Confirmation message of selection**





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**Printed Copy:** If you are not enrolled in online delivery a printed copy of the W-2 statement will be mailed to the home address you have on file. Please make sure that your address is current as W-2 reprints will not be available until after 2/10/2026.

**Questions?**

Please contact [payroll@nku.edu](mailto:payroll@nku.edu) or visit the payroll website <https://inside.nku.edu/hr/payroll.html>

**Faculty Senate – Dr. Janel Bloch**

Dr. Janel Bloch shared that Faculty Senate spent most of their last meeting discussing the upcoming voluntary separation program for Faculty. Similar to in times past there is a plan to ask tenure and tenure track faculty to express interest in taking a one-time payment and separating from the university.

**Student Government Association – Kyah Smith**

Kyah Smith shared that SGA has been working on several resolutions. One is working with Campus Recreation to add Ice Makers to the Recreation Center. Another is working with FUEL NKU to extend hours for students that may be on campus and have need during off business hours. They are also conducting a food drive this year for the Holidays.

**President - Vicki Cooper**

Vicki Cooper shared the following...

**Staff Congress President's Report, 11/13/2025**

The Staff Congress Administrator Survey Reports for 2024-2025 were emailed on 10/31/2025 to all of the administrators reviewed, their supervisors and President Short-Thompson. The Board of Regents chair also received President Short-Thompson's report.

Staff Congress Portal Submissions. We received 37 submissions this past month, a majority of them were related to the policies under review. All of these submissions were sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen. In addition, Diana McGill, Grant Garber, Chris Calvert and Ryan Padgett received some of the submissions.

I want to thank all members of Staff Congress and our committees for their hard work this year to represent the voices of all NKU staff. This past month was a difficult one on campus. We do not know what struggles and hardships others are experiencing so, if you are inclined, please practice random acts of kindness toward others, whether it's your friends, family, co-workers or strangers. Kindness costs us nothing but can make a big difference in lives of others.

I hope everyone can attend the Holiday Party later today, even if just for a little while, and that you enjoy your Thanksgiving break.

### **Constitution and Bylaws – Christopher Witt and Christine Yankovsky**

Christopher Witt shared that we would be having a second reading of bylaw changes. The changes were read aloud by Christopher Witt, Steve Slone, and Mike Irvin. The text of 11 documents are contained herein.

#### **(Article IV, Section 2 – Eligibility for Office – Who May Vote)**

##### **ORIGINAL:**

All elected members of the Staff Congress are eligible for the *offices* of Secretary *and Treasurer* stated in Section 1 of this Article. The offices of President and President-elect shall require a minimum of 2 years and 1 year of Staff Congress service respectively. Only elected members of the Staff Congress may nominate or cast ballots in the election of any officer of the Staff Congress.

##### **PROPOSED:**

All elected members of the Staff Congress are eligible for the **office** of Secretary stated in Section 1 of this Article. The offices of President and President-elect shall require a minimum of 2 years and 1 year of Staff Congress service respectively. Only elected members of the Staff Congress may nominate or cast ballots in the election of any officer of the Staff Congress.

#### **(Article 1 - Representatives, Section 3, Elections Process, item e)**

##### **ORIGINAL:**

e) The Staff Congress Office Personnel and/or one member of the Credentials and Elections Committee shall be responsible for reviewing all nominations *in his or her office*.

##### **PROPOSED:**

e) The Staff Congress Office Personnel and/or one member of the Credentials and Elections Committee shall be responsible for reviewing all nominations **in person or in a virtual meeting**.

#### **(Article II -Director of Personnel Services)**

##### **ORIGINAL:**

The *Director of Human Resources*, by virtue of position, is the administrative liaison of Staff Congress.

##### **PROPOSED:**

The **Chief Human Resources Officer**, by virtue of position, is the administrative liaison of Staff Congress.

**(Article IV – Officers, Section 3, Nominating Committee)**

**ORIGINAL:**

1. After the results of the general Staff Congress elections in May are posted, the nominating Committee will prepare a slate of nominees for each office (President-Elect and Secretary/*Treasurer*). Exception - See Article III, Section 1. This slate of nominees will be presented at the June meeting.

**PROPOSED:**

1. After the results of the general Staff Congress elections in May are posted, the nominating Committee will prepare a slate of nominees for each office (**President-Elect and Secretary**). Exception - See Article III, Section 1. This slate of nominees will be presented at the June meeting.

**(Article IV, Section 1, Officers)**

**ORIGINAL:**

The Staff Congress shall annually elect a President-Elect and Secretary/*Treasurer*.

**PROPOSED:**

The Staff Congress shall annually elect a President-Elect and **Secretary**.

**(Article IV – Officers, Section 4 - Elections of Officers, item c)**

**ORIGINAL:**

c) An election to fill a vacancy in the office of either President Elect or Secretary/*Treasurer* of the Staff Congress shall be conducted at the next regular meeting after such vacancy occurs.

**PROPOSED:**

c) An election to fill a vacancy in the office of either President Elect or **Secretary** of the Staff Congress shall be conducted at the next regular meeting after such vacancy occurs.

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**(Article IV – Officers, Section 5 – Duties of the President, items b & c)**

**ORIGINAL:**

- b) To determine, in consultation with the Secretary/*Treasurer* of the Staff Congress, the agenda for all meetings of the Staff Congress.
- c) To issue calls for both regular and special meetings of the Staff Congress through the Secretary/*Treasurer* and in accordance with Sections 3 and 5 of Article IV of these Bylaws.

**PROPOSED:**

- b) To determine, in consultation with the Secretary of the Staff Congress, the agenda for all meetings of the Staff Congress.
- c) To issue calls for both regular and special meetings of the Staff Congress through the Secretary and in accordance with Sections 3 and 5 of Article IV of these Bylaws.

**(Article IV -Officers, Section 7 -Duties of the Secretary/Treasurer)**

**ORIGINAL:**

Section 7 - Duties of the Secretary/*Treasurer*

The duties of the Secretary/*Treasurer* of the Staff Congress shall be:

**PROPOSED:**

Section 7 - Duties of the Secretary

The duties of the Secretary of the Staff Congress shall be:

**(Article V – Meetings, Section 5 -Agenda, items a & b)**

**ORIGINAL:**

The President of the Staff Congress, in consultation with the Secretary/*Treasurer*, shall determine the agenda for each meeting.

- a. All committees of the Staff Congress and individual members of the Staff Congress may submit agenda items to the Secretary/*Treasurer* not less than ten working days before a regular meeting.

- b. The Secretary/*Treasurer* of the Staff Congress shall deliver a copy of the agenda to each member not less than five working days before a regular meeting and not less than three working days before a special meeting

**PROPOSED:**

The President of the Staff Congress, in consultation with the Secretary, shall determine the agenda for each meeting.

