

FROM: ANNA NORIEGA, CHIEF PEOPLE OFFICER

DATE: 4/23/20

GUIDANCE FOR HR RELATED MATTERS

EMPLOYEES:

FFCRA:

The Federal Emergency Legislation Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) **went into effect on April 1, 2020**. This legislation expands the family and medical leave act (FMLA+) and provides emergency paid sick leave (EPSL) for specified reasons related to COVID-19 and will be in effect through December 31, 2020. These two types of leave will be provided in coordination with Valley Water's current COVID-19 Emergency Leave with Pay benefits approved through May 3rd.

On Tuesday of this week, HR distributed a poster that outlines an employee's eligibility and their rights under the FFCRA. In addition, HR's Benefits & Wellness Program has created an intranet page specific to the FFCRA. The information can be found on the Benefits Administration's intranet page at <http://aqua.gov/unit/benefits-administration>.

HR has been working on the implementation of the FFCRA in relation to Valley Water's current policies and practices. An addendum to the FMLA Policy, forms, and helpful "job aides" have all been created to assist employees, managers, and HR as they navigate through the requirements of these laws. In addition, two new timesheet reporting codes have been created and are to be used and applied retroactively starting April 1st to properly account for time taken under EPSL and FMLA+. Guidance on how to apply these codes and how they relate to the current COVID-19 codes is provided on the benefits administration page listed above.

In addition, starting the week of April 27th, Benefits staff will be contacting employees who are currently and/or have previously used one or more of the COVID-19 timesheet reporting codes. Benefits staff will be requesting appropriate documentation (if they haven't yet received it) and additional forms for completion. Effective this pay-period (starting this past Monday, April 20th), any employee who is requesting to use the COVID-19 time reporting codes for the first time, must complete and send the Emergency Paid Leave Request Form (FC1853) to Benefits PRIOR to using the codes. This form can be found on the Benefits intranet page.

Additional communication will be sent via an all-user to supervisors and managers outlining the requirements for approving timesheets. No approval of timesheets that include the COVID-19 codes should be made without speaking to Benefits staff and/or having received copies of approved request forms. Any questions regarding the new laws, process for requesting leave or utilization of the COVID-19 codes should be directed to Benefits at ext. 3030 or via email at EmployeeServices@valleywater.org.

ELIGIBILITY FOR PROFESSIONAL REIMBURSEMENT FUNDS UPDATE

With manager's approval, employees can be reimbursed for up to their annual limit for things such as professional associations, conferences subscriptions, etc. Although, policy and MOU language does not

normally allow for online training courses, with so many people at home, last Friday, the Chiefs approved online training and webinars for reimbursement through this program until further notice.

Please note that all other provisions of the policy remain in place (such as prior approval by manager, training must be related to the employee's area of responsibility or development goals, etc.).

For employees represented by the Employees Association (EA): All EA classes are eligible for a reimbursement up to \$300 per year.

For employees represented by the Engineers Society (ES): All ES classes are eligible for a reimbursement up to \$600 per year.

For employees represented by the Professional Managers Association (PMA): All PMA classes are eligible for a reimbursement up to \$350 per year.

Requests for reimbursement must be submitted on FC 680.

For more information on [Reimbursement for Professional Expenses](#) policy, please see: <http://www.aqua.gov/home/scvwd/main/policies/administration/hr/Ad-2.4.113.pdf>

VACATION/SICK LEAVE ACCRUAL WHILE UTILIZING COVID-19 CODES

Effective pay period 10, employees utilizing one or more of the COVID-19 codes below will not accrue vacation or sick leave hours for the hours they are not performing work. As an example, If a person reports a combination of time worked (telecommuting, working onsite and/or in the field) and one or more of the COVID-19 codes, the employee is entitled to accrue vacation/sick leave hours for the time they worked and will NOT accrue vacation/sick leave for the COVID time for which they were not working.

Project # **60601013 "COVID-19"**- "Emergency Leave with Pay" Time Reporting Code # 45

Task Codes:

#0000 - No telecommute work is possible.

#1370 – Sick, or in isolation and unable to telecommute.

#1371 – Quarantined due to an immediate household family member confirmed, or physician suspected of COVID-19 illness.

#1372 – Childcare due to a COVID-19 related school or day-care closure, and unable to telecommute.

UNDER THE FFCRA, employees that are eligible for Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL) can report on their timesheet and accrue vacation and sick leave for up to a maximum 80 hours as allowed under EPSL.

