



King County

**PANDEMIC INFLUENZA
EMERGENCY RESPONSE
MANUAL**

HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION

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OVERVIEW

King County is responsible for providing services to the 1.8 million citizens of King County. The potential Pandemic Influenza¹ could disrupt the continuity of operations for provision of essential and other community services, including governmental and businesses functions. Should that occur, the King County Executive may proclaim a county emergency.

The typical “seasonal flu” is separate and apart from Pandemic Influenza. Pandemic influenza could strike at any time.

If the Pandemic Influenza spreads to King County, a cumulative absentee rate of up to or more than 25-30% of King County employees is expected for up to 6 months, on a rolling basis. This number includes sick employees, employees who are caring for sick family members and employees who do not come to work out of fear of becoming ill. In addition, there may be a significant need for social distancing (a reduction of the number of persons concentrated in the workplace), necessitating that employees complete production but do not report to the workplace.

Emergency staffing and backfill of existing positions will be of primary concern in order to provide essential services and other services to the public. In the event that essential services are adequately staffed, non-essential services may be staffed, to the extent possible.

The majority of King County employees are represented by various labor unions. In the event that a Pandemic Influenza emergency is proclaimed, the temporary suspension of certain collective bargaining agreement provisions may be necessary.

This manual is drafted such that it can be used immediately. It is meant to compliment department operational plans. This manual does not limit department authority to make operational decisions as to essential or needed functions.

The following assumptions were made in drafting this manual:

- The provisions of King County Code (KCC) Chapters 3.12 and 3.15 must be followed;
- The Washington State Governor has not waived state legislation dealing with personnel issues;
- Unions will be informed in advance of potential personnel administration changes; and
- Essential functions will be staffed first and other functions will be staffed secondarily.

¹ A flu pandemic is a global outbreak that occurs when a new influenza A virus causes serious human illness and spreads easily from person to person.

This manual provides staffing strategies, tools, advice and directives that departments should follow in the event that the King County Executive proclaims a Pandemic Influenza emergency for the county. Of note, is the fact that many human resources processes may be simplified and the administration of collective bargaining provisions narrowed in order to meet exigent staffing needs.

The effect of the provisions of this manual confer no new privilege, right of appeal, right of position, transfer, demotion, promotion nor reinstatement for any King County employee, contract worker or volunteer. This manual does not constitute an express or implied contract. It provides general guidance that cannot form the basis of a private right of action.

MANUAL SUMMARY

- **Labor Relations – Emergency Administration:** The temporary suspension of certain collective bargaining agreement provisions may be necessary. Most likely, provisions concerning assignment of work, scheduling and notice will be suspended or narrowed.
- **Closure of Schools and Daycare Facilities:** Healthy employees may need to remain at home to care for healthy children or other healthy dependants if schools and daycare facilities are closed. First responders (those employees who exercise civil authority and maintain the safety and well-being of county citizens) are required to report to work; essential personnel will need to report to work, telecommute or use accrued leave time; non-essential personnel may use accrued leave time; sick leave may not be used. All employees with school-aged children are encouraged to pre-plan for potential school closures.
- **Essential functions, Lines of Succession and Delegation of Authority:** Departments are identifying essential functions and informing employees. Payroll and human resources functions are essential in every department. Management lines of succession may run four to five employees deep.
- **Alternative Work Schedules:** Normal and alternative work schedules may change with as much notice as possible or little as 24 hours notice.
- **Contingent Workforce:** Departments are pre-planning and identifying areas where contingent workers may be needed – contract workers, short-terms temporary and term-limited temporary. Disability and recall referrals will not be required but may be used to fill staffing needs.
- **Telecommuting:** Departments are identifying the essential functions which may be performed remotely and employees are being equipped accordingly. Depending upon the circumstances, some non-essential employees may also telecommute.

- **Special Duty Assignments:** Email may be used as the approval process for assigning special duty which is faster than the current process. Employees will receive the usual special duty pay for the majority of duties performed in a higher classification and their usual base pay for duties performed in a lower classification.
- **Volunteer Services:** Volunteers may be utilized after departments have attempted to staff functions with employees. Volunteers will need to sign a waiver and release.
- **Rescission of Approved Executive Leave, Vacation Leave and Compensatory Time Off:** In order to staff county functions, recession of approved leave time is a possibility and employees are being informed that this may occur.
- **Sending Ill Employees Home:** Employees who are symptomatic in the workplace may be sent home and may use any type of accrued leave to cover the absence.
- **Family Medical Leave and Sick Leave:** These will continue to be administered as usual. Employees may use sick leave for medical appointments.
- **Return to Work Authorization:** Medical certifications will not be required but, if an employee who returns to work is symptomatic, the employee may be sent back home.
- **Leave Donation:** This will continue to be administered as usual.
- **Facility Closure / Reduction in Force:** Regular employees will continue to be paid if a facility closes and the county will analyze the necessity for a reduction in force depending upon how long facilities are closed.
- **Discipline – Conduct Including Unauthorized Absences:** The processing of proposed discipline may need to be held in abeyance if management’s time is monopolized due to responding to the emergency.
- **Communication and Consistent Messaging:** Departments are preparing their communications plans in coordination with the executive’s communication manager.
- **Employee Assistance Program and Making Life Easier:** Supervisors are being provided with current information on these services and will be encouraged to refer employees.

Section 1 Labor Relations – Emergency Administration

Major recommended changes: *Policy.* Suspension of certain collective bargaining agreement provisions, notably those that concern scheduling, notification procedures and assignment of work, may occur.

Major consideration: Suspension of provisions is limited to the duration of the emergency.

Significant issue: Planning with unions is currently underway.

Preplanning: Suspension of certain collective bargaining agreement provisions must be carefully analyzed and communicated to employees and union representatives prior to and during an emergency. Departments will do this with the assistance of Human Resources Division Labor Relations.

In the event that a Pandemic Influenza emergency is proclaimed by the King County Executive, the emergency may necessitate the **suspension of certain collective bargaining agreement provisions** in order to staff and administer the functions of a department, division and/or work unit. Provisions should be suspended only when narrowly tailored for the emergency situation.

Provisions suspended may include but are not limited to those which deal with:

- Scheduling
- Notification procedures
- Assignment of work

To the extent possible, compensation provisions will not be suspended but may be streamlined in order to administer payroll in a timely manner.

The following provides guidelines in the administration of collective bargaining agreements to follow in the event an emergency is proclaimed:

A. Guiding Principles

1. Should a Pandemic Influenza emergency be proclaimed, **emergency administration of collective bargaining agreements** may be invoked where:
 - a. The King County Executive has proclaimed a temporary emergency;
 - b. The emergency threatens to impair county operations;
 - c. The need to address the threat results in an unavoidable suspension of certain collective bargaining agreement provisions;
 - d. Suspension of collective bargaining agreement provisions is narrowly tailored as necessary to provide services during an emergency; and
 - e. Suspension of collective bargaining agreement provisions is limited to the duration of the Pandemic Influenza emergency.

2. The provisions of the respective collective bargaining agreement that are temporarily suspended due to the emergency should be those that:
 - a. Ensure that functions of the unit can be staffed safely;
 - b. Have the least disruptive effect on bargaining unit employees; and
 - c. Have the least disruptive effect on non-bargaining unit employees.
3. Managers and supervisors should follow the provisions of collective bargaining agreements to the extent possible, without causing too much difficulty in administering a work unit during the emergency.
4. Managers and supervisors should provide as much notice to employees as possible, given the circumstances, of any change affecting employees.
5. In the event that emergency is proclaimed, managers and supervisors should refer to the list of King County **Labor Negotiators who will be available to assist** in using these guidelines.

► *A partial list of the Labor Relations staff and their phone numbers is attached at the end of this section.*

B. Communicate to employees that certain provisions of their respective collective bargaining agreement have been suspended.

For instance, the Pandemic Influenza emergency may result in high absentee rates resulting in the loss of the necessary number of employees to perform the identified functions of the work unit. The employee absentee rate may reach a point where, in order to perform the functions of the work unit, it is necessary to **use employees outside of the bargaining unit to perform the work.**

Some other examples are:

1. Previously approved vacation, compensatory time, leave of absences (other than for sick or family leave purposes) may be rescinded with minimal notice.
2. Employees may be required to report for work with minimal notice.
3. Employees' work schedules and/or hours of work may change with minimal notice.
4. Employees may be required to telecommute with minimal notice.
5. Employees may be assigned overtime with minimal notice.
6. Employees may be assigned special duty with minimal notice.
7. Employees may be assigned to other work units with minimal notice.

C. Pay and Break Periods

1. **Compensation** will be paid in accord with the respective collective bargaining agreements or personnel policies, as appropriate, for all work performed.²
2. **Rest and Meal Periods** will be administered in accordance with the employees' labor agreement, Personnel Guidelines and state law. Should exigent circumstances exist where rest and/or meal periods cannot be taken, employees will be paid for any missed rest and/or meal period.

D. **Contract Negotiations and Administration**

During the period of the emergency, the county may temporarily **suspend collective bargaining** negotiations, grievance processing and labor-management committee meetings.

Labor representatives should contact the Labor Negotiator for their respective collective bargaining agreement if she or he has questions or concerns about these guidelines or how they are being applied.

² Special duty assignments will be paid in accord with Section 5 of this manual.

LABOR RELATIONS CONTACTS

Manager:

Nancy Buonanno Grennan 296-8554

Negotiators:

Claudia Balducci	296-8591
Debbi Bellam	296-8560
Alex Golan	296-8529
Rick Hayes	205-8005
Jim Johnson	296-8556
David Levin	296-8585
Trish Murphy	296-7486
Karen Place	296-8589
Bon Railton	296-8557

Section 2

Closure of Schools and Daycare Facilities

Major recommended changes: *None.*

Major consideration: None.

Significant issue: First responders must report to work.

Preplanning: Staff should be informed of expectations; employees should have a family care succession plan in place; essential employees may have to telecommute to perform duties and should be equipped to do so in advance.

To minimize the effect of any disease outbreak, the Local Health Officer for Public Health – Seattle & King County is authorized to order disease control measures that include a broad array of actions. Isolation and quarantine orders and social distancing measures are likely to be used in a pandemic influenza event. In addition to closing large social gatherings, such as sporting events, theater shows, concerts and others, the Local Health Officer may close schools and large day care centers as a social distancing strategy. It is anticipated that this action would occur in coordination with any emergency proclamation that may emanate from the executive.

School and daycare closure is expected to have a significant cascading effect on staff absenteeism in both the private and public sectors. King County must be prepared for a reduction in its staff resulting from healthy parents staying home to take care of healthy children or other healthy dependants.

In the event that this occurs, staff should be informed of expectations³, depending upon their department designation as first responders (employees who exercise civil authority and maintain the safety and well-being of county citizens), essential personnel and non-essential personnel. If schools and daycare centers are closed, employees will **not be allowed to bring their children to work**.

A. First Responders: must report to work, notwithstanding school and daycare closures.

1. All first responders should have a family care succession plan in place.

B. Essential Personnel: should make every effort to report to work in the event of school and daycare closures.

1. All essential personnel should have a family care succession plan in place.
2. In the event that child and dependant care coverage may become impossible, arrangements should be made in advance with department management to telecommute, if appropriate and feasible. In addition, upon approval, essential personnel may use accrued vacation leave, accrued compensatory time, holiday leave or previously awarded executive leave or may request approval for leave

³ See Section 15 for a discussion on discipline for unauthorized absences.

without pay for such an absence. Otherwise, essential employees must report to work. Sick leave may not be used by healthy parents who are staying home to take care of healthy children or other healthy dependants due to lack of day care arrangements.

C. Non-essential Personnel: all non-essential personnel should make every effort to report to work in the event of school and daycare closures.

1. All non-essential personnel should have a family care succession plan in place.
2. In the event that child and dependant care coverage becomes impossible, non-essential personnel may use accrued vacation leave, accrued compensatory time, holiday leave or previously awarded executive leave for such an absence or may request approval for leave without pay. Sick leave may not be used by healthy parents who are staying home to take care of healthy children or other healthy dependants due to lack of daycare arrangements.

Section 3

Essential Functions, Lines of Succession and Delegation of Authority

Major recommended changes: *Procedural.* Management lines of succession will be expanded. Pandemic Influenza could affect the absentee rates of more management staff than in other emergencies. This absentee rate would mean that the lines of succession would need to be enhanced, up to 4-5 employees in depth. Payroll and human resource management are essential functions and lines of succession must be at least 3 deep with advanced cross-training required.

Major consideration: Multiple lines of succession will be required. As public servants, King County employees may be required to serve, if able.

Significant issue: Cross-training of the payroll and human resources functions will require additional resources and time.

Pre-planning: Departments must predetermine first responder functions, essential functions and non-essential functions; provide for access to information; and cross-train payroll function.

