




City of Olympia Administrative Guidelines

GUIDELINE #32	
Workforce Management Plan	
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Administrative Guideline #32 – Workforce Management Plan

32 Workforce Management Plan

32.1. PURPOSE: To establish guidelines that will assist both the city and employees in managing workforce changes resulting from a fluctuation in city resources.

32.2. REFERENCE:

32.3. APPLICATION: This Administrative Guideline applies to individuals who are in full-time or part-time regular, FTEs and have successfully completed their probationary period, unless provisions are established otherwise by contract or statute (e.g. Civil Service Rules, Labor Agreements, Individual Employment Contract or Memorandum of Understanding). This policy does not apply to temporary employees, seasonal employees, instructors (as defined in Employment Status 4.5.6), military replacement employees, or independent contractors.

It also does not apply to project funded employees. Project funded positions are for a defined amount of time that is clearly delineated in the offer letter. The time period is represented as a defined period of time or when the project funds are discontinued, whichever comes first. The loss of a project funded position **will not be considered an At Risk position**, even though it might be happening during a time when layoffs of regular employees are being announced or implemented.

32.4. POLICY: It is the policy of the City of Olympia to both employ and do everything possible to retain a highly skilled workforce to deliver City services. When there is a change in available resources needed to deliver services the following principles will form the basis for workforce management decisions.

- We will retain a highly qualified and talented staff.
- Compensation and benefits will remain competitive.
- Each department has unique needs and is encouraged to be creative in identifying alternatives suitable to the department and resource limitations.
- We will not solve long term problems with short term fixes.
- We will abide by all policies, labor agreements, contracts, and federal, state and local laws in all decisions made regarding workforce management.
- Laying-off employees will not be considered until other options have been considered.
- We will treat all employees with respect and compassion.

The City realizes that application of this policy will cause concern amongst employees. The City is committed to providing accurate and truthful information to employees as soon as possible, and will strive to keep employees apprised of the circumstances and status of the activation of this policy. It will be the responsibility of department directors to provide this communication.

32.5. GUIDELINES

32.5.1 AT RISK: City employees whose employment status may be changed as a result of a fluctuation in city resources will be deemed “At Risk”. This status is most likely to occur when reductions are part of the budget planning process. This process requires that the City Manager make recommendations to the City Council as part of a budget process and the City Council ultimately approves, disapproves or modifies the City Manager’s recommendations.

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- a. Department Directors or designees will let employees know as soon as possible if their position may be affected.
- b. At-Risk employees will be asked to complete a packet of information about themselves so that they may be considered for reassignment to positions that are vacant.
- c. Departments are expected to consider at-risk employees first before opening positions to other employees or to candidates outside the city. All guidelines pertaining to “Reassignment”, section 32.5.2 below will be used in making hiring decisions when there are at-risk employees available.
- d. If a reassignment is offered and refused by the at-risk employee, the at-risk employee will no longer be considered at-risk and their status will change to “laid-off” or “reduced in hours.”
- e. Notice of “at-risk” status will be considered as notice for lay-off or other reduction options in this policy.
- f. When final decisions have been made regarding reductions in force, all employees remaining on the at-risk list will be informed of their new status (laid-off, reduced in hours) and placed on the Re-Call list.
- g. Updated information will be shared with the employee as soon as it becomes available. While the city will do its best to keep employees informed, at-risk employees are encouraged to seek out the information they need to manage their employment status.

32.5.2 NON-VOLUNTARY OPTIONS:

32.5.2.1 REASSIGNMENT: Reassignment is defined as moving a current employee, whose position is being eliminated, to another position that is vacant.

- a. The employee must be qualified, at the sole discretion of the department director, to perform the duties of the vacant position or able to be trained to perform the duties within a reasonable period of time.
- b. Reassigned employees may, at the discretion of the department director, be required to complete a new probationary period, up to six months.
- c. Employees being considered for Reassignment may be required to participate in a competitive selection process, if more than one employee is eligible for the vacancy.
- d. Decisions regarding salary for those employees Reassigned will be handled in accordance with Administrative Guideline #5, Personnel Actions, 5.5.2 In-Training, 5.5.3 Promotions, 5.5.4 Demotions, 5.5.5 Transfer to same job class, and 5.5.6 Transfer to different job class.
- e. If the employee, who is being reassigned under the Workforce Management policy, chooses not to accept the reassignment, the employee will be subject to lay-off or other actions deemed necessary to address the change in available resources needed to deliver services.