VACATION CASH OUT – EMERGENCY/HARDSHIP PROVISION

Form FC1856 Emergency Vacation Cash Out Request form is now available for employee use. The form is posted on HR's main page: <http://www.aqua.gov/HumanResources>, as well

<http://aqua.gov/forms/fcforms> for easy access. Please refer to Vacation

Policy: <http://www.aqua.gov/home/scvwd/main/policies/administration/hr/Ad-2.4.102.pdf> for more information.

VACATION MAX ACCRUAL EXCEPTIONS STATUS UPDATE

During the Townhall on April 2, management reported that there would be a 6-month window for granting exception requests for employees reaching their maximum vacation accrual. The request will be approved through Oct. 31, 2020.

Employees reaching their maximum accrual by May 31, 2020 have been sent an email from Anna Noriega anoriega@valleywater.org, Upon response from the employee, HR will process all requests for an exception by notifying Benefits, Payroll, the employee and the employee's manager of the approved request.

Those reaching their maximum accrual in June will be sent an email in mid-May, and the process will continue on a monthly basis through October.

Please be aware that it may take two or more pay cycles for the vacation balances to be updated on your paystub.

For questions, please contact Anna Noriega, anoriega@valleywater.org.

MANAGERS/SUPERVISORS:

DAILY CHECK-INS AND NO-SHOW/NO CALL IN REPORTING PROTOCOLS

During the current COVID-19 Pandemic, Valley Water is requiring that all supervisors and/or managers complete daily check-in's with their direct reports by 10am and report the status via the CERT Tool on aqua.gov.

In the event that you cannot reach an employee for the daily check-in, normal no-show/no-call-in procedures will apply. Please contact the Benefits & Wellness Program *immediately* if you are unable to connect with an employee.

Benefits will ensure that Valley Water is following the proper protocols when it comes to employees who do not follow the normal call-in procedures. Benefits will take the proper steps to reach the employee and will keep the supervisor and/or managers up to date on status of the employee as it becomes known. Supervisors and/or managers should not try to contact the employee's emergency contacts, check-in at the employee's home address, or take any further action outside of contacting Benefits.

Please contact Natalie Vye nvye@valleywater.org should you have any questions regarding this communication.

CHARGING OVERTIME WHILE UTILIZING COVID-19 CODES

Overtime is authorized time worked in excess of 40 hours in a workweek or hours worked in excess of the regularly scheduled full-time shift, excluding meal periods.

Employees utilizing the COVID-19 Codes are not eligible to code overtime on the same day, because although all hours are paid, not all hours are worked. Managers should communicate to employees utilizing the codes that time worked outside of the normal shift should be considered make-up time that offsets the usage of the COVID-19 codes, and will not be approved for overtime pay. Make-up time may be utilized within the same workweek, and is captured on form FC-1641, found here:

<http://aqua.gov/forms/fcforms/fcsearch?keys=1641&=Search>.

SUPPLEMENTAL WORKFORCE

Based on data derived from CERT, HR Staff has taken steps to identify auxiliary workforce at Valley Water, including staff that is unable to telecommute based on normal job duties, and other potential staff that could be reassigned to support essential work assignments, projects, or tasks and provide supplemental support to units or programs.

This staffing data will be monitored and maintained by HR throughout the shelter-in-place to address on-going staffing resource gaps across Valley Water.

Managers that have supplemental work support needs should submit an email to EOCFinance@valleywater.org. Examples of why you are requesting this assistance should include, but is not limited to, work that you are not able to complete due to staff shortage, vacancies, pending temporary worker requests that remain unfilled or special needs like EOC support.

The ability to provide the supplemental work support will depend on the work identified, the ability to get IT equipment, and the skill set of staff that are available to telecommute.

The email to EOCFinance@valleywater.org should provide as much of the following information as possible to assist HR in determining whether there is an available employee who can perform the requested work:

1. What specific tasks do you require be done?
2. What types of abilities (knowledge, skills, experience) would a person minimally need to complete the work assignment(s)?
3. How many weeks would you need assistance? (1-2 Weeks, 3-4 weeks, through the COVID-19 crisis?)
4. Where does the work assignment(s) need to be performed? e.g. on-campus, field, from home.
5. What specific equipment/tools will be required to perform the work?
6. Would you be able to provide training and/or guidance to the employee on the work assignments?
7. What additional comments/concerns do you have that will help us with the matching process?

Upon receipt of staffing requests, HR staff in the EOC will work with the employee's manager, the employee, and the requesting manager to match available staff to work needing to be completed.

REQUESTING TEMPORARY WORKERS (INCLUDING RETIRED ANNUITANTS)

Prior to submitting a request for a temporary worker, please submit your request to EOCFinance@valleywater.org to determine if an employee can provide supplemental support for your needs.

In the event a supplemental workforce match is not available, please follow the process below to request temporary workers, including retired annuitants.