The following section provides guidance and direction to assist all departments, divisions and work units to develop plans for identifying essential functions, lines of management succession and delegation of authority in the event of a Pandemic Influenza emergency.

- A. Departments shall identify the conditions that activate the plan. For example, the King County Executive has proclaimed an emergency; *or* although a county emergency has not been proclaimed, a department director has received authority from the King County Executive to activate the plan because the Influenza Pandemic has negatively impacted the business continuity of his or her department.

- B. Departments shall **predetermine first responder functions, essential functions and non-essential functions**; including critical times of year when certain functions must be performed (the discharge of certain essential work may be specific to the time of season, year or month or dependent on other factors directly affecting the function).
 - 1. Departments shall **predetermine personnel** who perform first responder functions, essential functions⁴ and non-essential functions and the minimum number of staff necessary to perform the functions.
 - 2. Departments shall identify functions that may be suspended while personnel are assigned to more critical roles. Departments should identify the time period that the function can be suspended and the functions that may be done on a less frequent basis than would occur under normal conditions.

⁴ When making a determination about which personnel are essential, managers should consider whether employees need to arrange care for school-aged children or dependents over 16 if their family profile requires it. *See* Section 2 on School and Daycare Closures. In the event that such employees cannot make alternative care arrangements, management may consider modifying their essential personnel roster in advance.

3. Departments should identify **secondary personnel** that have the skills and abilities to perform other functions. Such personnel may be:
 - a. Employees in the same classification series as those who normally perform the function;
 - b. Employees who have previously performed the work and are currently employed elsewhere in organizations within the county; and
 - c. Employees who can be trained either in advance of the need or on-the-job when the need arises.
 4. Departments should identify other personnel who may be available to perform the essential functions. Such personnel may include **retired employees, former employees, temporary workers and contract workers.**⁵
 5. Each department **shall predetermine the payroll function as an essential function** and shall have a plan of succession and cross-training for the payroll function. There should be *at least 3 employees*; one of whom may **include the payroll supervisor**, who are trained to perform the payroll function.
 6. Each department **shall predetermine the human resource management function as an essential function** and shall have a plan of succession and cross-training for the human resource management function. There should be *at least 3 employees* who are trained to perform the human resource management function.
- C. Departments, divisions and work units shall establish a **management line of succession plan**. A line of succession provides a list of predetermined alternates for key leadership positions in each department, division or work unit.
1. The succession plan should be **4 to 5 employees in depth**, where possible. The personnel identified for the line of succession should know the operations of the work unit; have the confidence of the principal to act in his or her absence; clearly understand the scope of the powers and duties delegated to him or her; and clearly understand the constraints, if any, of the powers and authorities she or he will be delegated.
 2. The succession plan should clearly **identify the names of designated personnel** and their regular titles and how they can be contacted. (Consider having the principal's phone, work cell-phone, pager and email forwarded to the person who assumes the powers and duties of the principal in his/her absence.)

⁵ See Section 5 of this manual for administration of contingent workers during a Pandemic Influenza emergency.

3. The names and **order of succession** of designated personnel shall be *communicated* to division and work unit personnel.
4. The plan should clearly set forth the powers and duties that will be performed and by whom. The departments shall predetermine the individuals who will have the **delegated authority** to make decisions and *communicate* that these individuals will have that authority to division and work unit personnel.
5. If all of the personnel identified for the line of succession are unavailable (which may be the case in small work units where there is a limited number of leadership personnel), the department should provide for **alternate lines of succession** that identifies other personnel who can assume the powers and duties outside of the work unit. The line of succession plan should be updated whenever a pertinent staff change occurs.
6. Departments should determine if those in the line of succession may need to be **cross-trained** in advance and provide such training where needed. Advance cross-training for essential functions, *such as the payroll function*, is imperative. The department may provide resources which may be accessed to train employees to perform other functions (video tapes, outside trainers, procedures manuals, teleconferencing, consultants, etc.).
7. Departments should construct a method by which those in the line of succession will have **access to information** and needed items (*i.e.* computer passwords, calendars for employee approved time off, office keys, file cabinet keys, etc.) should they take over leadership responsibilities.
8. Succession plans shall be documented by divisions and/or work units and forwarded to the department director. Copies shall be provided by the department director to Kurt Triplett, Chief of Staff; Sheryl Whitney, Assistant County Executive; Paul Tanaka, Department of Executive Services Director; and Anita Whitfield, Human Resources Division Director.

Section 4 Alternative Work Schedules

Major recommended changes: *Policy and procedural.* An email/memo/fax may be used to document the assignment instead of the form which is routed for signature; no written explanation is required if a requested schedule is denied; and normal schedules and alternative schedules may be changed with 24 hour notice or minimal notice.

Major consideration: Meal and rest periods will still be required; overtime is probable and should be expected.

Significant issue: Notification periods in collective bargaining agreements may be suspended.

Pre-planning: Agencies review their normal business hours and work schedules to determine if they can be modified and staffed with personnel on alternative schedules.

The **administration of alternative work schedules will be modified**⁶ during a proclaimed Pandemic Influenza emergency to enhance social distancing, business continuity or other pandemic response goals as follows:

- A. In addition to regular full-time employees, **regular part-time and temporary employees** may work alternative schedules.⁷

⁶ Normally, alternative work schedules are governed by PER 18-1 (AEP) "Alternative Work Schedules" May 28, 1990, and Collective Bargaining Agreements. Administration involves:

1. Alternative schedules fall under the following categories:
 - Fixed Flex: a work schedule divided into "core" time when the employee shall be at work and flex times at either end of the core hours
 - Full Flex: a work week consisting of the hours (i.e., 40) and days (five in a seven-day period) that are worked on a regular schedule, but the daily hours worked may vary from day to day to meet the requirements of the position
 - Compressed work week: a work week of fewer than five days in a seven-day period or ten days in a 14-day period
2. Alternative schedules apply to regular full-time employees. An alternative schedule is not a right conferred, and the schedule may be rescinded at the discretion of the supervisor at any time with a two-week written notice. Employees shall make a written request for an alternative schedule and shall give two weeks advance written notice to return to a regular schedule.
3. An employee may request an alternative work schedule by making a written request to the supervisor using a standard form available on Public Folders at Human Resources/Forms/Alternative Work Schedules. The employee's supervisor reviews and discusses it with the employee, then reviews and discusses it with the appointing authority. The appointing authority is the approval authority. If the request is denied, the employee shall be provided with a written explanation of why the request has been denied.

See also Section 1 of this manual which explains emergency administration of collective bargaining provisions.

- B. Departments shall **review their normal business hours and work schedules** to determine if they can be modified in a manner that best promotes social distancing, business continuity or other pandemic response goals during an emergency.
- C. Departments will identify first responder functions, essential functions and non-essential functions that may be staffed with personnel on alternative schedules.
- D. If feasible, supervisors should first ask for employees to **volunteer** to work hours other than their usual schedule. Where certain work schedules cannot be staffed with volunteers, department management may direct staff to work the schedules necessary.
- E. **Regular work schedules may be changed** by a supervisor subject to a 24 hour cancellation notice, when possible, upon the proclamation of a Pandemic Influenza emergency. If less than a 24 hour notice is necessary, department management may make such changes.⁸
- F. **Alternative work schedules may be changed** by a supervisor subject to a 24 hour cancellation notice upon the declaration of a Pandemic Influenza emergency, when possible. If less than a 24 hour notice is necessary, department management may make such changes.
- G. Departments are encouraged to work with staff to minimize the impacts of decisions affecting schedule changes. Rest and meal period requirements continue no matter what type of work schedule is assigned. Overtime is probable and should be expected.
- H. Alternative work schedules may be processed via email, fax or telephone. Approved schedules shall also be **formally documented**. Such documentation should occur within one week of the start of an alternative schedule or as soon as practicable thereafter. A supervisor may document the change via email, memorandum, fax or Alternative Schedule Agreement form.

▶ *A sample email/memorandum/fax to request alternative work schedules is attached at the end of this section.*

▶ *An Alternative Schedule Agreement form used to request alternative work schedules is attached at the end of this section.* This form may be used by management or an employee. An electronic version is also available on Public Folders at Human Resources/Forms/Alternative Work Schedules.

⁷ Please note that an alternative work schedule for a part-time employee simply means a change in the scheduled workweek and does not mean that the part-time FTE may be increased. However, the part-time employee may be worked beyond their normal part-time hours on a very limited exigent basis.

⁸ Many collective bargaining agreements provide for a specific notification period. During a Pandemic Influenza emergency, the notification period may not be practicable to apply and enforce. See Section 1 of this manual for more detail on this issue.

- I. If an employee makes a request for an alternative work schedule and the request is denied, **no written explanation** of why the request has been denied is required during the proclaimed emergency.
- J. When appropriate, management may assign an employee back to the employee's regular schedule.
 1. If an employee is assigned back to his or her regular schedule *during a Pandemic Influenza emergency*, the assignment is subject to a 24 hour cancellation notice, when possible; if less than a 24 hour notice is necessary, department management may make such changes as necessary.
 2. If an employee is assigned back to his or her regular *schedule after the Pandemic Influenza emergency* is declared over, the assignment is subject to notification periods contained in applicable collective bargaining agreements.

(Sample Assignment to Alternative Schedule Email/Memo/Fax)

From: Appointing Authority
Sent: Date
To: [employee's name]
Subject: Alternative Work Schedule During Pandemic Influenza Emergency

Please be advised that effective (*date*) and continuing until approximately (*date*) I am assigning you to an alternative schedule on the following days and times:

Fixed Flex Compressed 4/40 Compressed 9/80 Compressed Other _____

Work Schedule (Two Week Period)

	Week One	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Start Time	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Stop Time	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Length of Lunch Break	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Total Hours Worked	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Week Two	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Start Time	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Stop Time	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Length of Lunch Break	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Your meal break is from ___ a.m. to ___ p.m. each day and be sure to take your rest breaks.

(For OT eligible employees: You may also be required to work overtime.)

Thank you for your assistance during this difficult time.

cc: *department or division director*
Department Human Resources Service Delivery Manager
Department payroll staff

ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULE AGREEMENT HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION

Non-represented/Non-union Represented/Union Local _____

For represented employees, alternative work schedules may be covered by a collective bargaining agreement. If that is the case, the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement prevail.

FLSA exempt (salaried) Non-exempt (hourly)

The Fair Labor Standards Act prohibits non-exempt employees from working any schedule with more than 40 hours in a single week (depending on conditions of employment) unless overtime is paid. However, the FLSA does allow the employer to define "week" as something other than the standard Sunday through Saturday, will allows us to accommodate 9/80 (or similar) schedule requests.

Alternative Work Schedule Requested

Fixed Flex Compressed 4/40 Compressed 9/80 Compressed Other _____

Work Schedule (Two Week Period)

	Week One	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Start Time	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Stop Time	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Length of Lunch Break	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Total Hours Worked	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	Week Two	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Start Time	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Stop Time	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Length of Lunch Break	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Total Hours Worked	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Holiday pay will be pro-rated per Executive Policy PER 18-1.

Approval

By signing below, we agree that the alternative work schedule complies with King County and agency policies and procedures, personnel guidelines, union contract provisions, and FLSA and state regulations.

Date Schedule Implemented: _____ Date agreement expires/must be reviewed: _____

Employee Signature: _____ Date signed: _____

Supervisor Signature: _____ Date signed: _____

HRD Manager Signature: _____ Date signed: _____

Section 5 Contingent Workforce

Major recommended changes: *Policy and procedural.* During a Pandemic Influenza emergency, the requirements for Reassignment and Recall releases are waived. However, during the emergency, departments are to check in with Reassignment every three months. No Position Description Questionnaire is required to establish a TLT until after the emergency is over.

Major consideration: Hiring the contingent worker must still be documented.

Significant issue: Work jurisdiction provisions of collective bargaining agreements may be suspended. Departments may need to utilize the services of employees outside of the bargaining unit's jurisdiction to perform work and will need to consult with Human Resources Division Labor Relations if this becomes an issue.

Preplanning: Departments must preplan and identify classifications which may be needed during an emergency so that they may more quickly staff their work units.

- A. King County contingent workers fall into one of **three general categories**⁹ as follows:
1. **Contract Worker (CW)** – an individual who is the employee of an authorized vendor to provide these resources. Generally, these workers are limited to 910 hours in a rolling 12-month period. CWs do not receive King County benefits.
 2. **Short-Term Temporary (STT)** – an individual who is a King County employee and who may work for six months (910 or 1040 hours) in a calendar year. STTs do not receive King County benefits.
 3. **Term-Limited Temporary (TLT)** – an individual who is a King County employee and who may work for greater than six months up to three years (which may be

⁹ The request process for each one is normally as follows:

CW After receiving a release from the Reassignment program, the department contacts one of the authorized vendors who have a contract with King County to provide these workers. All of the contracts provide staff using the same classifications as for regular employees, and there is usually a primary and secondary vendor identified for specific classifications or class families. The vendor is required to provide a qualified individual for the request within three working days.