- a. All committees of the Staff Congress and individual members of the Staff Congress may submit agenda items to the Secretary not less than ten working days before a regular meeting.
- b. The Secretary of the Staff Congress shall deliver a copy of the agenda to each member not less than five working days before a regular meeting and not less than three working days before a special meeting

**(Article VII -Standing Committees of the Staff Congress, Section 3 – Appointment, item d)**

**ORIGINAL:**

d) Standing committees shall be composed of a minimum of five members including a chairperson and a *vice-chairperson*. One member should have served on that committee the previous year.

**PROPOSED:**

d) Standing committees shall be composed of a minimum of five members including a chairperson and a **co-chairperson**. One member should have served on that committee the previous year.

**(Article VII – Standing Committees of the Staff Congress, Section 5, Chairpersons of Standing Committees, items a & 4)**

**ORIGINAL:**

- a. Following the Executive Council appointments, each committee shall elect, by a majority vote, a chairperson and *vice-chairperson*.
4. Duties of the *vice-chairperson* shall be to assume the duties of the chairperson in his/her absence.

**PROPOSED:**

- a. Following the Executive Council appointments, each committee shall elect, by a majority vote, a chairperson and **co-chairperson**.

**Scholarship – Kristi Bishop and Michelle Melish**

Kristi Bishop shared that the portal to apply for our scholarships is now open. Please encourage any and all students who have a parent or spouse who is an NKU staff member to fill out the application and apply for our scholarships. Deadline to apply is January 16, 2026. Flyer contained below.





ATTN: STUDENTS!

**IS YOUR PARENT  
OR SPOUSE A NKU  
STAFF MEMBER?**

IF SO, YOU MAY BE ELIGIBLE  
FOR A SCHOLARSHIP FROM  
NKU STAFF CONGRESS!

TO APPLY OR FOR MORE INFORMATION  
VISIT:

[INSIDE.NKU.EDU/STAFFCONGRESS](https://inside.nku.edu/staffcongress/scholarship)  
[/SCHOLARSHIP](https://inside.nku.edu/staffcongress/scholarship)

Submit Staff Congress essay and be  
sure to enter Staff Employee's name  
on Family Information tab

**DEADLINE:**

**January 16, 2026**





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## **University Committees**

### **Benevolent – Ali Hannig and Steve Slone**

Ali Hannig shared that the Benevolent Fundraising chili cook off was held on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Thank you to EVERYONE who helped with the event. We also brought back the holiday vendor market in the lobby area outside the UC ballroom. Rough estimates put attendance at around 130, cash donated at around 300 dollars, and hours donated at over 1,000 hours. The winner of the dessert competition was Teresa Walker and the winner of the chili competition was Madison Baker. Thank you to everyone who worked so hard to make this event a success. Special thanks to all of the members of the benevolent fundraising committee. Watch for information about the soup cook off in the spring semester.

### **Food Service Advisory – Michelle Melish**

Michelle Melish shared the following...

- The hours of operations have been updated on the website all the way through till the last day of finals week. Winter break hours are still being discussed
- During the week of December 15<sup>th</sup>, dining will only be accepting credit card. They are updating the system and will not be able to accept All Cards.

She also shared the newsletter from NKU dining contained herein.

# NKU DINING NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER | 2025

## TEACHING KITCHEN

Discover your inner chef in our free Teaching Kitchens! Sign up for hands-on cooking classes where you'll learn new skills, taste delicious creations, and have fun with friends.

## SUPPER CLUB

Join us for Supper Club—an RSVP-only elevated dining experience! Enjoy double-swipe, themed dinners from around the world, starting with A Night in Greece

- ▶ November Overview
- ▶ Team Member Highlight

- ▶ Looking Ahead
- ▶ Calendar + December Sneak Peek

# NEWSLETTER

Hi Norse Nation! We're excited to bring you the latest from NKU Dining—think limited-time offers, special events, and fun ways to connect over great food. More importantly, we want you to feel safe and confident when dining with us. If you have allergies or specific dietary needs, be sure to check the QR codes at each station, explore [DineOnCampus.com/NKU](https://DineOnCampus.com/NKU), or set up a time to chat with our chefs using our dietary needs form. Don't ever hesitate to speak up— we're here to help you find meals you can enjoy with peace of mind.



SCAN TO GET OUR ALLERGEN FORM

## LIMITED TIME OFFERS



### Section 1.01 Bacon Cheddar Ranch Chicken Salad Sandwich

Norse Street Subs | 09.01 - 09.12 Turkey breast, Bacon, Pepper Jack Cheese, Chicken Salad topped with lettuce, tomato, Jalapeño black bean mayo, Avocado, and bacon, and ranch dressing on an Artisan roll. Onion.



Norse Street Subs | 09.15 - 09.26

# SPECIAL EVENTS



**Article II. SUPPER CLUB - A NIGHT IN GREECE** **RSVP ONLY**  
11/18/2025 | NORSE COMMONS | 5:00PM - 6:00PM

Supper Club is a new dining experience designed to bring a touch of elegance and adventure to campus. This is not only event transforms the dining hall into a destination, where students can enjoy themed dinners inspired by cuisines from around the world. Each Supper Club is a communal, self-serve meal that encourages students to gather, share, and connect over food in a relaxed yet elevated setting. This next installment, A Night in Greece, will feature Greek-inspired dishes that will transport you to the city of culture and amazing food. Admission requires a double swipe, and space is limited—reserve your spot early to be part of this unique culinary journey!



**11/15/2025 | NORSE COMMONS | 4:30PM - CLOSE**

Anime Night is all about fun, creativity, and connection. Students can relax with screenings of popular anime movies and episode browse and read from a collection of manga, and enjoy themed snacks and treats inspired by their favorite shows. It's the perfect way to unwind, share your fandoms with friends, and dive into the colorful world of anime together.





Events

# EVENTS



## 11/05 | NORSE COMMONS | LUNCH

Warm up with a cozy cup at our Hot Chocolate Bar, featuring a variety of toppings and mix-ins to create your perfect drink. Enjoy the sweet flavors of the season while mingling with friends and family.



## 11/11 | NORSE COMMONS | LUNCH

Get creative in the kitchen by crafting your own delicious mini pies with a selection of fillings and crusts. This hands-on activity is perfect for bakers of all levels and makes for a tasty treat to take home.



## 11/24 | NORSE COMMONS | ALL DAY

Part of Chartwells Higher Education's Joy-Ful campaign, ThankFUL celebrates community, gratitude, and giving back. The event features activities like "thankful walls" and "Friendsgiving" gatherings while helping combat food insecurity through donated meals and meal vouchers.



## 11/12 | NORSE COMMONS | 4:30PM - 6:00PM

Join us for Holiday Hero, a fun and interactive cooking class where you'll learn to make delicious Thanksgiving appetizers. Bring a friend, make a friend, and enjoy a cozy evening of cooking, tasting, and connecting over holiday favorites—spots are limited, so reserve yours today!

