



Human Resources

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To: Board of County Commissioners
From: Angie Hodge, HR Director
Date: December 18, 2025
Subject: Employee Handbook Updates to align with 2026 CBAs

Attached is a revision of the Employee Handbook that will allow for consistency with many of our employer policies and compensation strategies that have been proposed (Teamsters) or accepted by represented groups (AFSCME).

There are a number of administrative clean-up items addressed throughout the document, including adding references to 'extra-help' where 'casual' is mentioned, and changing 'annual' leave to 'vacation' leave.

Substantive changes are as follows:

- 1.3: Employee Status. Extra-help is used as a more modern, understandable term for 'casual' employee.
- 1.4 Definitions of family member and household member that align with Washington's paid sick leave law.
- 2.1 COMPENSATION/Applied Principles
 - Paydays are outlined
 - Pay grades and step increases are outlined
- 2.6 specifies that a promotion will not result in a change to the employee's step increase date.
- 5.0 Attendance and Punctuality – stronger expectations for employees to come to work, avoid 'earning and burning' leave
- 5.3.3.2 specifies bereavement leave can be used for family member and household member as defined in the definitions (no more use of the word "consanguinity" or "non-pecuniary resident")
- 5.4 specifies employee's expectation to request leave and make a plan with HR/Supervisor if extended leave is needed. Updates FMLA measurement to be the first date of FMLA used moving forward (not backwards) to align with current practice.
- 5.4.8 PFML runs concurrently with FMLA in certain circumstances.
- 6.1 The day after Thanksgiving is actually "Native American Heritage Day". Changing Personal Day from 8 hours deposit into vacation bank to Personal Holiday, which is worth one shift, not compensable upon separation, and expires each year on 12/31.
- 6.1.2 In order to qualify for holiday pay, the employee must receive at least 80 compensable non-overtime hours during the month of the holiday, or be in paid status the full shift the day before the holiday AND

still be employed ON the holiday. No proration of holidays if full-time employees do not meet the eligibility requirements. (This will save payroll a lot of time prorating holiday pay.)

- 6.2.2 Accrual rates for vacation. In order to qualify for vacation accrual, a full-time employee must receive at least 80 compensable non-overtime hours for that month. Specifies actual accrual may be made on a semi-monthly basis

Payroll processing note: allows for pro-ration of sick and vacation accrual only on the employee's first pay period or last pay period (this is if they are not hired on the first of the pay period, and their last day of work is not the last day of the pay period).

- 6.2.7 Changes title from CANCELING LEAVE to Excess Vacation Leave (Above the Maximum) – This is to allow the Elected/Director to approve an extension of vacation leave into the next year, OR cash out excess vacation (subject to budgetary resources available) IF the employee has not been allowed to take leave. (Examples: if an employer cancels someone's vacation leave OR tells the person in advance that they cannot take vacation leave for a certain period due to work necessity). 6.2.4 still applies which says that any vacation hours above 240, the employee must use-it-or-lose-it by December 31. It will only be if they have not been permitted to take vacation leave that they can accrue above the maximum and use it later or be cashed out for the amount above 240.

NOTE: This varies from CBA to CBA. The County Manager requested we have some sort of policy to address this.

- 6.3 In order to qualify for 8 hours sick leave accrual, a full-time employee must receive at least 80 compensable non-overtime hours for that month. Full-time employees who do not receive 80 compensable hours will receive sick leave at the same rate as an extra-help/casual employee (1 hour for every 40 hours worked), per Washington's paid sick leave law. Part-time employees continue to receive a prorated amount of sick leave.
- 6.3.4 Reasons for sick leave that align with paid sick leave law are spelled out. Reasonable notice required.
- 6.10.2 Longevity pay increases for 7th year, 8th year, 9th year. Remains the same at 10 years and above.