STT After receiving a release from the Reassignment program, the department submits the STT request into temp track once a candidate is identified. The request is evaluated to ensure the appropriate classification is used, and usually is approved by the Human Resources Division within 24 hours.

TLT These requests are submitted through temp track as well as a short-form PDQ being emailed to the Human Resources Division. The request is evaluated to ensure the correct classification is used as well as the category and reason for the TLT reviewed for appropriateness as a TLT. Once approved by the Human Resources Division, the request is sent to the Reassignment and Career Support Services programs for release. These programs notify the Human Resources Division when the position has been released and the Human Resources Division notifies the department through temp track. These requests are usually approved by the Human Resources Division within three days.

extended for an additional two years for specific categories). TLTs receive King County benefits.

- B. **Monitoring** CW, STT and TLT contingent workers is a joint responsibility of the department and the Human Resources Division. Monitoring CW also involves the authorized vendor for CWs. It is the responsibility of the department to obtain any necessary departmental approvals prior to submitting a contingent worker request.
- C. All contingent worker positions shall be reviewed for potential assignment by the **Reassignment Program** for Employees with Disabilities. For CW & STTs, the requesting department obtains this release. For TLTs, the Human Resources Division requests the release after the TLT is reviewed in the Human Resources Division. The normal turnaround time for the Reassignment Program's review is 24 hours.
- D. The majority of CW used in King County are in the administrative, financial, and information technology fields. The primary (and most used) agency is Northwest Staffing. Smart Talent is designated as the secondary provider. The other heavily used area for CW is in nursing. SHC Services and Intrepid of Washington are two of the County's other CW vendors.¹⁰
- E. **Pandemic Emergency Modifications** apply to pandemic emergency planning and response for backfilling regular staff.
 - 1. During the **planning phase** for a Pandemic Influenza emergency:
 - a. Departments shall identify the classifications of staff needed to accomplish needed functions and notify the Human Resources Division of these classifications.
 - b. Departments should **pre-complete forms** in order to have the necessary documentation already completed and ready to use if an emergency is declared.
 - c. If a **PERS retiree** is considered as a resource, all required documentation¹¹ should be completed during this planning phase.

¹⁰ The Human Resources Division has contacted all four of these agencies in the planning for a Pandemic Influenza emergency. Both of the primary agencies, NW Staffing & SHC Services indicated that they have emergency plans in place that are not pandemic specific, but could be modified for a Pandemic Influenza emergency. In addition, all four indicated that not only could they accomplish staffing in the shorter response time of 24 hours, but they also agreed to give King County priority in filling these requests over other clients.

¹¹ Hiring of PERS 1 Retirees must comply with amended RCW 41.40.037. This requirement is administered as follows:

- 1. Refrain from making any verbal and/or written return-to-work agreements with an employee before the employee's retirement. A violation of this provision of the law may be considered a criminal offense.
- 2. Conduct the hiring process as follows:

► ***The PERS I form is attached at the end of this section and is also available in Public Folders/Human Resources/Forms/PERS1 Hire Form.***

- d. A **Position Eligibility Worksheet (PEW)** must be completed for STTs or TLTs in the planning phase and submitted to Benefits and Retirement Operations (BROS) to obtain a PERS eligibility determination in advance of a proclaimed Pandemic Influenza emergency. Departments will notify BROS when a position will be filled and when a pre-approved PEW is no longer necessary.
- e. The Human Resources Division will compile the classifications submitted by departments into a master list. This list will be provided to CW agencies and the Reassignment and Career Support Services programs to identify the classifications that will be needed for a Pandemic Influenza emergency. This will allow the CW agencies to acquire the resources necessary in advance for a 24-hour response to a request, and to obtain pre-release from the Reassignment and Career Support Services programs.

2. During a Pandemic Influenza emergency phase:

- a. **Contract Workers** - Departments may **go directly to the CW agency** to hire the classifications identified. Departments remain responsible for coding CWs' hours during the Pandemic Influenza emergency.

Reassignment Program processes for employees with disabilities will be suspended. However, every three months during a Pandemic Influenza emergency, departments that need contract workers should contact the program and check to see if and when processes will resume.

- b. **Short-term temporary** - Departments may **immediately hire STTs** to backfill for the classifications identified. The STT requests will be entered into temp track.

► ***A form is attached at the end of this section and is also available in Public Folders/Human Resources/Forms/STT Forms.*** Enter "Pandemic Response" as the reason for request.

-
- a. Complete a Position Eligibility Worksheet for the body of work or vacancy you will be filling to determine if the position is eligible for PERS retirement benefits.
 - b. Conduct the selection process appropriate for the type of position, i.e. short-term temporary, term-limited temporary, ongoing appointive, career service or civil service position.
3. Should the person selected for hire be a PERS 1 retiree and the position is a retirement eligible position, submit a justification request for approval using the attached PERS 1 Retiree Hiring Approval Form. The justification will be reviewed and approved by Paul Tanaka, County Administrative Officer for the Executive Branch of the County.

Please contact BROS Manager, Cindy Lee at 206-263-3189 should you have any questions.

- ▶ *In the event that no staff person with temp track knowledge is available to make the entry, the department may email the information concerning the STT to the Human Resources Division Deputy Division Director.*

c. **Term-Limited Temporary** - Departments may **immediately hire TLTs** to backfill in the classifications identified.

- ▶ *A form is attached at the end of this section and is also available in Public Folders/Human Resources/Forms/STT Forms.* Enter “Pandemic Response” as the reason for request.
- ▶ *In the event that no staff person with temp track knowledge is available to make the entry, the department may email the information concerning the STT to the Human Resources Division Director.*

During the period of a declared Pandemic Influenza emergency or until otherwise instructed, **layoff/recall processes will be suspended for TLTs**¹². However, when practicable, departments should attempt to work with the Reassignment Program and hire former King County employees who have been laid off instead of a TLT.

No Position Description Questionnaire (PDQ) will be required during the period of a proclaimed Pandemic Influenza emergency for TLTs. A PDQ will be required for any TLT that continues after the emergency is declared at an end.

- d. During a Pandemic Influenza emergency, **New Employee Orientation** will not be required for STTs. TLTs shall attend New Employee Orientation as soon as practicable after the Pandemic Influenza emergency is declared over (7 days after the Pandemic Influenza emergency is declared over would be ideal). In both cases, departments should contact BROS to obtain alternative delivery methods of the required new employee information (video, handouts, etc.).

¹² Currently, all TLTs must be reviewed by Career Support Services for potential referral from the **Layoff/Recall List**, and this is also accomplished by the Human Resources Division. The normal turnaround for the review is 24 hours for Career Support Services. See Section 1 of this manual for guidance on the suspension of certain collective bargaining agreements such as recall provisions.

(STT and CW Request Form)

Job class/title:	
Work location:	
Supervisor:	
Supervisor mail stop:	
Mark if internship:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Number of positions:	
Request date:	
Start date:	
Hours per week:	
Total hours to be worked:	
Organization #:	
Department:	
Division:	
Union:	
Contact name:	
Contact phone:	
Pay range/step:	
Hourly pay rate:	
Skills required:	
Education/licenses required:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	<i>If so, explain:</i>
Duties to be performed:	
Short Term Temp?	<input type="checkbox"/>
Contract Work?	<input type="checkbox"/>



PERS 1 Retiree Hiring Approval Form

Use only when the Selected Applicant is a PERS 1 Retiree and the vacancy or body of work is PERS eligible as determined by BROS.

=====

SECTION 1: The Hiring Supervisor/Manager completes this section, obtains the signature of the retiree selected for hire to indicate proper notice, attaches required documents and submits it to the Employment & Diversity Manager at Mail Stop ADM-ES-0450.

Date of Request: _____
Requesting Hiring Sup/Mgr: _____ Title _____
Department/Division/Section: _____
Telephone Number: _____ Fax Number: _____
PERS Eligible Job to Be Filled: _____
***** Attach copy of completed form that indicates Position is PERS Eligible.

PERS 1 Retiree Selected for Hire: _____ Date Retired: _____
Effective Hire Date: _____ Termination Date: _____

I attest that:

1. I have advised the PERS 1 retiree selected for hire of RCW 41.40.037 work hours limitation and penalty for excess hours.
2. I have not made any job offer orally or in writing prior to the retiree's retirement.
3. There has been no work nor will there be any work performed by said retiree until the hiring approval is received.
4. I have conducted the selection process consistent with county requirements. I believe this proposed hire is justified because: _____

*******Attach copies of 1. BROS determination that the position is PERS eligible, 2) job posting, 3) application materials and 4) selection process materials. INCOMPLETE FORM OR MATERIALS WILL NOT BE PROCESSED.**

Hiring Sup/Mgr Signature: _____ Date: _____

To be completed by PERS 1 Retiree to be hired.

I have been advised of RCW 41.40.037 work hours limitation and penalty for excess hours as follows:

- PERS 1 retirees who return to work in a PERS -eligible position *within less than one month* after retirement accrual date¹³ are subject to a 5.5% reduction in their retirement

¹³ Retirement Accrual Date means the date the Department of Retirement Systems uses as the date a retiree's benefits begins to accrue. This is the 1st day of the month following the retiree's termination date.

pay for every eight hours worked until they have separated from employment for one full calendar month.

- PERS 1 retirees returning in an eligible position *at least one calendar month* but less than three calendar months after retirement accrual date may work up to 867 hours per year without penalty.
- PERS 1 retirees returning to an eligible position *at least three calendar months* after retirement accrual date may work up to 1500 hours per year without penalty. However, there is a lifetime 1900 hour limit on cumulative hours worked in excess of the 867 hour threshold. The 1900 hour limit is retroactive for any PERS 1 retiree who retired prior to this amendment.

I also understand that it is my responsibility to monitor my work hours.

PERS 1 Retiree Signature: _____ Date: _____

=====

SECTION 2: To be completed by Employment & Diversity Manager (EDM)

Recommendation: Approved Denied

Comment: _____

EDM/Designee Signature: _____ Date: _____

=====

SECTION 3: To be completed by County Administrative Officer (CAO)

This request is: Approved Denied

CAO Signature: _____ Date: _____

(The CAO staff emails approval to requestor, EDM, and the Benefits & Retirement Operations Section (BROS), and forwards documents to BROS at EXC-ES-0300 for archiving.)

=====

SECTION 4: To be completed by BROS staff for audit & tracking purposes.

Log Number: _____ Filed by: _____ Date: _____

Section 6 Telecommuting

Major recommended changes: *Policy and procedure.* Employees should be able to provide limited child care while telecommuting and supervisors may require telecommuting, neither of which are the case under the current policy. If denied, there is no requirement that a supervisor provide an explanation of his or her reasoning for the denial.

Major consideration: Supervisors may require that an employee telecommute.

Significant issue: Collective bargaining agreement provisions requiring mutual agreement between the employee and supervisor for telecommuting may need to be suspended.

Preplanning: Telecommuters and associated technological needs must be identified and equipped as soon as possible. (*See ITS request for information regarding Response Support Services.*)

Telecommuting means that an employee is working one or more days each work week from home instead of commuting to his or her centrally located worksite.¹⁴ **Telecommuting is not appropriate for all employees and no employee is entitled or guaranteed the opportunity to telecommute.**

The purpose of modifications to the policy is to provide support for **social distancing** or other pandemic response goals as necessary to respond to a Pandemic Influenza emergency. These modifications apply only to pandemic planning and response for employees that have been identified as appropriate personnel for telecommuting.

A. Agencies should identify possible telecommuters as soon as possible and make the necessary technological arrangements.

1. Departments shall consider a broader use of telecommuting than they would for normal operations or other types of emergencies to accomplish social distancing for a Pandemic Influenza emergency.
2. Departments shall **identify essential functions that may be accomplished remotely** and whether the person performing the function needs access to all systems and applications or only email and/or voice communications.

¹⁴ Although modified in case of a Pandemic Influenza emergency as set forth above, currently, telecommuting is administered under "Telecommuting Policy" PER 18-4 (EAP) October 15, 2001, for non-represented employees and provides that employees may work one or more days from home instead of commuting to their normal worksite. Telecommuting for represented employees is administered under the provisions of the various collective bargaining agreements. Telecommuting is not a substitute for dependant/child care and employees are expected to make dependant/child care arrangements for the period they will be working at home; telecommuting is strictly voluntary and may be terminated at any time by either the employee or the immediate supervisor; if the request is denied, the employee must be provided with a written explanation of why the request has been denied.