859.572.5735

[Dineoncampus@nku.edu](mailto:Dineoncampus@nku.edu)

[Dineoncampus.com/NKU](https://Dineoncampus.com/NKU)

Teaching Kitchen

# TEACHING KITCHEN



## HOLIDAY HERO

11/12 | NORSE COMMONS | 4:30PM - 6:00PM

Join us for Holiday Hero, a fun and interactive cooking class where you'll learn to make delicious Thanksgiving appetizers. Bring a friend, make a friend, and enjoy a cozy evening of cooking, tasting, and connecting over holiday favorites—spots are limited, so reserve yours today!

# RECHARGE



## VISIT OUR SITE TO ADD MORE!

[Dineoncampus.com/NKU](https://Dineoncampus.com/NKU)

Running low on Flex Dollars? Head to [DineOnCampus.com/NKU](https://DineOnCampus.com/NKU) to quickly add more and keep fueling your day with your favorite campus eats. Stay refreshed, recharged, and ready to go!

# LOOKING AHEAD

## DECEMBER SNEAK PEEK

2025

DECEMBER

NKU Dining Events Calendar

Limited Time Offers

Caliente Turkey Club

Norse Street Subs | 12.01 - 12.12

Special Events

**FUEL NKU Teaching Kitchen Class**  
 Norse Street Subs | 12.02 - 12.12  
 Join us at Norse Commons for hands-on cooking classes in partnership with the campus food pantry, FUEL NKU. Learn how to make delicious meals while focusing on sustainability, reducing food waste, and helping fight hunger on campus.

**DIY - Hot Chocolate Bar**  
 Norse Street Subs | 12.03  
 Warm up at Norse Street Subs with your own custom hot chocolate or eatery! Choose from a variety of toppings, flavors, and mix-ins to craft the perfect cozy drink just the way you like it, and make your winter day a little sweeter.

Incase You Missed it!

PHOTO OF PAST EVENT

PHOTO OF PAST EVENT

PHOTO OF PAST EVENT

PHOTO OF PAST EVENT

PHOTO OF PAST EVENT

Name of Event

Name of Event

Name of Event

Name of Event

Name of Event

Stay Connected

@NKUDining

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30	1	2 Teaching Kitchen FUEL NKU	3 DIY DIY - HOT CHOCOLATE	4	5 LAST DAY OF CLASSES	6 EXAM WEEK
7 EXAM WEEK	8 EXAM WEEK	9 EXAM WEEK	10 EXAM WEEK	11 EXAM WEEK	12 EXAM WEEK	13 COMMENCEMENT
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3

FUEL NKU TEACHING KITHEN | 12.02 | NORSE COMMONS

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### ITAC – Vicki Cooper

Vicki Cooper shared the following...

Agenda		
Topic	Presenter	Discussion Points
I. Workday Update	Tim Ferguson	Tim presented an update on Workday, the new cloud-based HR and Finance system being implemented on campus. He explained that Workday will streamline processes, reduce manual work, and integrate various functions currently handled by separate systems. He also mentioned that Workday will eliminate the need for several other systems, including PaymentWorks, Kronos time clocks, and People Admin. He confirmed that NKU has a 10-year agreement with Workday, which includes infrastructure and subscription costs, and noted that approximately \$750,000 worth of existing tools will be eliminated as they are integrated into Workday. That savings will go to paying the annual cost of Workday. The plan is to go live with the system in early June, transitioning from SAP while maintaining integration between the two systems for student-related data. A change management team and change champions network have been established to support the transition, with increased communication planned for January and training scheduled for March through May. Workday Student phase is expected to begin in July 2026.
II. IT Update	Tim Ferguson	Tim discussed that IT lost 5 positions in the recent budgetary reductions. Responsibilities have been shifted within the department so that the campus community should not see an impact to services.

Agenda		
Topic	Presenter	Discussion Points
III. AWS Outage Review	Greg Thompson	Greg discussed the AWS outage on 10/20/25 that impacted Canvas. The resolution of the outage was outside of NKU IT control. NKU IT did send an email out in the afternoon about the outage. It was recommended by ITAC members that future email messages about outages like this should have a more direct subject line rather than a generic "News from IT" subject line.
IV. Subcommittee Updates - Hardware - Software - Emerging Technologies	Various	No meetings since the last ITAC.

#### Parking and Tuition Waiver Task Force – Mike Irvin and Steve Slone

Mike Irvin shared that we are in the process of developing a survey to go to all faculty and staff to gather data to use in the forthcoming parking conversations. The survey will basically be asking what you would want in a possible tiered parking plan going forward. Watch for it when we are back from break. On the Tuition waiver front conversations continue about what our recommendation will be and what we will advocate for. Obviously that conversation is more complicated because some recommendations would not be net neutral. More information forthcoming as our conversations continue. Special thank you to Danielle McDonald who is our liaison between the committee and the Provost's office as we continue these conversations.

#### Ad-Hoc Committees

##### Outreach – Terri Smith

Terri Smith was not able to attend the meeting because she was across campus setting up for our Holiday Party. Steve Slone shared information on her behalf. The party will take place directly after the Staff Congress meeting at 3:00. The winter wonderland themed party will feature giveaways, games, food, and fun. We are accepting donations to FUEL NKU, the Care Closet, and the Parents Attending College office. Please join us for food, fun, and philanthropy.

##### Advocacy – Jennifer Davis

Jennifer Davis shared that Advocacy is working on a resolution based on the feedback that they have gathered around the Flexible Work Arrangement. Thank you to everyone who took the time to reach out to share their individual stories. Those stories will make the resolution better. We will continue to have that feedback with the decision makers

The comment period for these policies closed at the end of October but the advocacy work continues. Jennifer also shared that she is working hard to keep Vanessa Steele's seat warm while she takes a step back from her role as Advocacy chair.

### **New Business**

#### **Men's Basketball Game**

Vicki Cooper shared that we once again have the President's suite for an NKU basketball game. Wednesday December 3<sup>rd</sup> when our Norse take on Cleveland State at 7 o'clock in Truist Arena. We are sharing the suite with Faculty Senate. Both groups have 20 tickets available for the game. Please reach out to Vicki as soon as possible if you are interested so we can arrange for the distribution of tickets. We have opened it up to all Congress members first but if we have extra tickets those attending will be able to bring guests as well.