32.5.2.2 REDUCTION IN HOURS: Reduction in hours is defined as the reduction in FTE or funding of a position. This may apply to one or more positions, be voluntary or mandatory, and temporary or permanent, whatever is deemed as operationally necessary.

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- a.** The City will let affected employees know as soon as possible if their position is to be reduced or potentially reduced in hours. It will strive to give at least 60 days notice.
- b.** The City will continue health and welfare benefits for affected employees at the FTE level extant prior to the commencement of the reduction in hours for 90 days. After 90 days, employee benefits will be maintained and premiums deducted as defined in the Administrative Guidelines, Employment Status, 4.5.3.
- c.** Vacation and Sick leave accruals and Holiday Pay will be accrued on a prorated basis according to the budgeted FTE.
- d.** If funding becomes available so that hours can be restored, the hours will be restored to the positions they were taken from, in whatever manner is deemed operationally necessary by the department director.
- e.** If the employee, whose hours are being reduced, chooses not to accept reduced hours, the employee will be subject to lay-off or other actions deemed necessary to address the change in available resources needed to deliver services.

32.5.2.3 JOB SHARING: In a lay-off/reduction in force situation, the department director may direct two full-time employees who are in the same classification to share a position in order to avoid laying-off one of the two employees. The department director may also ask for volunteers willing to share jobs, or may consider employee-initiated proposals to share jobs when layoffs/reductions in force are considered likely to occur in the near future.

- a.** The City will continue health and welfare benefits to both employees at the FTE level extant prior to the commencement of the job share for 90 days. Vacation accruals, Sick Leave accruals, and holiday pay will be provided at the FTE level associated with the Job Share.
- b.** Job Share employees will be placed on the Recall list for recall to full-time employment.
- c.** If a full-time position in the same classification, as that of the employees who are sharing a position, becomes available, that position will be apportioned between the Job Sharing employees in the interest of returning them to full-time employment.
- d.** If one of the employees participating in a lay-off/reduction in force induced Job Share arrangement subsequently leaves City employment, the remaining employee shall be offered an opportunity to return to full-time employment without competition. If the remaining employee turns down the offer of full-time employment, and management considers full-time employment to be an operational necessity, management may at its discretion attempt to continue the Job Share arrangement or involuntarily discharge the remaining employee. In the event that the remaining employee is involuntarily discharged, that action will be considered a layoff and the affected employee will be eligible for all of the rights, privileges, and benefits described in Section F of this guideline.

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32.5.2.4 FURLOUGHS: The department director may direct an absence from the workplace of up to 3 (three) months per calendar year per employee to address changes in available resources needed to deliver services, relieve employees from duty during drops in workload, or as part of an overall strategy to avoid layoffs. The use of furloughs is to be limited to situations where imminent or expected future revenue shortfalls are expected to result in layoffs/reduction in force; furlough status is not appropriate in the absence of these conditions, as it is not intended to be used as another form of unpaid time off or leave absences that may be necessary due to medical conditions.

- a. Employees will be returned to their positions and FTE level when their furlough is over.
- b. The City will continue health and welfare benefits during a furlough.
- c. Vacation and Sick Leave accruals will continue up to the maximum accrual allowed by policy during a furlough, though employees on furlough status may not use accrued vacation or sick leave, as the intent of placing an employee on furlough status is to reduce overall expenditures.
- d. Furlough status may be rotated among employees in a workgroup as part of an overall expenditure reduction strategy.
- e. Furlough status is temporary and employees placed on furlough can anticipate a return to work in the near future.

32.5.2.5 LAYOFF: In the event of a lack of financial resources and the inability for a department to utilize an alternative employment option, the department director may decide that a City employee will be discharged, involuntarily, from City service.