3. Departments shall **identify employees** who are qualified for the provision of essential functions and determine their ability to telecommute and their current capacities (*i.e.*, who already have Virtual Private Network - VPN). As part of the plan for the procedure, provide either VPN or Go to My PC service in advance of the potential Pandemic Influenza emergency to such employees performing functions that require access to systems and applications. (*See* ITS Request for Information form.)
 4. Departments shall consider **alternative work schedules** for those authorized to telecommute to reduce peak demands on Information Technology systems.¹⁵
 5. Employees authorized for telecommuting may be allowed to provide **limited dependant/child care** during a Pandemic Influenza emergency *if* providing care does not impact the ability of the employee to accomplish assigned tasks.
 6. Departments might consider having a laptop computer that is pre-loaded with the VPN software which may be checked out on an emergent basis by employees who do not already have the necessary equipment to telecommute. Equipment is limited and employees should not expect to be provided a laptop.
 7. Telecommuting assignments may be processed via email or telephone.
- B. **Supervisors may require that an employee telecommute** during a Pandemic Influenza emergency. A requirement to telecommute shall be **documented**. Such documentation should occur within one week of the start of the directive to telecommute or as soon as practicable thereafter. A supervisor may document the change via email, memorandum, fax or other documented method.
- ▶ *A sample email/memorandum/fax requiring telecommuting is attached at the end of this section.*
- C. **Employees initiate a telecommuting arrangement** by submitting a written Telecommute Request form to their immediate supervisor. Telecommuting may be approved by the appointing authority for set periods up to one year. If the request is denied, the employee **need not be provided with a written explanation of why the request has been denied**.
- ▶ *The Telecommuting form is attached at the end of this section.* It is also available on the Public Folders at Human Resources/Forms/Telecommute.
- D. There are a number of **technical planning** methods to accomplish telecommuting as follows (*see* ITS Request for Information form):

¹⁵ *See* Section 4 of this manual for a discussion on alternative work schedules.

1. Via the **World-Wide-Web**, employees can access their email accounts and public folders from any computer with internet access. There is no additional set-up or cost, however, the access is limited only to email and the public folders. Employees cannot access other systems or applications.
2. **Virtual Private Network (VPN)** – employees can access their work computer from their home computer through software that must be loaded on the home computer and settings on the work computer. The software is normally provided to the employee on a CD, with installation instructions. This allows the employee to log into the county network via a password protected connection. There is no cost to use VPN services, though the employee must have internet access, preferably a high-speed connection.

Use of VPN is the preferred solution for accessing the network for telecommuting.

▶ *VPN software can be obtained through the Information Technology Section (ITS) or the Department IT staff.*

3. **Go to My PC** – this is a subscription service at \$15 per month that allows access to the work computer through any computer with internet access. This is a cost that is borne by the department approving the telecommuting. The software must be downloaded from the web to both the home and work computers. To implement this, ITS must be consulted to receive the individual account at the discounted monthly rate, to make required modifications to network security and to allow the external access to the work computer.
4. **Instant Messenger (IM)** – this is a free service provided by a number of companies including Microsoft, AOL and Yahoo. It allows for real-time instant text messages either between individuals or as part of a group. The access should be developed in advance so that employees who are telecommuting would be able to load their IM address book to enable the communication. This technology should not be used for secure and/or confidential communications because it is not private.
5. **Teleconferencing** – allows for audio meetings to be held with multiple attendees at different sites. This can be a subscription service where individuals call into a toll-free number and enter a password for the connection to others calling into the same meeting.

(Sample Assignment to Telecommute Email/Memo/Fax)

From: Appointing Authority
Sent: Date
To: [employee's name]
Subject: Assignment to Telecommute During Pandemic Influenza Emergency

Please be advised that effective (*date*) and continuing until approximately (*date*) I am assigning you to telecommute on the following days and times:

[*Monday through Friday*] from ___ a.m. to ___ p.m.

Your meal break is from ___ a.m. to ___ p.m. each day and be sure to take your rest breaks.

Your approximate voicemail message call-in times are:

Please be advised that you may be called to work at (*worksite*) on your regular telecommute day during your regular work hours to meet workload requirements. (*For OT eligible employees: You may also be required to work overtime.*)

Please note the following:

- Telecommuting equipment and services expenses, such as an additional telephone line or software, must be approved in advance by (*your immediate supervisor*). If any equipment or services have been pre-approved, the expenses will be paid or reimbursed.
- You may not use any King County equipment for private purposes, nor allow family members' or friends' access to that equipment.
- You shall promptly return all King County-owned equipment and data documents when requested by (*your immediate supervisor*).
- You must follow all software licensing provisions agreed to by King County.
- King County may pursue recovery from you for any King County property deliberately or negligently damaged or destroyed while in your care, custody and control.
- King County is not responsible for the private property that you use, lose or destroy.
- You may not meet with customers or clients in your home. Meetings should be scheduled in the office.

Thank you for your assistance during this difficult time.

cc: *department or division director*
Department Human Resources Service Delivery Manager
Department payroll staff



King County

Telecommuting Form

(Employee must submit this form to their immediate supervisor for consideration.)

Name: _____

Office phone: _____

Home phone: _____

Supervisor: _____

Office phone: _____

Proposed Schedule:

1) Telecommuting Days: MON __ TUE __ WED __ THU __ FRI __ VARIABLE __

2) How many days a month do you expect to telecommute? _____ Days

3) Telecommuting day Schedule:

Start _____ a.m./p.m. End _____ a.m./p.m.

Lunch starts _____ a.m./p.m. Lunch ends _____ a.m./p.m.

4) What hours could you be reached at home: _____ to _____
(Note: If you have one phone line and will be working on-line, what hours can you be reached at home)

Tasks:

What functions or types of tasks will you be doing at home? (*i.e.*, data entry, word processing, etc.)

Equipment:

Place a check by the following equipment or services that you will need to telecommute. For each item needed, please indicate whether you plan on providing the equipment or if you expect the county to supply it.

ITEM:	Provided by Self	Provided by County	N/A
second telephone line			
telephone answering machine			
residential voice mail			
computer			
computer surge protection			
software used at office (specify)			
printer			
modem			
FAX machine			
Remote access to the county network			
Other			

TELECOMMUTING AGREEMENT

These conditions for telecommuting must be agreed to by the employee and supervisor.

My telecommuting arrangement will begin on (effective date): _____ and end on _____ (agreement shall not exceed 12 months).

I will work at the following location:

I will telecommute ____ days per week. Specific weekly schedule will be:

My telecommuting work hours will be from ____ a.m. to ____ p.m. (meal break from ____ a.m./p.m. to ____ a.m./p.m.)

I agree to call the office or my voice-mail to obtain messages at least ____ times per day while working at home/remote location (or agree to forward my office phone line to my telecommute location when I telecommute).

Approximate voicemail message call-in times:

I will be using the following county-owned equipment at the work location shown above and understand that I am responsible for said equipment, as stated in the county's Telecommuting policy:

I understand and agree to the job assignments or tasks to be completed under my telecommuting arrangement with my supervisor. (Supervisors may attach a specific written statement of job assignments and additional expectations if desired.)

Telecommuting equipment and services expenses (such as an additional telephone line or software) must be approved in advance by your immediate supervisor. If any equipment or services have been approved, the expenses will be paid or reimbursed.

Employees who will be working with confidential county information at their home must attach information describing what strategies will be used to maintain that the information remains secure and confidential in a manner consistent with existing county policies.

TELECOMMUTING EQUIPMENT POLICY:

The employee agrees not to use any King County equipment for private purposes, nor allow family members or friends access to that equipment.

The employee shall promptly return all King County-owned equipment and data documents when requested by the employee's supervisor.

The employee agrees to follow all software licensing provisions agreed to by King County.

The county may pursue recovery from the employee for any county property deliberately or negligently damaged or destroyed while in employee's care, custody and control.

The county is not responsible for private property used, lost or destroyed.

The employee agrees to comply with policies regarding telecommuting equipment in the telecommuting policy.

OTHER CONDITIONS:

Employees may, at the discretion of their immediate supervisor, be called to work at their centrally located worksite on their regular telecommute day during their regular work hours to meet workload requirements.

Section 7 Special Duty Assignments

Major recommend changes: *Procedural.* An expedited process, including email notification, may be used to document the assignment, instead of the form which is routed for signature.

Major consideration: Special duty pay is not available for assignment to other units or other duties unless that assignment also encompasses duties of a higher classification.

Significant issue: Collective bargaining agreement provisions dealing with special duty assignments and notification periods may be suspended.

Preplanning: Departments should identify areas where special duty assignments are expected to occur.

Administration of Special Duty will continue in accordance with King County Code Section 3.15.140 and Personnel Guidelines Section 12.5¹⁶ Completion of a Special Duty Request & Extension form is currently required for all special duty assignments involving higher pay.

¹⁶An appointing authority, with the prior written approval of the department director and the [Human Resources Director], or his or her designee, may temporarily assign an employee to an existing higher-level classification when the higher-level duties and responsibilities comprise the majority of the work performed.

Special duty may be appropriate for an employee assigned to perform duties and responsibilities that are outside of the scope of his/her current classification if the higher level duties, as described in an existing classification, are of a temporary nature and comprise the majority of the work being performed.

Special duty may be assigned under the following conditions:

To backfill a vacancy created when another employee is on leave for a medical disability, as required for reasonable accommodation under the state or federal law, on leave for military duty or other approved leave of absence.

To perform higher-level work either directly or backfilling for another employee when the work is related to a project that has a definite termination date.

The maximum period of special duty is six months [when approved by the Human Resources Director or designee]. A special duty assignment may be extended to a maximum of twelve months if authorized in advance in writing by the department director and the [Human Resources Director] before the expiration of the initial six-month period. Any further extensions must be authorized in writing in advance by the department director and the county administrative officer based upon a specific determination that a special duty assignment continues to meet the requirements stated in this chapter and that a position reclassification is not appropriate. Such cases shall only include back-filling for a regular position when an incumbent employee is absent because of an extended leave of absence for a medical disability, as required under reasonable accommodation provisions of applicable state or federal law, or is on military reserve duty. Additionally, an extension may be allowed for performance of a project when a higher level of work has a definite termination date.

Special duty assignments may not exceed two years in duration.

A special duty assignment is **defined** as a temporary assignment of an employee to an existing higher-level classification when the higher-level duties and responsibilities comprise the majority of the work performed.

- A. Only in the event that an employee is **assigned to higher level duties will they be paid special duty**. Special duty pay is not appropriate where an employee is simply assigned different duties which are not higher level duties or where an employee is simply assigned to work in a different work unit if the work performed there are not higher level duties.
- B. Employees may be assigned to perform **duties of an equal or lower classification**, without reduction in base pay.
- C. Should a Pandemic Influenza emergency be declared, assignments to special duty involving higher pay will continue to be made prospectively but approvals and notification to the employee may be made prior to the commencement of the assignment either **via e-mail or using the Special Duty form**. If the email process is used, then routing the special duty form will not be required.
 1. An assignment to special duty may be made via e-mail, memorandum or fax only for the duration of the proclaimed emergency.
 2. **Where an email, memorandum or fax is used:**
 - For an initial request of **6 months** or less, the email originates with the employee's supervisor, manager or the division director and is emailed to the Department's Human Resources Service Delivery Manager (SDM) or his or her designee. The SDM or his or her designee may approve or deny the request by simply replying to the email.
 - For the first extension request of **7-12 months**, the email originates with the employee's supervisor or manager and is emailed to the Human Resources Division Director or his or her designee. The Human Resources Division Director may approve or deny the request by simply replying to the email.
 - For the second extension request of **13-18 months**, the email originates with the employee's supervisor or manager and is emailed to the King County Administrative Officer. The King County Administrative Officer or his or her designee may approve or deny the request by simply replying to the email.

A special duty assignment must be made in writing to the employee before the beginning of the assignment. The written notice must provide the classification title and description and must list the specific duties that the employee is to perform and the duration of the assignment. The written notice must also include a statement that the assignment will not confer on the employee any new privilege, right of appeal, right of position, transfer, demotion, promotion or reinstatement. A special duty assignment may be revoked at any time at the discretion of the appointing authority. Special duty may not be assigned retroactively.

- For the third and final extension request of **18-24 months**, the email originates with the employee's supervisor or manager and is emailed to the county Administrative Officer. The King County Administrative Officer or his or her designee may approve or deny the request by simply replying to the email.
- ▶ *A sample email/ memorandum/fax is attached at the end of this section.*
- ▶ *The Special Duty Form is attached at the end of this section.* An electronic version is also available on Public Folders at Human Resources/Forms/Special Duty forms.

(Sample Special Duty Assignment Email/Memo/Fax)

From: Appointing Authority

Sent: Date

To: [SDM/HRD Director/CAO]

Subject: Assignment to Special Duty During the Pandemic Influenza Emergency

Please be advised that effective (*date*) and continuing until approximately (*date*) I am requesting approval to assign (*employee's name*) to special duty as a (*classification*) at (*range/step*). This is the (*initial/first extension/second extension/third extension*) request. (*Employee's name*) is currently serving as a (*base classification*)

During the assignment, (*he/she*) will be responsible for (*general statement of duties*) for (*100%/intermittent*) of the time assigned.