### **Staff**

#### **Blake Tharp**

*Blake is always willing to help with any web assistance that I may need. Not only is he helpful but he is kind, thorough and fast. Thanks, Blake, for being so easy going and wonderful to work with!*

#### **Bonita Pack**

*I am honored to nominate Bonita Pack for Norse Uppreciation for her unwavering dedication to NKU's teacher education programs and her exceptional support of students. Bonita goes above and beyond to guide future educators with compassion, clarity, and professionalism, ensuring every student feels seen and supported. Her deep knowledge of teacher preparation, attention to detail, and commitment to continuous improvement strengthen our programs and partnerships across the region. Bonita's kindness, responsiveness, and service-oriented leadership truly embody the Norse spirit of excellence and care.*

### Announcements

Nick Bliven shared that FUEL will be hosting Produce Pop Ups on November 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> from 10 till 3 both days on the plaza outside Student Union. In the event of rain the event will take place inside the Student Union on the second floor.

Steve Slone shared that the Karis Hawkins and the Parents Attending College office is once again running its holiday help program. This program aids our students that may need a little help during the holidays season. If you or your offices are interested in sponsoring a family for this holiday season reach out to Steve or to Karis and you can be matched with a family.

### Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 2:50 PM.

## Staff Congress Portal Questions – 11/13/2025

**Date Received: 10/9/2025**

*Layoffs are always difficult, but can Cady share how the layoff decisions were made? There were several that seemed to go against our stated priorities, such as housing, who are already dealing with vacancies, career services, this is their third layoff, and cutting the director of ATC when last year they had record enrollments for transfer students. The same can be said for IT when we are implementing Work Day and cutting advisors when we say our focus is on student success. Again, I know these decisions are challenging to make, but knowing the reasoning behind them would be helpful.*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson, Diana McGill, Amy Gellen on 10/24/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 10/9/2025**

*In today's Staff Congress meeting, President Short-Thompson stated that the senior administration is being held accountable for the financial issues the university is facing. Could she please clarify what that accountability entails in practical terms? To our knowledge, no senior administrators have been laid off, demoted, or experienced any reduction in compensation. In what specific ways does the university believe accountability has been demonstrated at the leadership level?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson, Diana McGill, Amy Gellen on 10/24/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 10/14/2025**

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*The division of Admin & Finance just announced that they want their employees to be on campus 5 days a week with only a possibility of a 1-day exemption. We feel this is unreasonable and they should not be able to override the 3 day a week on campus policy set forth by the Board of Regents.*

*According to their website, "The Administration and Finance (A&F) Division includes over 400 employees who perform a wide variety of tasks for NKU." How can over 400 people be expected to all abide by the same rules when they perform such different jobs? My position is not student facing and doesn't have much interaction with other areas and could easily be 100% remote.*

*Please urge the Board to disallow this restriction of freedoms by individual divisions. If anything, more freedoms should be able to be granted the more you work down the org chart.*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson, Diana McGill, Amy Gellen, Chris Calvert on 10/24/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 10/16/2025**

*Dear Staff Congress Advocacy Committee,*

*I want to share my strong concern about the proposed change requiring employees in our division to be on campus four days a week, while the broader university policy still allows up to two days of remote work. This inconsistency creates inequity across divisions and risks undermining morale, retention, and engagement.*

*Flexible work arrangements have proven to be one of the most effective tools for maintaining a happy, productive, and engaged workforce. Since adopting hybrid work, many of us have experienced:*

*Higher productivity and focus when working from home, allowing for deeper, uninterrupted work on projects that directly support students and faculty.*

*Better work-life balance, which translates to lower burnout, improved retention, and more consistent performance.*

*Increased responsiveness to student and departmental needs, since flexibility enables staff to manage workloads more effectively and devote attention where it matters most.*

*The university's stated goal of "increasing vibrancy" on campus is important, but vibrancy comes from an engaged, motivated workforce—not from physical presence alone. Employees who feel trusted and supported are far more likely to contribute energy and creativity to NKU's mission.*

*Furthermore, as other divisions continue to operate under the two-day remote option, enforcing a stricter standard in one area not only causes disengagement but also sends a message of inequity and*

*inconsistency. These changes risk creating resentment and turnover—outcomes that run counter to NKU’s values and its strategic framework.*

*As leaders, we should focus on making NKU a place where employees want to stay and grow, rather than sending the message that those who are unhappy should “find happiness elsewhere.” True vibrancy is achieved when people feel respected, supported, and valued for their contributions.*

*I urge NKU to preserve flexible work options equitably across divisions, ensuring we remain aligned with both our mission and our people-centered values.*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson, Diana McGill, Amy Gellen, Chris Calvert on 10/24/2025**

**Response:**

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**Date Received: 10/22/2025**

*Could the administration please address the multiple cases of fraudulent student records recently identified in the system. In past years, such cases were either non-existent or extremely rare, but this year, that number has reached double digits. It appears unlikely that the university will be able to recover these losses, and significant resources are now being spent to resolve these issues. Since this situation is causing additional financial strain, and staff often bears the consequences for such failures, we request full transparency and accountability for how this was allowed to happen.*

- *A key part of the admissions process is requiring social security numbers from domestic students as well as verifying student transcripts for all students. Were these procedures followed for these records? If not, could you please clarify why.*
- *Was the expected admissions process followed in these cases: requiring official transcripts, verifying them, and placing credential holds on student accounts?*
- *Could the administration please clarify how this occurred? How were these fraudulent records able to pass through the admissions process? Why were they not identified until after students were enrolled and financial aid had already been disbursed?*
- *Was this a consequence of the direct-admit process, where students are admitted regardless of their credentials? By removing admissions barriers, is it possible the university has compromised the integrity of our business processes in pursuit of higher enrollment numbers?*
- *Could this issue also be related to the use of Slate for onboarding and the decisions made during its implementation?*
- *What steps are being taken to prevent this from happening again?*
- *What legal actions are being taken against the students who submitted fraudulent records?*
- *These fraudulent records are a high cost to the university and will be affecting the budget. How much money has the university lost due to identify theft during the onboarding process? Which bucket in the budget would cover this loss?*
- *When the budget is affected, staff lose their jobs. Should we expect more staff layoffs due to these issues?*
- *Finally, who will be held accountable for this serious failure?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson, Diana McGill, Amy Gellen, Grant Garber, Ryan Padgett on 10/24/2025**

**Response:**



**Date Received: 10/22/2025**

*NKU's workforce has clearly demonstrated over the past five years that flexible and hybrid work arrangements are not privileges – they are proven, sustainable tools for productivity and institutional success. During and after the pandemic, employees continued to deliver strong results, launch new programs, and support record numbers of students while working remotely or hybrid. The proposed policy's rigid stance that "no employee is entitled to flexibility" dismisses that record and undermines morale. Flexibility helped NKU thrive during crisis; it is contradictory and unjustified to now suggest that flexibility is incompatible with "vibrancy."*

