

Request for Board Action Details

File #: 2020-599

Type: Administrative Item **Status:** Passed

In control: Board of Commissioners

On agenda: 12/22/2020 **Final action:** 12/22/2020

Title: Extension of Paid Extraordinary Pandemic Event Leave Memoranda of Agreement

Sponsors: Human Resources

Indexes:

Code sections:

Attachments: 1. 2021 MOA Extension of Use of PEPEL, 2. Resolution

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
12/22/2020	1	Board of Commissioners	approved	Pass

Sponsor: Human Resources

Title

Extension of Paid Extraordinary Pandemic Event Leave Memoranda of Agreement

Recommendation

1. Authorize the extension of the Memoranda of Agreement for Paid Extraordinary Pandemic Event Leave (PEPEL) benefits to enable staff to use PEPEL hours remaining on December 31, 2020 for COVID-19 related absences.
2. Authorize new employees employed after December 31, 2020 to access a one-time benefit of up to 80 hours of PEPEL leave (pro-rated for part-time staff) for COVID-19 related absences.
3. Authorize the Chair and County Manager to execute the Memoranda of Agreements as agreed to with individual bargaining units which are in form and substance with the attached representative document.
4. Authorized the County Manager to retain the discretion to end or modify PEPEL leave as necessary until the Board declares an end to emergency declaration for COVID-19, or beyond the end of the emergency period with notice to the Board and the bargaining units, but not to exceed December 31, 2021.

Background and Rationale

On March 13, 2020, Governor Walz declared a state of emergency for the state of Minnesota due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Ramsey County Board declared a local state of emergency related to the COVID-19 pandemic on March 14, 2020. On March 24, 2020 the Ramsey County Board established a COVID-19 related benefit for employees, providing for 80 hours (prorated for part time employees) of Paid Extraordinary Pandemic Event Leave (PEPEL) for certain absences as identified in Memoranda of Agreement (MOA). The MOAs expire on December 31, 2020. As of December 1, 2020, the state of emergency declaration remains in effect. COVID-19 rates of transmission continue to rise and the County workforce is continuing to experience COVID-19 related absences. All federal benefits made available for COVID-19 absences cease to exist December 31, 2020. In an effort to minimize the impact of the ongoing pandemic, Ramsey County seeks to extend the MOAs to permit usage in calendar year 2021 of the PEPEL benefits remaining on December 31, 2020.

County Goals (Check those advanced by Action)

☒ Well-being

☒ Prosperity

☐ Opportunity

☒ Accountability

Racial Equity Impact

Once approved, this action will enable the County to continue to provide resident-focused care with consistent service delivery, minimizing the impact to employees of absences due to COVID-19, in particular lower wage employees who include a greater percentage of the racially and ethnically diverse workforce of the county.

Community Participation Level and Impact

This action is strictly operational and internal facing. The result of the action helps support residents by offering effective, efficient and accessible operations. Information on this action is available on Ramsey County's website at

<https://www.ramseycounty.us/your-government/leadership/board-commissioners/board-meetings-information>.

☒ Inform

☐ Consult

☐ Involve

☐ Collaborate

☐ Empower

Fiscal Impact

Sufficient funds are available in the 2021 personnel budget. Extension of this benefit is considered a soft cost, meaning that the employee will be paid for time off due to COVID-19 related reasons up to 80 hours (or pro-rated for part-time employees), but the benefit will not be paid out if unused. Ramsey County may incur costs due to temporarily back-filling a critical position to ensure continuity of operations.

County Manager Comments

The current benefit expires on December 31, 2020 and County Board approval to extend the use of the benefit is required.

Last Previous Action

On March 24, 2020, the County Board approved the support for unrepresented Ramsey County Employees during the COVID-19 Pandemic utilizing PEPEL, and authorized the County Manager to enter into Memorandum of Agreements with labor unions to provide the same support for represented employees (Resolution B2020-066).

Attachments

1. 2021 MOA Extension of Use of PEPEL