Via a copy of your reply approving this assignment, (*employee's name*) has been advised that this assignment will not confer any new privilege, right of appeal, right of position, transfer, demotion, promotion or reinstatement; that this assignment may be revoked at any time; and that, during the duration of this assignment [*employee's name*], the will be paid at the rate of (*pay rate equating to step one of the higher class of 5% above the base class*) which reflects the higher level duties (*employee's name*) will be performing. At the conclusion of the assignment, (*employee's name*) pay will revert to its usual rate.

Thank you for considering this request.

cc: *department or division director*

Department Human Resources Service Delivery Manager

Department payroll staff

cc: *employee after approval email is received*



King County

Special Duty Request and Extension Form

The Supervisor making the request completes this form and forwards to the Service Delivery Manager or the appropriate Human Resources Representative.

Use this form when requesting a special duty assignment. *Reclassification: This form is not to be used in lieu of request for reclassification nor pending reclassification.*

All special duty requests and/or extensions *must* have advanced written approval before the employee begins the assignment. Extensions are to be requested prior to the end of the special duty assignment. **No retroactive pay for a special duty assignment is allowed.**

PLEASE NOTE: Union contract provisions and practices governing special duty and lead worker pay will continue to apply. If you have any questions as to whether these special duty changes can be made to a particular bargaining unit, please contact your Labor Relations representative.

Employee Name:

Requesting Department:

Division:

Requesting Division Manager or Designee Signature:

Request Date:

Select one appropriate Action:

Action

- Work is within a higher-level classification/pay range. Special duty tasks comprise a majority of the work performed **AND** duties do not justify a permanent reclassification. This may be a short backfill (vacation/sick leave) or project-related.
- Assign as a Lead Worker. Limited supervisory authority exists **AND** duties do not justify permanent reclassification. (Applicable to represented employees whose contract includes lead worker provision)
- Backfill a vacancy due to one of the following reasons (check applicable box):
 - Vacant Position
 - Medical Disability, as required for reasonable accommodation under the State or Federal law,
 - Military Duty, or
 - Project where higher level of work has a definite termination date
 Backfill is for
 Employee name: _____ Position number: _____

Select one appropriate Duration:

NOTE: Assignments or extensions are prospective. No retroactive compensation will be awarded, unless specified by bargaining agreement.

Assignment/Extension Dates	Duration (limited to 6 month increments)	Approval Level Required
Start (mm/dd/yy):	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial request – 6 months or less	HR Service Delivery Manager
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 st Extension – 7 to 12 months	HRD Division Director
End (mm/dd/yy):	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 nd Extension – 13 to 18 months	County Administrative Officer
	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 rd Extension – 19 to 24 month (Overall max.)	County Administrative Officer

This Special Duty Assignment is:

- 100% Full-time**
- Intermittent – Employee is required to submit timecard for all actual hours worked while performing higher-level duties**

Please note: boxes will expand as necessary

Specific Duties and Responsibilities:

Extension Justification:

To be completed by the Supervisor and verified by Department HR or Payroll staff			
Payroll ID Number		Base - Current Class Code	Base - Current Classification Title
Base -Current Union	Special Duty Union	Special Duty Class Code	Special Duty Classification Title
Base ~ Current Plan/Range/Step / /		Base Hourly Rate \$ /hr	Current FLSA status <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Exempt (OT eligible) <input type="checkbox"/> Exempt
Special Duty Plan/Range/Step / /		Special Duty Hourly Rate \$ /hr	Special Duty FLSA status <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Exempt (OT eligible) <input type="checkbox"/> Exempt
Special Duty Low Org/Cost Center #		Increase % Increase Amt. \$	PeopleSoft Only Special Duty Workgroup Effective Date Special Duty Mailstop New phone
Additional Comments			

Approval Signatures

<input type="checkbox"/> Denied <input type="checkbox"/> Approved, as amended	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied <input type="checkbox"/> Approved, as amended	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved
_____	Date	_____	Date
HR Service Delivery Manager		HRD Division Director	
<input type="checkbox"/> Denied <input type="checkbox"/> Approved, as amended	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Denied <input type="checkbox"/> Approved, as amended	<input type="checkbox"/> Approved
_____	Date	_____	Date
County Administrative Officer			

Employee Acceptance and Agreement

Employee agrees the following terms and conditions were met prior to acceptance of the special duty assignment:

- Written notification for the special duty assignment (this form) has been provided by the Supervisor.
- Notification listed the specific duties that will be performed and the duration of the assignment.
 - Notification informed employee the assignment will not confer on him/her any privilege, right of appeal, or right of position, transfer, demotion, promotion, or reinstatement to the higher level classification.
 - The special duty assignment may be revoked at any time at the discretion of the appointing authority.

By signing, the employee agrees not to perform duties nor receive any pay for the special duty assignment prior to receiving written required approvals.

- Accept
- Decline

Employee Name (print) _____ Date _____

Employee Signature _____ Date _____

cc: HRD Compensation Management Services
Employee

Section 8 Volunteer Services

Major recommended changes: *None.*

Major consideration: Individuals may not volunteer to do what they are otherwise paid by the county to do.

Significant issue: Volunteers must sign a waiver and release.

Preplanning: Departments should compile a list of potential volunteers.

During a Pandemic Influenza emergency, departments may wish to utilize the services of volunteers. Generally, volunteers are individuals who perform hours of service for the county for civic, charitable or humanitarian reasons.

- A. Departments should first attempt to utilize King County employees to perform needed work and then look to volunteers.
- B. Departments should **identify areas where volunteers might be utilized in advance** and identify the type of **skills** that volunteers will need to be useful in that area. Departments should then compile a list of possible volunteers.
 1. Departments may be contacted by individuals who want to volunteer but are not needed or do not possess the needed skills. Departments should preplan on how to communicate to such individuals that their offer to volunteer is appreciated but that the department cannot utilize their services.
- C. Departments may include as volunteers any individual who volunteers to perform services for the department if the following **conditions** are met:
 1. The individual receives no compensation or is paid expenses, reasonable benefits, or a nominal fee to perform the services for which the individual volunteered. The individual must perform services without any kind of promise or expectation or receipt of compensation for the services rendered.
 2. Such services are not the same type of services which the individual is employed to perform for the county's executive branch departments. Individuals may not volunteer to do what they are otherwise paid by the county to do.
 3. The volunteer must sign a waiver and release prior to performing volunteer services.

► ***A Volunteer Services Waiver and Release is attached at the end of this section.***

**VOLUNTEER SERVICES
WAIVER AND RELEASE**

The undersigned, on behalf of themselves and their estate, hereby waives any right of recovery and releases King County, their officers, officials, employees and agents, from liability arising from any injury to Undersigned, arising from or out of the Undersigned's activities and participation in volunteer services at the King County [*INSERT DEPARTMENT AND DIVISION NAME*].

The Undersigned further acknowledges and agrees that King County does not assume any responsibility whatsoever for any property of the Undersigned and the Undersigned shall not hold the county liable for any loss or damage to same. The Undersigned give their permission to be photographed and have their image used in King County publications.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

For youth under 18 years of age: _____ (print) has my permission to accept an assignment as a volunteer for King County.

Signature of Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Section 9

Rescission of Approved Executive Leave, Vacation Leave and Compensatory Time Off

Major recommended changes: *Process.* There will be no requirement that an employee must actually have a request for vacation denied before carryover of unused vacation is approved.

Major consideration: Managers and supervisors already have this right and should utilize it when necessary.

Significant issue: None.

Preplanning: Managers and supervisors should keep an updated calendar of all approved time off and provide access of that calendar to those in their line of succession.

Because the Pandemic Influenza emergency may cause significant staffing shortages, previously approved executive leave, vacation leave and compensatory time off may be rescinded in order to provide staffing coverage for county services. The ability to rescind previously approved vacation leave and compensatory time off currently exists in the event of business need.¹⁷

Supervisors, managers and directors should note the following:

- A. Managers and supervisors should keep an **updated calendar of all approved time off** and provide access of that calendar to those in their line of succession.
- B. Executive leave, vacation and/or compensatory time off should only be rescinded where the supervisor is unable to adequately staff a work unit or project.
- C. Executive leave, vacation and/or compensatory time off should be rescinded as soon as the supervisor believes that a potential staffing shortage will require that the employee report to work.
- D. Prior to rescinding previously approved vacation leave or compensatory time off, the supervisor should **attempt to staff the unit or project through other available means** (*i.e.*, seek available staff to volunteer for the work or staff with other available employees or contract workers).
- E. Rescission of an employee's leave which is already in progress shall be **reasonably based upon the employee's ability to report to work.**

For example, it would be reasonable to require that an employee who is on vacation at home report to work but unreasonable to require that an employee who is on vacation out of the country report to work.

¹⁷ See also Section 11 of this manual. Rescissions may not be made where the approved leave is a necessary extension of sick leave to be used in conjunction with King County Family Medical Leave.

- F. When rescinding vacation and/or compensatory time off, the **supervisor shall have actual contact with the employee** to ensure that the employee received the directive to report to duty. Rescission should be made in writing, if possible.

For example, an email exchange between the employee and the supervisor or a letter from the supervisor to the employee in which the employee acknowledges receipt is acceptable contact; a message left on an employee's home telephone message recorder is not an acceptable contact, unless the message was left and employee returned the call acknowledging the directive.

▶ *A sample email/memorandum/fax is attached to the end of this section.*

- G. Employees eligible for vacation leave may accrue up to sixty days vacation leave, prorated to reflect their normally scheduled work day. However, should the need for an employee to work during Pandemic Influenza emergency result in the employee going beyond the maximum accrual amount, the appointing authority may submit a recommendation to the Human Resources Division Director that the employee be allowed to **carryover vacation leave**.
- H. While employees who have accrued compensatory time off have a right to use it within a reasonable time of their request, such may not be the case in the event of an emergency, such as the Pandemic Influenza, where an employee's absence would disrupt County business operations. Should rescission of compensatory time off due to a proclaimed Pandemic Influenza emergency occur, the appointing authority may submit a recommendation to the Human Resources Division Director that the employee be allowed to **carryover accrued compensatory time**. Compensatory hours that have been carried over shall be used within the first quarter of the new calendar year.
- Should, at year end, an employee have accrued compensatory time that is not carried over, it will be paid to the employee.
- I. **Executive leave** cannot be carried over or cashed out—it must be used in the calendar year that it is granted or it is forfeited.

(Sample Rescission of Vacation and Comp Time Off Email/Memo/Fax)

From: Appointing Authority
Sent: Date
To: [employee's name]
Subject: Rescission of Previously Approved (*Vacation/Compensatory Time Off*)

Please be advised that, the Pandemic Influenza emergency has caused staffing shortages county wide. Unfortunately, this means that I must rescind my prior approval of your (*date of vacation leave and compensatory time off*) in order to provide staffing coverage for (*name of work unit*).

However, please note that:

[*The following is only for employees whose approved vacation is being rescinded:*]

- Employees eligible for vacation leave may accrue up to sixty days vacation leave, pro-rated to reflect their normally scheduled work day. However, should rescission of your vacation leave due to a declared Pandemic Influenza emergency result in your leave going beyond the maximum accrual amount, either myself or the department director may submit a recommendation to the Human Resources Division Director that you be allowed to **carryover vacation leave**, per Personnel Guideline Section 14.3(D).

[*The following is only for hourly employees whose approved compensatory time off is being rescinded:*]

- As an employee who can accrue compensatory time off, you normally have a right to use it within a reasonable time of your request. However, such is not the case in the event of an emergency, such as the Pandemic Influenza, where your absence may disrupt county business operations. Because your previously approved compensatory time off is being rescinded, upon your request the department director may recommend to the Human Resources Division, the **carryover of accrued compensatory time to the next calendar year**. If that occurs, you must use those hours within the first quarter of the new calendar year.
- Should you have accrued compensatory time at year end that is not carried over, it will be paid out to you.

Thank you for your understanding and your assistance during this difficult time.

cc: *department or division director*
Department Human Resources Service Delivery Manager
Department payroll staff

Section 10 Sending Ill Employees Home

Major recommended changes: *Training.* Managers and supervisors already have the right to send ill employees home.

Major consideration: Safety considerations will drive a decision to send an employee home.

Significant issue: Employees who decline to leave the workplace when directed to may be subject to some level of corrective or disciplinary action.

Preplanning: Training of supervisors should include a reminder that they have the authority to send ill employees home and that sick leave is meant to cover such an absence.

- A. If an employee who is staffing operations appears to have the Pandemic Influenza at the workplace, supervisors have the authority to **require the employee to leave the workplace.**

As a **safety consideration**, management should look to the physical well-being of its employees and whether the health of fellow employees is endangered by the health of an ill employee. Such is the case where an employee is exhibiting symptoms of the Pandemic Influenza because an ill employee may endanger the health of fellow employees.