*This policy also creates serious financial strain. With parking exceeding \$400 annually, rising commuting costs, and a 12% increase in health insurance premiums, the loss of flexibility comes at a time when wages have stagnated and workloads have increased. Over the last decade, staff numbers have dropped from 942 full-time employees in 2015 to below 800 today, while part-time positions have declined from 107 to 39. Fewer employees are now covering more responsibilities, yet the university expects even greater on-campus presence. This is not "vibrancy" – it's work intensification under worsening economic conditions.*

*Moreover, this change contradicts NKU's stated commitments to inclusion, innovation, and student success. Flexible work arrangements have enabled employees with disabilities, caregiving responsibilities, and long commutes to contribute equitably. Removing that flexibility sends a message that control matters more than trust, and uniformity more than inclusion. NKU cannot build a thriving community by coercion. A student-centered institution must also be employee-centered, recognizing that staff well-being directly impacts the quality of student support and services.*

*If NKU's mission is to empower diverse learners, drive innovation, and promote student success, then leadership must model those same values in its treatment of employees. Flexibility fosters engagement, creativity, and commitment – the very qualities that allow staff to serve students with excellence.*

*Questions:*

*How does removing workplace flexibility, especially during a time of shrinking staff, rising costs, and increasing workloads, align with NKU's mission and the NKU Forward Together strategic plan?*

*Flexibility has become one of the few meaningful benefits that helps offset stagnant pay, rising benefit costs, and heavier workloads. If this benefit is taken away, what incentive will remain for staff to stay at NKU?*

*Could the administration please clarify what specific problem the new flexible schedule policy is intended to solve? What data or evidence supports the need for this change?*

*The term "vibrancy" has been used to justify increased on-campus requirements. Could you please define what "vibrancy" means in this context and explain how it will be measured?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson, Diana McGill, Amy Gellen, Grant Garber on 10/24/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 10/22/2025**

*The latest version (v3) of the Flexible Work Arrangement appears to list department heads/supervisors as the main decision makers on how many days their employees can work remotely. I welcome this change, as I believe earlier versions left the final decision to the VPs.*

*Please keep these changes and allow the decision to be made as close to the employee as possible. VPs oversee too many people to make an informed decision on who is able to do their work remotely. They should not be able to override a department head or supervisor on this type of decision.*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson, Diana McGill, Amy Gellen, Grant Garber on 10/24/2025**

**Response:**

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**Date Received: 10/23/2025**

*Madame President, what is the university leadership going to do about the toxic work environment they have created?*

*One of the pillars of the NKU Forward Together plan is Colleagues. It states that the university promises to “enhance employee morale, wellbeing, and professional growth,” ensure “competitive salary and benefits,” and “develop workplace policies that effectively support institutional goals while accommodating the diverse responsibilities of employees.”*

*How does the administration plan to achieve any of these goals when:*

*1. Pay has not been competitive, raises have been inconsistent, and pay grades have not been reviewed for many years.*

*2. When raises do occur, they are distributed unfairly, disproportionately favoring those at the top.*

*3. Wage increases have not kept pace with inflation, leaving employees effectively earning less each year.*

*4. The recent medical premium increase exceeds this year’s raise.*

*5. Health benefits have declined in quality and coverage.*

*6. Dental insurance is severely limited, forcing employees out-of-network and increasing personal costs.*

*7. Promotion opportunities from within are unavailable to most staff and concentrated only in a few areas*

*8. Pension benefits have deteriorated, with state pension no longer available for new or Tier 3 employees.*

*9. Job security has been eroded by repeated layoffs/position cuts, leading to work overload for remaining staff*

*10. And now flexibility, the only meaningful benefit left, is being eliminated*

*Many of us joined NKU because of its reputation for benefits, stability, flexibility, and a family-like work environment that balanced lower pay. The administration has systematically removed every one of those advantages, creating a toxic environment, a culture of fear, distrust, and burnout.*

*How does this align with the Colleagues pillar or the mission to value people as NKU’s greatest asset? What concrete actions – not words – will leadership take to rebuild trust, morale, and dignity among staff?*

*(And please do not tell us “if you don’t like it, you can leave” or “it’s bad out there, be grateful to have a job.” Those are not leadership responses - they are authoritarian, dismissive, and actively harmful to employee morale, trust, and engagement.)*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson, Diana McGill, Amy Gellen on 10/24/2025**

**Response:**

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**Date Received: 10/23/2025**

*Madame President, what research or evidence is the administration using to support the proposed in-office requirements, including the two-day minimum and other restrictions? Has the administration conducted its own research or sought input from NKU academic areas that have expertise in environmental factors on workplace productivity, such as:*

- *The Department of Psychology, which includes a Master's program in Industrial-Organizational Psychology*
- *Department of Political Science, Criminal Justice and Organizational Leadership that offers the BA in Organizational Leadership*
- *College of Business, offering a Master of Business Leadership & Innovation (MBLI), a Master of Science in Executive Leadership and Organizational Change, and B.S.B.A. in Human Resource Management*

*And if so, could you also please clarify what research findings and data were used to determine the proposed policy?*

*We would like to present this extensive research for the administration's review, including studies from reputable sources such as the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, MIT, and Stanford.*

*State of Remote Work 2025: How Remote and Hybrid Arrangements Are Reshaping Hiring, Salaries, and the Future of Employment (A Comprehensive Research Report) - The Interview Guys*

*Here are some key findings:*

*The engagement data is unambiguous. Remote workers are 31% more engaged than their on-site counterparts. They show higher enthusiasm for their work and stronger attachment to their teams and organizations. The skeptics who predicted remote work would damage engagement have been proven wrong by the evidence.*

*Organizations implementing rigid return-to-office mandates are losing their best performers to more flexible competitors. The research shows that high performers are most likely to leave when flexibility is removed. Top talent has options. When companies eliminate remote work, they're selecting for the least marketable employees who can't easily find other jobs, not the most committed ones.*

*The question facing every organization isn't whether remote work will remain part of the workplace landscape. The evidence definitively shows that it will. The real question is whether your organization will adapt quickly enough to remain competitive in attracting and retaining the talent that drives business success.*

*Companies that embrace remote work strategically, invest in the necessary infrastructure, prioritize employee wellbeing, and create authentic flexibility will thrive in this new environment. They'll attract passionate people who bring their best work because they feel trusted and valued.*

*Those that resist, implementing rigid mandates based on outdated assumptions about productivity and control, will struggle. They'll watch top performers leave for competitors who understand the future of work. They'll spend more on recruiting to replace departed employees than they would have spent enabling remote work effectively. They'll compete from a position of weakness in labor markets where flexibility is increasingly non-negotiable.*

*The future belongs to those who understand that remote work represents evolution, not disruption. Smart organizations and professionals will adapt accordingly, while those clinging to 2019 workplace models will find themselves increasingly unable to compete.*

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*For employers, the path forward requires courage to challenge assumptions and willingness to redesign work around outcomes rather than outdated norms. Those who take this path will build competitive advantages that translate directly to business results.*

