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Year-end 2026: Deadlines and important tasks [1]

September 23, 2026 by ES and UIS Communications [2]

Year-end is fast approaching, and it's time to start planning for the successful wrap-up of 2026 payroll.

Year-end tasks

Departments should complete the following payroll year-end processes on time during November and December to ensure paychecks will process on time and correctly.

Keep these tasks on hand over the next few months and into the new year to stay on track during this important transition.

November/December 2026

Overpayments:

- Process overpayments immediately to allow the employee to repay the overpayment before Dec. 31.
- Taxes will be added to the overpayment amount if payment is not received in 2026, which could cause financial hardship.

Deadlines:

- There will be no off-cycle payroll on the week of Dec 27.
- Please review all deadlines carefully.
- Review your campus holiday schedules [3].
- Ensure moving expenses [4] are entered into CU Time.
- Submit imputed cash transactions before the December upload deadline.

Before final 2026 paychecks are processed:

- Verify Social Security numbers (SSN) have been entered into employee records.
- Verify SSN for international and/or new employees.

2026 Payroll Year-End Deadline Overview

11/26/26–11/27/26	**Employee Services will be closed for Thanksgiving.**

2026 Payroll Year-End Deadline Overview

12/18/25	Deadline to submit imputed cash transactions including 2026 moving expenses from PO/PO-Card and Reimbursement. MN123126 uploads **due 5 p.m.**
12/21/26–12/22/26	Processing December monthly payroll. Due to tight deadlines, please review registers as soon as they are available and enter adjustments into the final OC processing on Dec 23.
12/23/26	OC121726 upload deadline at **10 am. This is the final 2026 off-cycle.** Review monthly payroll registers on this date.
12/23/26	BW121926 uploads **due by 5 p.m.** Process OC121726 with a check date of 12/24/26.
12/24/26–01/01/27	**SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION CLOSED.** Employee Services will be minimally staffed. This may result in delays responding to emails, calls and tickets. **No off-cycle the week of 12/27/26–01/02/27.** All Hand-drawn warrants will be reviewed and processed on a case-by-case basis as time and system availability allow.
12/29/26	Run BW121926 payroll registers MN123126 **Pay Pull deadline at 10 a.m.** BW121926 **Pay Pull deadline at 10 a.m.**

- Review payroll registers [5] immediately after the December payroll is complete. Find instructions in this blog [6].
- Process any necessary pulls [7] to prevent overpayments from crossing tax years.

Minimum wage: The Colorado State employee minimum hourly wage [8] will increase to $19.29 effective Nov 1, 2026. This increase applies to CU classified staff and will also apply to university staff.

January/February 2027

2027 Payroll New-Year Deadline Overview

01/05/27	OC123126 uploads for first off-cycle in 2027 **due by 5 p.m.**
01/06/27	Processing OC123126 with check date of 01/08/27
01/07/27	BW010227 uploads **due by 5 p.m.**
01/08/27	Process BW010227 This includes the **2027 minimum wage updates**.
01/11/27	Review BW010227 Payroll Register
01/12/27	OC010727 uploads **due by 5 p.m.**
01/13/27	BW010227 Pay Pull deadline at 10 a.m.
01/13/27	Process OC010727 with a check date of 01/15/27
02/15/27	W-4 exempt status expires. Employees must enter new exemption to continue [9]. If not updated by this deadline, W-4 status will default to single.

- Review Payroll Calendars [5].
- Review the first paychecks for accuracy.
- Hire Spring Appointments before their first check. Terminate Fall appointments and contracts, if needed.
- Verify new hires and re-hires have a valid address in employee portal.
- Remind employees claiming exempt status on their W-4 that it will expire Feb. 15, 2026.
    - To maintain their exemption, they will need to enter a new W-4 [9] in the employee portal [10] before Feb. 15.
- W-2s [11] will be mailed by the end of January.

Minimum wage: The Denver minimum hourly wage increases January 2027 to $19.84 ($19.29 in 2026). The 2027 Colorado minimum hourly wage will increase to $15.71 ($15.16 in 2026).

- Employee Services uploads the minimum wage rate for each biweekly hourly employee below the threshold for the applicable state.
- Effective date: 12/20/26 (BW010227)
- Use query **CUES_HCM_MINIMUM_WAGE_STATE** to obtain minimum wage rates for all states.

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