Supervisors should first seek the approval of their manager or director prior to sending an ill employee home.

- B. Supervisors are not to make judgments as to medical diagnosis but may rely on observations of an employee's symptomology in making a determination to send an employee who appears ill home. **Symptoms** of flu in humans may be:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Muscle aches
- Eye infections (conjunctivitis)
- Pneumonia
- Acute respiratory distress
- Viral pneumonia

▶ **Public Health's web site should be consulted for updates on Pandemic Influenza symptomology <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/avian/index.htm>**

C. If an employee is sent home because the employee may have Pandemic Influenza the employee may be eligible to use their **Home Free Guarantee** benefit and take a taxi home. The service is available up to 8 times a year, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by calling the Employee Transportation Hotline at 206-263-4575.

▶ *The employee shall obtain a completed taxi receipt, sign the receipt and mail it to:*

Home Free Guarantee
KSC-TR-0412
201 South Jackson Street
Seattle, Washington 98104

D. Under Personal Guidelines Section 14.4.3(F)(1-2), an employee may use sick leave for the employee's bona fide illness or incapacitating injury or the employee's exposure to contagious diseases. Employees who are exempt from the overtime and minimum wage provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Washington Minimum Wage Act will not have their pay or leave banks reduced for partial-day absences.

E. In the event that employees are sent home because of Pandemic Influenza, employees may use their **sick leave accruals**, vacation accruals, compensatory time off accruals or previously awarded executive leave; or, may request approval for an unpaid absence without leave if sick leave and vacation leave accruals are depleted. With the exception of leave which qualifies under family medical leave, any request for a leave of absence without pay for more than 30 days, must be pre-approved by the Human Resources Division Director.

▶ *A Leave of Absence Without Pay Request form is attached at the end of this section.*

F. **Paid administrative leave is not available to an employee who is being sent home because of exhibiting symptoms of Pandemic Influenza.**

G. When the employee's condition improves to the point where the employee no longer poses a health hazard to fellow employees, the employee shall contact his or her supervisor and arrange for the employee's **return to work**.¹⁸

▶ *A sample email/memorandum/fax is attached at the end of this section.*

¹⁸ See Section 12 of this manual for return to work authorization; Public Health – Seattle & King County may provide further guidance on how long an employee will need to remain away from work if exhibiting symptoms.



King County

Leave of Absence Without Pay Request

Date received by supervisor

Employee

- Submit this form to your supervisor to request a leave: 1) that begins and ends as unpaid leave, 2) that begins as paid leave but ends as unpaid leave or 3) for a health condition that doesn't qualify as FMLA/KCFML (family-medical leave).
- Complete all information and submit for approval. Your supervisor will submit for additional approval as needed.
- Questions? See page 2 of this form, refer to your labor agreement and personnel guidelines or talk to your supervisor.

Name _____ Home phone (_____) _____

Payroll ID or Soc Sec No _____ Contact phone (_____) _____

Home address _____

Job title _____ Work site/mail stop _____

Benefit eligible: Yes No Union _____ Paid: 5th & 20th ea month Every other Thurs

If your spouse/domestic partner works for King County, provide his/her name (it can affect your benefit coverage during leave) _____

Purpose of leave of absence without pay (LWOP) _____

Date last day worked before leave begins _____ Date you anticipate returning to work _____

If your LWOP begins on paid leave but ends on unpaid leave, what paid leave is being used in conjunction with this LWOP?

Sick leave Vacation leave Other (specify) _____

I've read and understand my responsibilities for requesting this leave; I've submitted this form for appropriate signature and approval. The information I've provided is true, correct and complete; I understand the willful falsification of any information I've provided may lead to disciplinary action up to and including discharge from employment. I will notify my supervisor/appointing authority if and when there are changes to the circumstances of my leave.

Employee signature _____ Date _____

Supervisor

- If leave is less than 30 days, secure approval from the appointing authority (if that's not you).
- If leave is more than 30 days, secure approval from the appointing authority and the Human Resources Director.
- If LWOP is approved, provide signed original to employee and forward copy to your payroll/human resources representative.
- You must also notify your payroll/human resources representative when employee returns to work.

Sick leave: Approved Not approved
Vacation leave: Approved Not approved
Other (specified above): Approved Not approved

Supervisor signature _____ Date _____

Printed name _____ Work Phone _____

Department _____ Division _____

Appointing authority _____ Date _____

Human Resources Director _____ Date _____

Payroll/Human Resources Representative

- Complete all information below and forward a copy of this form to Benefits and Retirement Operations at EXC-ES-0300. This ensures employee is notified of the option to self-pay to continue benefit coverage when employee goes on unpaid status.
- You must also notify Benefits and Retirement Operations when employee returns to work/paid status; call 206-684-1556, fax 206-684-1925 or e-mail kc.benefits@metrokc.gov.

Date employee goes on unpaid status _____

Payroll/HR rep signature _____ Date _____

Printed name _____ Work Phone _____

Guidelines for Leave of Absence Without Pay

- If you're eligible for other leave, you're eligible to take a leave of absence without pay in accordance with your department policy (for instance, to complete educational programs). A leave of absence without pay:
 - Up to 30 days must be authorized in writing by your supervisor and appointing authority (your appointing authority is the person with hiring authority for your work group; your supervisor and appointing authority may be the same person)
 - From 31 days to a year requires additional authorization by the Human Resources Director (the leave may not exceed one year unless special circumstances apply and the director grants the extension)
 - Taken in conjunction with a workers' compensation claim requires no authorization.
- You may combine a leave of absence without pay with paid leave. When you do, you must use your paid leave before you go on unpaid status.
- When you go on unpaid status, your sick leave, vacation leave and other benefit accruals stop (except as provided under family-medical leave), and gaps in your county employment occur that may extend your probationary period (if you're on probation when you take the leave) and affect your seniority, retirement service credit, etc. For details, talk to your human resources and union representatives.
- If your unpaid leave is 30 days or less, any county-paid benefit coverage you receive continues uninterrupted. If your unpaid leave is 31 days or more, any county-paid benefit coverage ends the last day of the month you work before the leave begins. Benefits and Retirement Operations contacts you regarding arrangements for paying to continue benefit coverage when it receives a copy of your approved leave of absence without pay request and you go on unpaid status.
- You may return to work from a leave of absence without pay before your leave expires if you submit a written request to your appointing authority at least 15 days before the expiration date. If you take leave to recover your health, your appointing authority may require you to submit a physician's statement concerning your ability to resume duties before you return to work.
- The Human Resources Director may revoke your leave of absence without pay if your appointing authority provides evidence that it was granted and approved under false pretenses, or the need for your leave has ceased to exist. If you don't return from a leave of absence without pay when your leave expires, you're automatically terminated from county service.
- For more information, refer to King County Code 3.12.250 and the Personnel Guidelines.

(Sample Email/Memo/Fax for Sending Ill Employee Home)

From: *Appointing Authority*
Sent: *Date*
To: *[employee's name]*
Subject: *Removal From Workplace – Exhibiting Pandemic Influenza Symptoms*

During the last [*time period i.e. few days, several hours*] I have observed that you appear ill because you are [*list symptoms observed*]. I am concerned about your physical well-being. I am also concerned that you may be contagious. In light of these concerns, I am sending you home.

You will need to use your sick leave accrual, vacation accrual, compensatory time off accrual or previously awarded executive leave (if available) for your absence; or, may request approval for an unpaid absence without leave if your leave accruals are depleted.

When your condition improves, please contact me at [*supervisor's phone number and email address*] and we will discuss your return to work.

Thank you for your understanding and I hope that you feel better soon.

Section 11 Family Medical Leave and Sick Leave

Major recommended changes: All departments must allow sick leave to be used for medical and dental appointments.

Major consideration: The administration of family medical leave must continue in accord with current legal requirements.

Significant issue: None.

Preplanning: Departments need to assure that family medical leave administration is encompassed in the essential human resource management functions.

King County employees may use medical leave pursuant to their current rights under:

- Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) 29 CFR
- King County Family Medical Leave (KCFML) KCC 3.12.220 & PG 14.4
- Washington Family Care Act (WFCA) (RCW 49.12.265 & WAC 296-130)
- Washington Family Leave Act (WFLA) (RCW 49.78)

During the Pandemic Influenza emergency, the necessity for supporting employees seeking medical assistance will be crucial. Some departments currently are not required to allow sick leave for medical and dental appointments. If departments are not already allowing sick leave for medical and dental appointments they shall permit it. KCC 3.12.220 (H)(5).

► *A leave chart is attached as an Addendum to this manual.*

Section 12 Return to Work Authorization

Major recommended changes: *Procedural.* During a Pandemic Influenza emergency, as a general rule, medical certifications for return to work will not be required if related to influenza; employees may be required to return to different work sites and to different work duties.

Major consideration: Employees may be returning to duties outside of their bargaining unit or of another bargaining unit and departments will need to consult with Labor Relations if this becomes an issue.

Significant issue: Educating managers and HR practitioners on symptomology of influenza will be critical.

Preplanning: Managerial and HR practitioner training.

In the event the King County Executive declares a Pandemic Influenza emergency, the following procedures will be in effect for the duration of the emergency.

Returning from Leave: In the event that an employee is ready to return to work from a leave (paid, unpaid, or military) the following procedures shall apply:

- A. The employee who is ready to return from leave shall **contact his/her supervisor** (or a person acting in his/her capacity) for instructions on when and where the employee should return for assignment, provided an assignment is available prior to the day that the employee proposes to return. Contact shall be made in the manner deemed appropriate by the work unit.
- B. The supervisor shall **inform the employee** as to whether or not the employee's return to work is authorized.¹⁹ If it is authorized, the employee should be informed of his/her work location (or whether the employee will be assigned to work from a remote location or telecommute), work schedule and shift, and specific work assignments, if different from the employee's regular assignment.
- C. In administering this section, medical certifications may not be required.
- D. After the emergency, the requirements for the employee to provide a medical release/return to work verification form from a health care professional will be restored, unless otherwise notified by the employee's supervisor.

¹⁹ See Section 10 for a discussion on sending ill employees home. Of note, if the employee returns to work and appears ill, the supervisor may send the employee back home.

Section 13 Leave Donation

Major recommended changes: *None.* The current procedure will continue.

Major consideration: None.

Significant issue: Employees should be informed that a payroll lag time will exist from the date of the leave donation and the date that the donated leave is available for use.

Preplanning: None.

Administration of leave donations will continue in accordance with King County Code Section 3.12.223 and Personnel Guidelines Section 14.6 as follows:

A. **Vacation leave hours.**

1. Any employee eligible for leave benefits may donate a portion of his or her accrued vacation leave to another employee eligible for leave benefits. Such donation will occur upon written **request to and approval** of the donating and receiving employees' department director(s), except that requests for vacation donation made for the purposes of supplementing the sick leave benefits of the receiving employee shall not be denied unless approval would result in a departmental hardship for the receiving department.
2. The **number of hours donated shall not exceed the donor's accrued vacation credit** as of the date of the request. No donation of vacation hours shall be permitted where it would cause the employee receiving the transfer to exceed his or her maximum vacation accrual.
3. Donated vacation leave hours must be used within ninety calendar days following the date of donation. Donated hours not used within ninety days or due to the death of the receiving employee shall revert to the donor. Donated vacation leave hours shall be excluded from vacation leave payoff provisions contained in KCC Chapter 3.12. For purposes of this section, the first hours used by an employee shall be their own accrued vacation leave hours.

B. **Sick leave hours.**

1. Any employee eligible for leave benefits may donate a portion of his or her accrued sick leave to another employee eligible for leave benefits upon written notice to the donating and receiving employees' department director(s).
2. No donation shall be permitted unless the **donating employee's sick leave accrual balance** immediately subsequent to the donation is **one hundred hours or more**. No employee may donate more than twenty-five hours of his or her accrued sick leave in a calendar year.
3. Donated sick leave hours must be used within ninety calendar days. Donated hours not used within ninety days or due to the death of the receiving employee shall revert to the donor. Donated sick leave hours shall be excluded from the sick leave payoff provisions

contained in KCC Chapter 3.12, and sick leave restoration provisions contained in KCC Chapter 3.12. For purposes of this section, the first hours used by an employee shall be their own accrued sick leave hours.

- C. All donations of vacation and sick leave made under KCC Chapter 3.12 are strictly **voluntary**. Employees are prohibited from soliciting, offering or receiving monetary or any other compensation or benefits in exchange for donating vacation or sick leave hours.
- D. All vacation and sick leave hours donated shall be **converted to a dollar value** based on the donor's straight time hourly rate at the time of donation. Such dollar value will then be divided by the receiving employee's hourly rate to determine the actual number of hours received. Unused donated vacation and sick leave shall be reconverted based on the donor's straight time hourly rate at the time of re-conversion.
 - ▶ *A form used to request approval for leave donations for a Pandemic Influenza emergency is attached at the end of this section.* Employees should be informed that a payroll lag time will exist from the date of the leave donation and the date that the donated leave is available for use.