*The state of remote work in 2025 is clear. It's thriving, evolving, and permanent. The only remaining question is whether you'll lead this transformation or be left behind by it.*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson, Diana McGill, Amy Gellen on 10/24/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 10/23/2025**

*The recent town hall revealed a chilling reality: NKU employees are too afraid to ask questions, even in a public forum. This level of fear and silence is unprecedented in my decades at this university and reflects a deeply toxic work environment.*

*Leadership's defensive and combative responses to reasonable, constructive questions make it clear that dissent, critique, or accountability are not tolerated. This has created an atmosphere of intimidation and control that directly contradicts the university's stated commitment to open dialogue, collaboration, and mutual respect. The current administration's authoritarian approach is actively harming morale, stifling communication, and eroding trust.*

*A university president must be able to lead transparently, engage staff respectfully, and maintain a safe and collaborative environment. When leadership cannot meet these basic expectations, it is not only failing staff—it is failing the institution. The ongoing suppression of staff voice and the climate of fear raise serious questions about whether this administration is qualified to hold the office of president.*

*Dr. Votruba would not be proud of the trajectory current leaders are taking NKU.*

*Immediate action is required to restore an environment where employees can speak openly, contribute meaningfully, and trust that leadership will respond professionally rather than defensively. Without urgent intervention, NKU risks irreparable damage to its culture, reputation, and ability to fulfill its mission.*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson, Diana McGill, Amy Gellen on 10/24/2025**

**Response:**

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**Date Received: 10/24/2025**

*How does the administration plan to rebuild trust with staff and faculty who feel silenced or dismissed?*

*What specific steps will be taken to ensure that staff voices are heard and valued in decision-making processes?*

*How will you hold yourself and your leadership team accountable for fostering a culture of openness and respect?*

*How do you reconcile your public statements about collaboration and transparency with your actions during that meeting?*

*What measures will you take to improve communication with staff and faculty going forward?*

*What assurances can you provide that staff can speak openly without fear of retaliation or professional harm?*

*How will you restore a sense of mutual respect and psychological safety among NKU employees?*

*You have told staff, "If you don't like it, here is the door." Do you believe that statement aligns with the principles of servant leadership and academic freedom?*

*If you are unable to lead with openness and humility, do you believe it is fair to hold others to a standard you are not modeling yourself?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson, Diana McGill, Amy Gellen on 10/24/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 10/24/2025**

*The flexible schedule policy is currently under review and open for comment. In both presidential town halls, the administration assured employees that feedback would be valued, carefully considered, and could influence the final policy. Yet, before the policy has even been approved, several units, including Administration and Finance, have already announced schedule changes effective January 1.*

*This raises serious questions about the integrity of the feedback process. If the administration was truly committed to considering employee input, why are changes being implemented in advance? It appears that the decision has already been made, rendering the feedback process performative and eroding trust.*

*NKU's mission emphasizes collaboration, transparency, and engagement of all stakeholders. By acting unilaterally before soliciting or reviewing input, the administration undermines these principles and disregards the very staff whose work is essential to student success.*

*Employees deserve a transparent process where feedback is genuinely considered before policies are enacted. Implementing changes prematurely not only violates trust, it risks creating unnecessary disruption, inequity, and disengagement across campus.*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson, Diana McGill, Amy Gellen, Grant Garber on 10/24/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 10/24/2026**

*In the last Staff Congress meeting, when asked about trust, the President said, "just trust me." However, trust cannot simply be requested – it must be earned. Trust is built through transparency, inclusion, and consistent actions (not just words) that show respect for staff voices.*

*There are several opportunities right now for the administration to begin re-building trust with staff:*

*1. Is the administration willing to demonstrate trust by allowing staff to retain workplace flexibility, which is one of the few remaining meaningful benefits and, for many, essential to financial stability?*

*2. Is the administration committed to not implementing the new flexible work policy before the feedback and comment period has concluded, so staff input is genuinely considered? Is the administration willing to listen to staff by working with Staff Congress to reach consensus on the flexible schedule policy before it is approved?*

*3. Is the administration willing to include staff in the future in decision-making processes that directly affect them, so that "Forward Together" becomes more than a slogan?*

*4. Is the administration willing to listen to our concerns when we bring them forward? For example, when concerns are raised regarding fraudulent records, they are taken seriously, rather than dismissed?*

*5. Finally, how does the administration plan to shift away from dismissive messages such as "if you don't like it here, then leave" and "be grateful to have a job," which damage morale and signal a lack of respect?*

*True leadership listens, values input, and acts with integrity. Is the administration willing to use these opportunities to earn back staff trust and demonstrate that our voices truly matter?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 10/27/2025**

*Departmental Return-to-Office Order Contradicts Pending Flexible Work Policy*

*Why is the entire A&F division being mandated to return to campus five days a week, with no flexible time or hours, starting January 1, 2026? Employees are only offered a limited option to request an*



*exception for a single remote work day (excluding Wednesday), with a submission deadline of November 11, 2025. This new requirement is significantly more restrictive than the new flexible work policy currently under review, which may be approved and effective by that time. Madame President, why is VP for A&F Chris Calvert working to preemptively negate the pending policy in such a tone-deaf manner, particularly when many employees forced back full-time lack a dedicated office space?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 10/27/2025**

*Madame President Short-Thompson, the proposed flexible schedule policy applies only to staff, while faculty maintain greater autonomy in managing their work. Why are expectations different between staff and faculty? If the justification is that the nature of staff work differs from faculty work, the same reasoning could be used to argue against a blanket in-office requirement for all staff. Some employees can perform their duties fully and effectively remotely, while others may need to be on campus. Shouldn't the policy be tailored based on the requirements of each role rather than applying a one-size-fits-all mandate? If NKU is willing to recognize differences between faculty and staff work, why not apply the same careful, role-specific approach to staff, tailoring flexibility based on individual responsibilities rather than a blanket mandate?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 10/28/2025**

*Departmental discretion can be unsettling when it's exercised inconsistently or with optics in mind rather than employee well-being. If a department head prioritizes appearances over effectiveness, they may deny flexible work arrangements.*

*While the approach to allow flextime or remote work at the discretion of individual departments suggests flexibility, the Vice President of Administration and Finance has already issued directives mandating a five-day on-campus workweek, with only the possibility of one day of remote work permitted. This directive exceeds the on-campus requirement outlined in the proposed policy and explicitly disallows flextime.*

*This top-down decision appears disconnected from the realities of our daily operations. Those of us who manage the day-to-day responsibilities that keep our offices running smoothly understand the value of flexibility in maintaining both productivity and morale. Unfortunately, this directive feels more like an assertion of authority than a thoughtful strategy to enhance employee performance or well-being.*

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*Madame President Short-Thompson, how does the administration ensure that flexibility is applied fairly and consistently across all departments, rather than selectively?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 10/28/2025**

