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MEMORANDUM

TO: All Payroll and Personnel Officers

FROM: Kathleen D. Baxter
State Comptroller 

CC: Accounting Contacts

DATE: January 24, 2019

SUBJECT: IRS W-4 Requirement - Employee Exemption from Federal Withholding

All agencies should have an IRS Form W-4 properly completed and signed by each employee to claim withholding allowances. If an employee **does not** submit a Form W-4, the employing agency **is required** to withhold federal income tax as if the employee is single with zero withholding allowances (Single-0). W-4 withholding allowances remain in effect until the employee completes a new form **except for** employees who claim exemption from federal withholding.

Specific IRS W-4 Requirement for Employees Claiming Exemption from Federal Withholding:

A Form W-4 claiming exemption from withholding is effective when it is filed with the employer **only for that calendar year**. Each calendar year the employee must complete a new Form W-4 by February 15. If they do not, their withholding reverts to the last W-4 that did not claim an exemption or single with zero withholding allowances (Single-0). For employees in the payroll system claiming exempt that do not have a current W-4 on file, **immediate action** is required.

- Request each employee file a new W-4 for this calendar year
- If the employee does not file a new W-4 **before** the next payroll cutoff date, change their withholding to the last Form W-4 that did not claim an exemption
- If the employee did not claim W-4 withholding exemptions, change their withholding to single with zero withholding allowances (Single-0)

IRS Lock-in Letters: The IRS issues employee Lock-in letters if the IRS determines taxpayer withholding is not correct. IRS Lock-in letters supersede an employee filed W-4. Agencies are required to change withholding as stated in the Lock-in letter.

A report listing employees in your agency currently claiming EXEMPT for federal taxes is available on the Comptroller's website. The report is entitled "**EMPLOYEES WITH TAX CLASS N O R S**" and is only available to authorized users.

Contact the GHRIS Hotline 334-242-2188 if you have any questions or need additional information.