Donation of Vacation and Sick Leave During a Pandemic Influenza Emergency (for Both Payroll Systems)

Instructions

- Any full-time regular, part-time regular and term-limited temporary employee who receives vacation and sick leave accruals, may donate a portion of his or her accrued vacation or sick leave to another full-time, part-time regular or term-limited employee.
- Vacation leave donations are limited to the donor's accrued vacation as of the date of this request.
- No sick leave donation shall be permitted unless the donating employee's sick leave accrual balance immediately subsequent to the donation is 100 hours or more. No employee may donate more than 25 hours of his or her accrued sick leave in a calendar year.
- Donated leave hours must be used within ninety calendar days. Donated hours not used within ninety days or due to the death of the receiving employee shall revert to the donor. Donated leave hours shall be excluded from the leave payoff provisions and sick leave restoration provisions contained in King County Code Chapter 3.12. For purposes of this section, the first hours used by an employee shall be accrued leave hours.
- All donations of vacation and sick leave made are strictly voluntary. Employees are prohibited from soliciting, offering or receiving monetary or any other compensation or benefits in exchange for donating vacation or sick leave hours.
- All vacation and sick leave hours donated shall be converted to a dollar value based on the donor's straight time hourly rate at the time of donation. Such dollar value will then be divided by the receiving employee's hourly rate to determine the actual number of hours received. Unused donated vacation and sick leave shall be reconverted based on the donor's straight time hourly rate at the time of re-conversion.

To Be Completed By the Donating Employee

Name of employee donating leave (Donor) _____

PeopleSoft Payroll ID _____ Payroll Representative _____

Department/Division _____ Work location _____

Mail stop _____ Job title _____

Union _____ Status: Full time Part time Paid: 5th & 20th ea month every other Thurs

Type of accrued leave donated _____ (Vacation or Sick)

Number of hours donated _____

Name of employee receiving donated leave (recipient) _____

Recipient's department/division _____

Donor's signature _____ Date _____

Donor's department director or designee's signature _____ Date _____

Recipient's department director or designee's signature _____ Date _____

Send form to recipient's payroll representative: Name _____ Mail stop _____

To Be Completed By the Payroll Specialist

Date request received by payroll: _____

Recipient's Payroll ID or Soc Sec No _____ Work location _____

Mail stop _____ Job title _____

Union _____ Status: Full time Part time Paid: 5th & 20th ea month every other Thurs

Donor's Rate of Pay _____ Converted Dollars _____

Recipient's Rate of Pay _____ Converted Hours _____

Notes: _____

Send copy of completed form to donor's payroll representative.

Section 14

Facility Closure / Reduction in Force

Major recommended changes: *None.* The county may currently affect facility closures and reductions in force as necessary to meet business needs.

Major consideration: Decisions as to facility closures or reductions in force will be made on a case-by-case basis, in conjunction with the Human Resources Division and the King County Executive's office.

Significant issue: In the event of large-scale reductions in force, the economic impact of vacation payouts and unemployment benefits may be at issue.

Preplanning: Agencies should review standard reduction in force template letters and update as necessary to address a Pandemic Influenza emergency.

Administrative offices and King County operations **will remain open** during emergency situations that do not pose an immediate life, health, or safety risk to its occupants **unless directed otherwise** by the executive or the respective department director, per Personnel Guidelines Section 14.14.

Because of potential staffing shortages, employees may be deployed to provide support for varied county operations in alternative worksites and should expect to come to work.

In the case of closure of specific offices, employees will be sent home as a last resort. Should employees be sent home, **payment of wages** to employees will be made in accordance with the established emergency processes under Personnel Guidelines Section 14.14(D) as follows:

- A. If a **facility is closed** by order of the executive and no alternative site is designated for the employee to report to, regular, provisional, probationary and term-limited temporary employees scheduled to work will be paid their normal pay until such time as the facility is reopened, alternative worksites are arranged or a reduction in force is implemented.
 1. **If the shutdown extends for more than one week**, the status of displaced workers may be reviewed by the executive to determine whether a **reduction in force** due to either lack of funds or lack of work is in order. This applies to affected employees who are **exempt** from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and the Washington Minimum Wage Act (WMWA), as well as **hourly employees** who are not exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and the Washington Minimum Wage Act (WMWA).
 2. Employees who, prior to a facility closure, have previously requested and have been **approved for time off** (*e.g.*, vacation, sick leave, compensatory time off,

executive leave, leave of absence) will have hours deducted from their accruals as approved in accordance with established policies.²⁰

3. **Temporary** (other than provisional, probationary and term-limited temporary), administrative interns, and non-regular part time employees will be paid only for hours actually worked during a facility closure.
 4. Employees designated as **first responder employees** who are unable to report to work will have their time charged to vacation, compensatory time (FLSA overtime non-exempt hourly), executive leave (FLSA exempt) or leave without pay unless the department director or designee determines that regular pay is warranted and waives the charging of the time missed.
 5. If the facility closes after the start of an employee's shift, employees who are scheduled to report to work but do not report to work and do not contact the appointing authority or designee prior to a facility closure are considered to have been **absent without leave** and will be subject to leave without pay for the full day.²¹ However, the appointing authority may at his or her discretion authorize the use of vacation, compensatory time or executive leave for the absence as individual circumstances warrant.
- B. When a department or division director or agency administrator closes operations in his or her agency during the work day or **orders employees to leave the premises** because of safety concerns, employees (regular, provisional, probationary and term-limited temporary) scheduled to work will be paid for the normally scheduled work day.
- C. Departments should make every reasonable effort to **allow employees who have reported to work to check on the status of their families**, providing that doing so does not compromise emergency response functions.

²⁰ See Section 9 of this manual for rescission of vacation leave and compensatory time.

²¹ See Section 15 of this manual where consequences for absences without approved leave are discussed.

Section 15

Discipline – Conduct, Including Unauthorized Absences

Major recommended changes: *Procedural.* Processing of disciplinary action may need to be held in abeyance pending a return to normal business operations.

Major consideration: First responders who are absent without leave are held to a higher standard than other employees in analyzing disciplinary action.

Significant issue: Certain absences without approved leave for more than 3 days may subject an employee to termination. Administrative leave remains available for departments to utilize when departments determine that an employee should not return to work pending the outcome of the disciplinary process.

Preplanning: Employees should be informed of the expectation that they report to work and that the consequence for not doing so is potential disciplinary action.

King County's commitment to public service will be the cornerstone to holding the function of our community together. In order to fulfill service to the public, all able employees are expected to report to work and perform duties, unless directed otherwise. Held to the highest standard are **first responders** -- those are employees who exercise civil authority and maintain the safety and well-being of county citizens.

Unfortunately, there may be occasions during the emergency when employee misconduct or unexcused absenteeism arise and need to be addressed. In some cases, that will mean that discipline is appropriate.

A. **Disciplinary Action, in General:** The type and level of disciplinary action will be determined by the nature and severity of the behavior and/or performance deficiency that led to the disciplinary action.

Prior to proposing or implementing disciplinary action, managers and supervisors should first **consult** their department Service Delivery Manager, the top human resources employee in their department and/or their labor negotiator. These persons may assist the department in a review of pertinent facts and decisions regarding when and if to process disciplinary action.

1. Any suspension or termination disciplinary proposal for an employee's misconduct will be reduced to a form of **written correspondence** (*e.g.* letter, email, facsimile) by the appointing authority and a copy will be provided to the employee. The correspondence will set forth the dates of the employee's alleged misconduct, noting when the proposal will be processed and when the employee will have an opportunity to be heard, as set forth below.
2. Processing of disciplinary proposals, including *Loudermill* meetings, for **career service employees** who are alleged to have engaged in misconduct may be held in abeyance pending the county's return to normal business operations.

Administrative leave remains available for departments to utilize when departments determine that a career service employee should not return to work pending the outcome of the disciplinary process.

3. Processing of disciplinary proposals for **career service exempt employees** (appointed, probationary, term-limited temporary, short term temporary) who are alleged to have engaged in misconduct may be conducted as soon as the department is able to do so or may be held in abeyance pending the county's return to normal business operations.

B. Disciplinary Action for Unauthorized Absences: An unauthorized absence means the absence of an employee from duty without specific authorization. Authorization is obtained via the notification and approval method prescribed by the department or work unit. Certain unauthorized absences during a Pandemic Influenza emergency may result in a reduction in pay and/or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

1. **Pay**

- a. **Hourly employees** who are not exempt from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and the Washington Minimum Wage Act (WMWA), will not be paid for any time that they are absent from work without approved leave.

- b. Employees who are **exempt** from the overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and the Washington Minimum Wage Act (WMWA), will not be paid for any full work day that they are absent from work without approved leave.

2. **Disciplinary Action**

- a. **Hourly employees** may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, for an unauthorized absence, the level of severity of which shall be dependent upon the length of the absence and whether they have been designated as a *first responder*. Should a suspension be imposed, the time period for the suspension may be in any increment, normally 1 to 30 days, depending upon the facts and circumstances.

- b. **FLSA exempt employees** may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, for an unauthorized absence, the level of severity of which shall be dependent upon the length of the absence and whether they have been designated as a first responder. Should a suspension be imposed, the time period for the suspension shall be in one week increments, normally 1 week to 4 weeks, depending upon the facts and circumstances.

- c. Any suspension or termination disciplinary proposal for an employee's unapproved leave of absence will be reduced to a form of **written correspondence** (e.g. letter, email, facsimile) by the appointing authority and a copy will be provided to the employee. The correspondence will set forth the dates of the employee's unapproved absence, noting when the proposal will be processed and when the employee will have an opportunity to be heard, as set forth below.

▶ *A sample email/memorandum/fax is attached at the end of this section.*

3. Processing of disciplinary proposals for **career service employees** who are alleged to be absent without approved leave may be held in abeyance pending the county's return to normal business operations. **Administrative leave** remains available for departments to utilize when departments determine that a career service employee should not return to work pending the outcome of the disciplinary process.
4. Processing of disciplinary proposals for **career service exempt employees** (appointed, probationary, term-limited temporary, short term temporary) who are alleged to be absence without leave may be conducted as soon as the department is able to do so or may be held in abeyance pending the county's return to normal business operations.
5. **Mitigating circumstances** underlying the unauthorized absence may be taken into consideration in any analysis of disciplinary action proposals, including termination. Incidents will be reviewed on a **case-by-case basis**.
6. Should an employee's unauthorized absences from work for a period of three consecutive days be **sustained and no compelling mitigating circumstances exist**, such may be considered as **abandonment** of the employee's position with the county. An employee who abandons his or her position may be subject to termination.

(Sample Email/Memo/Fax)

INSERT DATE

Transmitted via {method of transmission i.e.,
ELECTRONIC-MAIL(if employee has email)/
HAND DELIVERY/U.S. CERTIFIED MAIL
AND U.S. MAIL}

TO: NAME, TITLE
XX Division
Home Address
Home Address

FM: INSERT NAME,
XX Division

RE: *Loudermill* Opportunity – Recommendation for {SUSPENSION FOR “X”
DAYS/TERMINATION}

Purpose

This is a notice that I propose that you be {SUSPENDED FOR “X” DAYS/TERMINATED} from your position as {TITLE} with the Department. My recommendation is based upon sustained findings that you were absent without approved leave on [list dates].

Proposed Discipline

The department director will make the final decision concerning my proposal that you be {SUSPENDED FOR “X” DAYS/TERMINATED}. Prior to rendering a decision on the {SUSPENSION/TERMINATION} recommendation, you are entitled to a *Loudermill* meeting with the Director. In light of the current Pandemic Influenza emergency, the meeting will be held in abeyance until approximately [date].

The purpose of a *Loudermill* meeting is to give you an opportunity to provide the Director with any information you feel will assist him or her in rendering a decision regarding the {SUSPENSION/TERMINATION} recommendation. The information presented may be verbal or written and will be considered by the Director before he or she makes the final disciplinary decision. The meeting is purely optional on your part. If you do not wish to have a *Loudermill* meeting, you may decline to present information or you may present written materials for the director’s consideration.

A representative from Human Resources and a management representative from {THE DIVISION} may also be present. Your {GUILD/UNION} representative may attend and present information on your behalf. Outside legal counsel is not permitted.

I have received the original and one copy of this letter advising me of my *Loudermill* rights and options on this date. My signature does not necessarily signify an acknowledgment of guilt or acceptance of the recommended action.