*Many staff are required to be on campus four or five days a week while also being expected to work outside normal hours. How is NKU ensuring that flexibility is mutual and not one-sided, so that employees' work-life balance and well-being are respected? For example, under the proposed snow policy, if employees are not allowed flexibility in their work, they should not be expected to work on snow days. Flexibility should be a two-way street – NKU should not expect employees to be flexible only when it benefits the university, without offering the same consideration in return.*

**Action Taken: Submitted on policy comment website on 10/28/2025 and sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 10/29/2025**

*Employees have different peak productivity times and preferred work environments. How does the university plan to account for individual working styles when establishing flexible work expectations, particularly to maximize productivity and benefit the university, especially with the upcoming Workday project, rather than enforcing a uniform schedule for all staff?*

*Same with work location. Would the administration consider a policy that empowers employees to choose the work environment, on-campus or remote, that best supports their productivity and contribution, while still meeting the needs of the university? If the goal is to make the Workday project successful, forcing staff into a specific environment may be counterproductive. As any management class will tell you, people accomplish far more when motivated with a carrot rather than driven with a stick. Please, consider putting the stick away.*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 10/29/2025**

*How does the administration justify limiting flexibility for staff while allowing certain high-level administrators to work remotely, some hundreds of miles away?*

*Can the administration clarify why it believes that senior leaders can effectively understand campus needs, staff morale, and day-to-day operations while working remotely, while staff are not considered capable of performing their work under similar conditions?*

*What message does the administration intend to send to staff when leadership retains remote flexibility that staff are being asked to give up?*

*As staff are being asked to return to campus more frequently, how is the university ensuring that expectations for workplace flexibility are applied equitably across all levels of employees, including senior administrators earning six-figure salaries?*

*Finally, how does the administration plan to maintain trust, morale, and a sense of fairness among staff when policies appear to create two different standards—one for leadership and another for the rest of the university community?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 10/30/2025**

*During the recent Town Hall, it was stated that the new flexible work policy “reflects what we have been doing over the past few years.” However, this is not accurate. The new policy is far more rigid and removes flexibility that many employees previously had.*

*For many staff members, flexibility is the only meaningful benefit left and is essential for maintaining morale, retention, and work-life balance.*

*Could you please explain why the university chose to reduce flexibility rather than preserve or expand it, especially given that flexibility has proven effective for employee productivity and satisfaction?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 10/30/2025**

*In past discussions, it was suggested that NKU might consider implementing a 4-day work week, and the administration appeared open to at least exploring this option.*

*Could the administration clarify whether a 4-day work week is still a viable option for consideration? If it is not, please explain why this option is no longer being considered.*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 11/3/2025**

*Rumor has it that a new conference room is being added in the Admin building for the President. Why is a new room necessary, and how can this spending be justified when we've just cut nearly 20 positions and may face additional reductions?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 11/5/2025**

*With the Workday implementation underway – and with additional systems expected to address functionality gaps – staff across campus will be required to maintain daily operations in SAP while simultaneously supporting a large-scale, multi-year, multi-system, campus-wide transition. This is a significant undertaking under any circumstances, but particularly concerning given NKU's staffing levels.*

*As stated in the most recent Staff Congress meeting, back in 2015 NKU employed 942 full-time staff members. That number fell to 806 by 2024, and with the recent layoffs, the total has now dropped below 800. Part-time staff have also declined sharply during that same period, from 107 to just 39. In other words, the university is attempting to execute one of the most complex and resource intensive projects in NKU history with nearly 20% fewer employees than a decade ago.*

*To make matters more concerning, NKU's implementation timeline is roughly half the duration recommended by best practices for large public institutions. Other universities and public-sector organizations that attempted similarly accelerated implementations have encountered serious problems, including major operational disruptions, extensive financial losses, and even litigation, with several breach of contract lawsuits still pending. Some institutions have even abandoned their Workday implementations entirely.*

*It is one thing to occasionally ask employees to take on short-term additional duties during peak workloads. It is entirely different to expect staff to sustain excessive workloads and extended hours for years on end. Under both federal and state labor standards, it is the employer's duty to provide adequate*

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*staffing and reasonable working conditions. When an institution knowingly understaffs a major project of this scale and expects existing employees to compensate through constant overtime, weekend work, or holiday assignments, it is knowingly creating not only an unsafe but an abusive work environment.*

*My question is:*

*What concrete steps is the university taking to ensure compliance with its legal and ethical obligations as an employer, specifically to prevent prolonged overwork, burnout, and coercive expectations on staff during this multi-year transition?*

*How will NKU ensure that employees are not forced to absorb the consequences of administrative understaffing, poor project planning, and overly compressed implementation timelines?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 11/5/2025**

*Could the administration please clarify why NKU is purchasing additional systems to address gaps in Workday functionality? Previously, it was announced that Workday was being implemented to replace multiple existing systems and therefore reduce overall costs.*

*Could you please specify:*

- Which systems have been or will be eliminated as a result of Workday implementation;*
- Which new systems have been purchased to supplement or fill gaps in Workday's functionality; and*
- The total cost to date and anticipated annual spending associated with these new systems?*

*This information would help the campus community better understand how these technology investments align with NKU's original goals for Workday and overall budget priorities.*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 11/5/2025**

*Given the high implementation risks associated with large-scale system transitions, is the university prepared to address potential challenges similar to those experienced by other institutions or any unforeseen issues that may arise during NKU's implementation?*

*Does the university have a detailed contingency plan in place should the implementation not proceed as expected?*

*And if so, could you share what that plan entails?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 11/5/2025**

*With the Workday implementation underway, many staff are supporting that project while also maintaining day-to-day operations in SAP.*

*To ensure a smooth transition and avoid unnecessary duplication of effort, could the administration please confirm that no major projects or changes to SAP functionality will be initiated during this period?*

*Could the administration clarify why certain policies (ex. the admissions policy that is currently under review) are being changed now, when the university is only a short time away from fully transitioning to Workday?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 11/6/2025**

*Why are departments still being permitted to spend money on things like new conference rooms, new furniture and digital signs at a time that we cut staff and operating budgets midyear due to funding and enrollment drops? Seems like every time a new director or department head gets hired, a new conference room and digital sign goes in. One would think there are better uses for those funds that would benefit the students and learning outcomes more.*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 11/7/2025**

*Faculty and staff have expressed significant anxiety about the possibility of further work force reductions.*

*Can you please clarify whether the university anticipates additional layoffs or departmental reorganizations if enrollment numbers are not met?*

*Can you confirm whether there is a commitment to no additional restructuring or layoffs in the near*

*future?*

*If enrollment does decline, what alternative strategies does the administration plan to pursue to address budget shortfalls without further impacting employees?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 11/7/2025**

