Due to the unprecedented cuts in state funding, combined with the uncertainty regarding further reductions, the University of South Carolina is implementing a mandatory furlough for some campuses. The mandatory furlough will address the critical reductions in operating budgets and will help the University avoid incurring an operating deficit this fiscal year.

The furlough program guidelines adopted by the University of South Carolina for the 2008-2009 fiscal year are authorized by the General Assembly under the General Appropriations Act Rescission Bill H.5300:

89.120. (GP: Mandatory Furlough) In a fiscal year in which the general funds appropriated for a state agency, institution, or department are less than the general funds appropriated for that state agency, institution, or department in the prior fiscal year, or whenever the General Assembly or the Budget and Control Board implements an across-the-board budget reduction, agency heads may institute employee furlough programs of not more than ten working days in the fiscal year in which the deficit is projected to occur. The furlough must be inclusive of all employees in an agency or within a designated department or program regardless of source of funds or place of work. The furlough must include all classified and unclassified employees in the designated area. If the furlough includes the entire agency, the furlough must include the agency head. Scheduling of furlough days, or portions of days, shall be at the discretion of the agency head, but under no circumstances should the agency close completely. During this furlough, affected employees shall be entitled to participate in the same state benefits as otherwise available to them except for receiving their salaries. As to those benefits that which require employer and employee contributions, including but not limited to contributions to the South Carolina Retirement System or the optional retirement program, the state agencies, institutions, and departments will be responsible for making both employer and employee contributions if coverage would otherwise be interrupted; and as to those benefits which require only employee contributions, the employee remains solely responsible for making those contributions. Placement of an employee on furlough under this provision does not constitute a grievance or appeal under the State Employee Grievance Procedure Act. In the event the reduction for the state agency, institution, or department is due solely to the General Assembly transferring or deleting a program, this provision does not apply. The implementation of a furlough program authorized by this provision shall be on an agency-by-agency basis. Agencies may allocate the employee's reduction in pay over the balance of the fiscal year for payroll purposes regardless of the pay period within which the furlough occurs. The Budget and Control Board, Office of Human Resources shall promulgate guidelines and policies, as necessary, to implement the provisions of this proviso. State agencies shall report information regarding furloughs to the Office of Human Resources of the Budget and Control Board.

For this time, the University has designated each separately funded campus as a department for purposes of a mandatory furlough.