Signature

Date

Time

cc: *Union representative*
 Human Resources Service Delivery Manager
 Labor Negotiator, Human Resources Division
 Personnel File [employee name]

Section 16 Communication and Consistent Messaging

Major recommended changes: *None.* This section sets forth many useful reminders and suggestions on effective communication.

Major consideration: None.

Significant issue: With the aid of central service agencies, departments and agencies will be responsible for educating their employees and ensuring that communications personnel are trained for emergency communications.

Preplanning: Departments not only need to identify key internal and external stakeholders but the methods that will be used to communicate with them. Departments, together with Labor Relations, need to communicate to labor unions and employees that certain provisions of their respective collective bargaining agreement may be suspended.

One of the key elements in responding to any disaster, including a Pandemic Influenza emergency, is effective and timely communication. King County departments must plan their internal communications strategies *now*, before the crisis. Sound and thoughtful communications will be required before, during and after Pandemic Influenza emergency. This section provides guidance on internal communications planning and strategies.

When communicating to their employees, agencies should coordinate closely with their department public information officer and the King County Executive's communications director to ensure that county wide messages align.

- A. Understanding the **core values of communications** is a fundamental goal of the county's response to a Pandemic Influenza emergency. This goal is to provide clear, consistent, candid communications to employees and agencies. This goal applies to communications at every level, from the Executive's Office to departments and divisions.
1. As departments contemplate and develop communications, they should adhere to these **guidelines**:
 - There will be a great demand for accurate and timely information that will provide guidance and ease anxiety. There will be a need to build and maintain trust.
 - Know your stakeholders, and develop a communications strategy for each one. Different types of information will need to be communicated to different audiences.
 - Basic messages may change over the duration of the emergency. Departments will need to develop a phased communications plan that can be partially or fully implemented as needed.

- There may be a need to counteract the circulation of conflicting information, misinformation and rumors.

B. **Assessing department communications resources and needs** -- Before a potential Pandemic Influenza emergency strikes, departments shall assess their communications strengths and weaknesses.

1. **Communications resources**

- Determine whether adequate human resources are available during all phases of a Pandemic Influenza emergency. Remember, a Pandemic Influenza emergency may last for several months. Departments must ensure that they will have the **people available to implement** a sustained communications plan. Prepare for resource contingencies by training extra staff for emergency communications responsibilities.
- Identify and communicate to others which employees have **authority to communicate** directly with employees.
- Communicate which employees who have **authority to issue news releases** or communicate with the media.
- Schedule **crisis communication training** for all employees who will have a communications role.
- Establish procedures that will ensure **technology** such as networks and servers are readily available, tested, and backed up. Ensure access to laptops, fax machines, and other hardware for appropriate personnel. Provide risk communications priority over standard business use.²²

2. **Communications needs**

- Develop and regularly review a Pandemic Influenza emergency communications plan.
- Develop policies to implement the communications plan and to deploy resources during a Pandemic Influenza emergency.
- Familiarize key management with available communications resources.
- Prepare basic templates and other communications materials in advance, and update them during a Pandemic Influenza emergency as needed.
- Monitor the effectiveness of communication messages, vehicles, and timing and refine them as necessary.

C. By **educating your employees** through early and ongoing communications, departments can reassure their employees and assist in protecting their health.

1. The county and departments should tell employees about the threat of a Pandemic Influenza emergency, and describe the steps they are taking to prepare for it.²³

²² See Section 6 of this manual for guidance on telecommuting.

²³ Public Health – Seattle & King County will provide guidance and information on the Pandemic Influenza threat.

2. The county and departments should communicate potential changes to personnel policies located in this manual in response to a Pandemic Influenza emergency and must emphasize that these **changes apply only to the emergency response, not for routine operation.**
3. Departments should communicate changes in business culture in response to a Pandemic Influenza emergency. Changes may include social distancing, increase in telecommuting or suspension of non-essential functions.
4. Departments should communicate the importance of staying home if employees are ill or have Pandemic Influenza symptoms.
5. Departments should **distribute practical information** on maintaining a healthy work environment. For example, the Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control provide materials that demonstrate the simple steps employees can take to protect themselves and their families. Materials are also available that illustrate good respiratory hygiene and describe the signs and symptoms of the flu. Here is an informative website with numerous links on the subject:

▶ <http://www.metrokc.gov/health/avian/index.htm>

▶ *A Pandemic Flu Planning Checklist for Individuals and Families is attached at the end of this section.*

Departments should recognize that a Pandemic Influenza emergency may provide physical, social, and emotional challenges to employees. Morale building communications will be essential.

D. In order to maintain business continuity and **to ensure efficient communications**, departments should:

1. Identify and communicate the department's critical functions and the employees who can perform them. Build depth through **cross-training**. Keep in mind that absentee rates may top 25-30%, so build in the redundancy necessary to ensure that essential work will be done.
2. Ensure that authority (such as hiring or purchasing) is delegated to appropriate employees and that such authority is fully communicated.
3. Update employee phone lists and make sure management has access to up-to-date data.

4. Ask employees to update their emergency contact information.
 5. Develop a list of union business representatives and provide that list to directors managers and supervisors.
 6. Ask for feedback and plan for disability accessibility requirements that may be necessary due to a Pandemic Influenza emergency. These requirements may include additional disability access services or translation services.
 7. Ensure that essential reporting can be maintained. For example, departments should make sure that staff absenteeism can be monitored and reported.
- E. When developing a communication plan, departments should identify their key **internal stakeholders and the methods that will be used to communicate with them**. For most departments, these stakeholders will include:
1. **Employees.** As detailed earlier in this section, departments must establish on-going and frequent communications with employees. Plan to implement two or more communications methods which may include an Internet web site, central telephone number with pre-recorded information, central telephone number staffed by informed communications personnel, e-mails or hard copy (print) materials.
 2. **Department management.** Departments will need to communicate business continuity issues and changes to policies and procedures. Again, plan to implement two or more communications vehicles to ensure the messages are received.
 3. **County management.** In addition to the “business as usual” communications required, departments may need to provide the Executive’s Office or other agencies with a record of decisions made during a Pandemic Influenza emergency and other information such as employee absence rates.
- F. When developing a communication plan, departments should identify their key **external stakeholders and the methods that will be used to communicate with them**. For most departments, these stakeholders will include:
1. **Labor representatives.** Departments should work with their labor negotiators and must establish on-going and frequent communications with labor representatives. Plan to implement two or more communications methods which may include an Internet web site, central telephone number with pre-recorded information, central telephone number staffed by informed communications personnel, e-mails or hard copy (print) materials.

2. **The public.** Departments and agencies will need to communicate business continuity issues and changes to policies and procedures. Again, plan to implement two or more communications vehicles to ensure the messages are received.

Pandemic Flu Planning Checklist for Individuals and Families

(from the Department of Health and Human Services)

You can prepare for an influenza pandemic now. You should know both the magnitude of what can happen during a pandemic outbreak and what actions you can take to help lessen the impact of an influenza pandemic on you and your family. This checklist will help you gather the information and resources you may need in case of a flu pandemic.

1. To plan for a pandemic:

Store a supply of water and food. During a pandemic, if you cannot get to a store, or if stores are out of supplies, it will be important for you to have extra supplies on hand. This can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages and disasters.

Ask your doctor and insurance company if you can get an extra supply of your regular prescription drugs.

Have any nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes and vitamins.

Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they got sick or what will be needed to care for them in your home.

Volunteer with local groups to prepare and assist with emergency response.

Get involved in your community as it works to prepare for an influenza pandemic.

2. To limit the spread of germs and prevent infection:

Teach your children to wash hands frequently with soap and water and model the correct behavior.

Teach your children to cover coughs and sneezes with tissues and be sure to model that behavior.

Teach your children to stay away from others as much as possible if they are sick. Stay home from work and school if sick.

3. Items to have on hand for an extended stay at home:

Examples of food and non-perishables

Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, vegetables and soups

Protein or fruit bars

Dry cereal or granola

Peanut butter or nuts

Dried fruit

Crackers

Canned juices

Bottled water

Canned or jarred baby food and formula

Examples of medical, health, and emergency supplies

Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood-pressure monitoring equipment
Soap and water or alcohol-based hand wash
Medicines for fever, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
Thermometer
Anti-diarrheal medication
Vitamins
Fluids with electrolytes
Cleansing agent/soap
Flashlight
Batteries
Portable radio
Manual can opener
Garbage bags
Tissues, toilet paper and disposable diapers

Section 17

Employee Assistance Program and Making Life Easier

Major recommended changes: *None.* These resources and the processes for contact already exist.

Major consideration: None.

Significant issue: None.

Preplanning: Pre-pandemic briefings may need to occur in order that managers and supervisors are prepared to address the employee stresses that may arise during a crisis and to know when a referral to EAP and MLE should occur.

Should a Pandemic Influenza emergency occur, referral to the King County Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or the Making Life Easier Program (MLE) may be recommended to address personal problems that interfere with work performance. In particular, a crisis such as a Pandemic Influenza may cause stresses that compromise the effective functioning of a work unit. Further, there may be a need for “Critical Stress Debriefing Sessions” to assist a work unit with particular problems or traumatic events.

It is recommended that referral appointments to EAP or MLE during a Pandemic Influenza be allowed during regular working hours during the course of the emergency even if the department does not normally allow use of work time for such appointments, as long as this does not interfere with the operations or functions of the workplace.

A. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The EAP is a service provided through the Human Resources Division for all county employees, regardless of benefits eligibility or career service or temporary employment status. The program’s primary purpose is to assist employees and managers with personal problems that are interfering with work performance.

The program is staffed with two county employees, who are called EAP Coordinators:

Pam Wyss
206-684-2103
pamela.wyss@metrokc.gov

Tom Friedel
206-263-4572
tom.friedel@metrokc.gov

B. Making Life Easier Services (MLE)

The MLE is an external contracted service administered by the EAP program to offer additional related services to employees. MLE services are available to benefits-eligible employees, their dependents and household members.

The county's external EAP contractor, Making Life Easier (MLE), would be available to add or supplement internal EAP capacity, although a community-wide Pandemic Influenza emergency may also reduce their staffing resources.

MLE may be accessed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week at 1-888-874-7290.

Pre-Planning Checklist

Determine Critical Functions and Personnel

- Predetermine personnel who perform first responder functions
- Predetermine personnel who perform essential functions
- Predetermine personnel who perform non-essential functions
- Identify functions that may be suspended while personnel are assigned to more critical roles
- Identify secondary personnel who have the skills and abilities to perform other functions
- Identify other personnel, such as retired employees, former employees, temporary workers, and contract workers, who may be available to perform essential functions
- Identify potential volunteers who have the skills to perform needed departmental functions

Succession Planning

- Predetermine the payroll function as an essential function and have at least 3 employees cross-trained for the payroll function
- Predetermine the human resources management function as an essential function and have at least 3 employees cross-trained for the human resources management function
- Establish and identify a 7 to 10 employee management line of succession plan which lists predetermined alternates for key leadership positions in each department, division or work unit
- Predetermine the individuals who will have the delegated authority to make decisions and *communicate* that succession plan to division and work unit personnel
- Provide for alternate lines of succession
- Provide for access to information and needed items to those in the line of succession (*i.e.* computer passwords, office keys, file cabinet keys, etc.)
- Forward document succession plans to the department director

Review Business Hours, Work Schedules and Mode of Service Delivery

- Review business hours and work schedules to determine if they can be modified in a manner that best promotes social distancing, business continuity or other pandemic response goals during an emergency
- Identify essential functions that may be accomplished via telecommuting and whether the function needs access to all systems and applications or only email and/or voice communications
- Identify technical planning methods such as the World-Wide-Web, Virtual Private Network, Go to My PC, Instant Messenger and teleconferencing to be implemented prior to a Pandemic Influenza emergency
- Pre-complete forms, such as the Position Eligibility Worksheet and Temp Track, for the expected need to hire STT, TLTs and CWs

Develop a Communications Plan

- Communicate with employees about the threat of a Pandemic Influenza emergency, and describe the steps they are taking to prepare for it such as:
 - Potential changes to personnel policies located in this manual
 - Changes in business culture which may include social distancing, increase in telecommuting, or suspension of non-essential functions
 - The importance of staying home if employees are ill or have influenza symptoms
- Distribute practical information on maintaining a healthy work environment
- Update employee emergency contact information
- Identify key internal and external stakeholders and the methods that will be used to communicate with them
- Communicate to labor unions and employees that certain provisions of their respective collective bargaining agreement may be suspended such as:
 - Use of employees outside of the bargaining unit to perform the work
 - Previously approved vacation, compensatory time, leave of absences may be rescinded with minimal notice
 - Employees may be required to report for work with minimal notice
 - Employees' work schedules and/or hours of work may change with minimal notice
 - Employees may be required to telecommute with minimal notice

- Employees may be assigned overtime with minimal notice
- Employees may be assigned special duty with minimal notice
- Employees may be assigned to other work units with minimal notice