*With the recent staff layoffs, employees are struggling to understand how decisions are made and who is held accountable. Staff are losing jobs while no senior administrators have faced consequences for the financial or enrollment shortfalls that created this situation. Some administrators whose roles are to prevent these issues have even been promoted.*

*In the last Staff Congress meeting, President Short-Thompson stated that the administration is “being held accountable,” yet none have lost positions, been demoted, or had pay reduced. Can she please clarify exactly what accountability looks like at the leadership level when the top has faced no consequences over the past decade for decisions that now force difficult cuts on staff?*

*At what point will those making the largest decisions be held responsible for the outcomes that affect the entire university community?*

*Additionally, for transparency, can the university provide:*

- How many VP-level and administrative positions have been added or filled since President Short-Thompson took office?*
- The total annual cost of these positions, including bonuses and unreported compensation?*
- The total annual salaries of those eliminated staff positions?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 11/7/2025**

*In past workforce reductions, faculty were given options such as early retirement packages, time to consider their choices, and the opportunity to make informed decisions about their futures. In contrast, staff have repeatedly been treated with disregard and disrespect – terminated without notice, escorted off campus by police like criminals, and denied any dignity in the process.*



*We understand hard decisions, but could you please help us understand why staff did not deserve the same respect and consideration that faculty received?*

*How do you think this was perceived by those left behind? What messages did you intend to send?  
Could you please explain why staff are continually treated as disposable, without consultation, input from their managers, or options to choose what works best for them?*

*This is not an isolated incident. What happened this time reflects a long-standing pattern throughout NKU's history. The message from administration has been clear and consistent: staff do not matter, are not respected, and we are not valued as equal members of this community.*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

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**Date Received: 11/7/2025**

*In last Staff Congress, President Short-Thompson stated that the positions eliminated were ones 'not needed.' However, managers and direct supervisors were not consulted during this process. How did the administration determine which positions to cut if supervisors were not asked for input or insight?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 11/7/2025**

*As reported by WCPO on 10/11/2025, a School of Nursing employee was asked to return early from FMLA after giving birth to her daughter, only to be let go. Could the administration clarify how this action aligns with the 'Community' pillar of the Together Forward strategic plan? Molly and her family ARE a part of our community. How does treating her and her family in this way reflect NKU's stated values?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 11/7/2025**

*NKU staff continue to express significant concerns about the Humana dental network. While we appreciate the recent additions, the expansion still falls short of meeting employee needs. Humana had indicated that over 60 dentists would be added to the network, but the reality is that only 8 of the 66 new dentists are located in Kentucky, and of those, 6 are in Northern Kentucky, with only 2 in Campbell County. Furthermore, only 5 of the new dentists are within 10 miles of NKU.*

*Breakdown by county:*

- Campbell County – 2
- Kenton County – 2
- Boone County – 1
- Pendleton County – 2

*This level of coverage is insufficient. Staff should not be expected to travel 40–50 minutes to Blue Ash or farther for routine dental care. The current network still does not meet the needs of NKU employees, and further action is necessary to expand local coverage.*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 11/7/2025**

*NKU has recently announced that medical insurance premiums will increase by 12%. Could the administration please provide more details about this increase? Specifically:*

- *In the open enrollment email, it was mentioned that NKU is absorbing a “significant” cost increase. Could you clarify what “significant” means in this context?*
- *While the employee contribution increase was specified, details about the university’s share of the cost were not provided.*
- *We request greater transparency regarding this change. Can the university share a detailed breakdown showing how the cost increase impacts both employer and employee contributions?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 11/10/2025**

*In the President’s Town Hall, it was announced that staff pay increases will be contingent on strong enrollment numbers and a balanced budget. Could the administration please clarify:*

- *Does this contingency apply only to staff, or will faculty compensation also be tied to enrollment and budget performance?*
- *Will administrators be subject to the same standard?*
- *In previous years, when the university’s budget was not balanced and staff did not receive raises, certain administrators received bonuses. Will future bonuses for leadership also be contingent on meeting enrollment and budget goals, to ensure consistency and fairness across all employee groups?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

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**Date Received: 11/10/2025**

- *Could the administration please share when pay grades were last reviewed and adjusted and clarify when the university plans to review current pay grades? NKU had planned to review and update pay grades in 2022, but this did not occur—when is this now expected to take place?*
- *If a 3% salary increase would push an employee beyond the maximum of their current pay grade, will the increase be capped at the maximum or allowed to exceed the range?*
- *According to best practices in human resource management, pay structures should be reviewed every 2–3 years, and in some cases annually. What is the administration’s policy regarding how often NKU reviews and updates pay grades and salary ranges?*

**Action Taken: Sent to Cady Short-Thompson and Amy Gellen on 11/11/2025**

**Response:**

**Date Received: 11/12/2025**

*False and Misleading Information in Humana’s Newly Added Provider List*

*The list of “newly added” Humana Dental providers shared with employees is inaccurate and misleading.*

*Humana listed 8 new Kentucky dentists — I personally called all 8:*

- *5 will NOT participate in Humana Dental next year*
- *1 out of these 5 does not even have a Kentucky office at all (and will not participate)*
- *3 are already in-network this year*

*In summary: There are zero newly added Kentucky dentists for 2026!*

*These are my notes from the calls I made:*

*Name Will participate in 2026 Currently participates Comments*

*Michael Frankart DMD NO NO No office in Cold Spring; number disconnected; called Mason office*

*Michael Walker DDS NO NO Will not participate in Humana Dental*

*Cara Copes DMD NO NO Will not participate in Humana Dental*

*Jack Lenihan DMD NO NO Will not participate in Humana Dental*

*Stephen Kees DMD NO NO Pediatric dentist; retiring; will not accept Humana*

*Lacedric Tolliver DMD YES YES Already in network; not new*

*Tyler Blincoe DMD YES YES Already in network; not new*

*Sarah Lonneman DMD YES YES Already in network; not new*

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*This level of inaccuracy is unacceptable. Employees were told additional providers were being added, yet the information provided is factually wrong and gives a false sense of improvement.*

*For Kentucky “newly added” providers, information from Humana is 100% false—with 63% of dentists not participating at all and the remaining 37% already participating. We have not contacted the rest of the list, but should we assume a similar level of inaccuracy for the rest of “newly added” providers?*

*Is Humana inflating its numbers to make the network appear larger or improved? If they cannot even provide a correct provider directory, how can we trust the accuracy of any other services they provide?*

*We need:*

- 1. A verified, accurate list of 2026 in-network providers.*
- 2. A clear explanation from Humana regarding these false listings.*
- 3. More Kentucky dentists — especially those located near NKU, not 30–40 miles away.*

*Please address these issues asap. This level of misinformation directly affects employees’ ability to plan essential dental care.*

*Thank you!*

**Action Taken: Sent to Amy Gellen on 11/13/2025**

**Response:**