Temporary Employee Process Overview During COVID-19 Event

Hiring Process:

1	Complete Request for Temporary Staffing Assignment: Form FC_1630 <i>Note: as part of the form, you will be required to obtain all necessary approvals/signatures as well as ensure that you have accounted for the employee in your unit's budget. Email approvals are accepted during this shelter and place.</i>
2	Send the completed form to Recruitment (Laurel Hanchett) via email; retain a copy for your records. Contact IT (Mike Cook and Chris Cannard). Currently there are no laptops for temps/interns. Make sure you have a plan in place and the temp will have work to complete without laptop or VPN. Contact your space coordinator to give them a heads up.
3	Recruitment will distribute the form to Valley Water's temp agencies, who will send qualified resumes to Recruitment / the Hiring Manager <i>Note: Hiring Managers are welcome to reach out to their own networks independently to solicit resumes for the position, as well.</i>
4	Screen resumes and select top candidates for Zoom/Phone interview <i>Note: HR recommends interviewing a minimum of 3 candidates.</i>
5	Submit desired interview questions to Recruitment <i>Note: Recruitment can help provide interview questions upon request, as well.</i>
6	Partner with Recruitment to form interview panel of 2 VW employees
7	Sign Interview Guidelines
8	Agencies schedule candidate interviews
9	Hiring Managers conduct interviews candidates and make a selection
10	Complete Hiring Justification: Form FC_1799
11	Send the completed form to Recruitment via email; retain a copy for your records
12	Temp Agency makes the offer to the candidate and conducts background check usually taking 7-10 business days. There is currently a delay because some courthouses have limited staff.
13	Contact your space coordinator to ensure adequate desk space and IT setup for your temp.
14	Candidate starts at Valley Water in person or from home- schedule an appointment with security to get their badge. Work directly with the temp to figure out first day logistics and unit training.

Involuntary Separation Process:

1	Contact Laurel Hanchett and let her know why the employee should be let go <i>Note: Temporary staff are not employees, and therefore Labor Relations is not involved in the separation process. However, separated temporary workers will occasionally file complaints, so HR suggests having documentation as a backup and general good practice.</i>
2	Laurel Hanchett will contact the Temp Agency to notify them of the Temporary Worker's end of their assignment. Laurel will also send a notice out to IT, Security, etc. of the end of the assignment.
3	The Temp Agency will contact the temporary worker and inform them that their assignment has ended. <i>Note: Typically, the Temp Agency will call the temporary worker after he/she has left for the day to inform them that their assignment has ended. Do let Laurel know if the temporary worker has any personal items remaining at Valley Water and she will let the Temporary Agency know so arrangements can be made for picking the items up.</i>

Retiree Annuitant Process Overview*

Hiring Process if the annuitant retired from Valley Water:

1a	Contact Laurel Hanchett to let her know you are interested in bringing back a retired annuitant from Valley Water for a temporary assignment. During the COVID-19 event, the six-month waiting period for a retired annuitant returning to Valley Water is waived. Laurel will contact IT (Mike Cook and Chris Cannard), Labor Relations and Benefits on your behalf (information needed on FC 1799). Contact your space coordinator to give them a heads up.
1b	Complete Request for Temporary Staffing Assignment: Form FC_1630, and Hiring Justification: Form FC_1799 and memo. <i>Note: as part of the form, you will be required to obtain all necessary approvals/signatures (COO-A signature is required) as well as ensure that you have accounted for the retiree in your unit's budget.</i> Effective the week of April 20 th , Forms FC1799 SELECTION JUSTIFICATION and FC 1630 REQUEST FOR INTERN/TEMPORARY STAFFING ASSIGNMENT are available as Seamless.gov documents.
2	Send the completed form to Recruitment via email ; <i>Email approvals are accepted during this shelter and place.</i> Retain a copy for your records.
3	Temp Agency makes the offer to the candidate. The retiree must complete paperwork through the temp agency, but no background is required.
4	Contact your space coordinator to ensure adequate desk space and IT setup for your new hire
5	Candidate starts at Valley Water in person or remotely- schedule an appointment with security to get their badge. Work directly with the temp to figure out first day logistics and unit training.

* **NOTE:** As of March 4, 2020, the 960-work hour limitation for retired annuitants is suspended from the date the state of emergency was declared until the state of emergency is lifted.

Please remember that if your temporary worker has ended their assignment due to maximizing their hours or lack of work, notify Laurel Hanchett with the worker's last day. It is important that this be done timely to ensure that appropriate notice goes out across Valley Water that the temporary worker no longer has access to facilities, equipment or systems.

If you have any questions regarding any aspect of this process, please email Laurel Hanchett at lhanchett@valleywater.org.