- a. The City will let affected employees know as soon as possible if their position is going to be eliminated. The City will strive to give at least 60 days notice.
- b. The City will continue health and welfare benefits at the FTE level extant prior to the commencement of the layoff for 90 days after an employee is no longer working in a benefits eligible position for the City. After 90 days, the employee will be responsible for the cost of continuing these benefits through COBRA.
- c. An employee's accrued vacation leave and compensatory time will be cashed out based on the effective date of the layoff and in accordance with provisions and limits found within the Administrative Guidelines or labor agreements.
- d. Employees will be automatically placed on the Recall List.
- e. Laid off employees will have the following resources:
 1. Workshops on health and welfare benefits, resources available to assist with job search, and re-hire procedures will be coordinated and conducted by the Human Resources Department.
 2. Employees will have access to seminars or training on job search tools and techniques.
 3. Employees still in active status may spend work time in job search activities up to 8 hours in any week. More time can be negotiated with the Department Director. Within reason, employees may use City computers, telephones, fax machines and copiers for their job search efforts.

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32.5.3 VOLUNTARY OPTIONS

32.5.3.1 VOLUNTARY ABSENCE WITHOUT PAY: A Voluntary Absence Without Pay Absence (VAWOP Absence) is defined as a period of time during which an employee has voluntarily elected to take a leave of absence from the workplace in an unpaid status, even though the employee may have accrued time available to utilize. A VAWOP must have defined start and end date and may not exceed 6 (six) months. A VAWOP will not result in an official reduction in the employee’s position’s FTE status.

- a. The City will continue health and welfare benefits at the FTE level extant prior to the commencement of the Voluntary Absence Without Pay for 90 days. After 90 days, the employee will be responsible for the cost of continuing these benefits.
- b. Vacation Leave and Sick Leave will not accrue while in VAWOP status.
- c. A VAWOP that exceeds 10 days is considered a break in service. Therefore, an employee’s anniversary date will be adjusted by the length of the break.
- d. If funding becomes available, department directors may conclude a VAWOP Absence earlier than the previously agreed-upon end date, as deemed operationally necessary.
- e. An employee in VAWOP status will still be subject to layoff or other actions deemed necessary to address a reduction in City financial resources.

32.5.3.2 EDUCATIONAL LEAVE: An Educational Leave is defined as a period of time during which an employee has voluntarily elected to take a leave of absence from the workplace in order to pursue a full-time educational opportunity or to practice skills by working in community service related non-profit organization. The employee must have worked for the City as a regular employee for at least 5 years and may not be in a probationary status in their current position to be eligible for a Educational Leave. An Educational Leave must have a defined start and end date, must be at least 6 months and may not exceed one year. An employee wishing to use this option under the Workforce Management Plan must provide proof of the educational effort or paid or voluntary work for a non-profit.

- a. An employee wishing to use this option under the Workforce Management Plan must apply to and receive the approval of their Department Director. The application, which may be in the form of a letter, must contain:
 - 1. A detailed description of the full-time educational opportunity they will be participating in or a description of full time work for a community service non-profit organization.
 - 2. A detailed description of the directly beneficial relationship between the education opportunity or the non-profit work in a way that makes them more successful at their job?
 - 3. A description of how the employee would propose their job to be covered in their absence.
 - 4. A description of the method by which the employee shall provide the Department Director documentation to show that they are participating full time in an education opportunity or working for a non-profit community service organization. This may include proof that they are participating in the educational opportunity or a certification from the non-profit that the employee is working for the non-profit.
 - 5. A description of how the employee would propose to keep in touch with their manager while on educational leave.

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- b. The Department Director may approve the proposed educational leave, approve the educational leave with additional or differing conditions, or deny the proposed educational leave.
- c. The City will continue to pay the City's share of the employee's benefits. The employee will still be responsible for their portion of benefits. If the employee chooses not pay their portion of benefits the benefits will be allowed to lapse. The employee will not be allowed to use any vacation, sick leave, or annual leave accruals. Vacation, sick leave, or annual leave will not accrue while in Educational Leave status.
- d. If an employee chooses to go on Educational Leave they will lose service credit under the DRS. PERS 2 and 3 can purchase the service credit back at a later date but PERS 1 personnel cannot.
- e. This will not be considered a break in service. The anniversary date will remain in place. When the employee returns to work their pay will be adjusted to include step increases or cost of living adjustments that would otherwise have been received had the employee not taken leave.
- f. An employee in Educational Leave status will still be subject to layoff or other actions deemed necessary to address a reduction in City financial resources.
- g. An employee may be allowed to return early to work from Educational leave upon the approval of their Department Director.
- h. Upon returning to work, the employee shall submit a written report within three months that shall demonstrate how the purpose of the educational leave has been met.

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32.5.3.3 NINE MONTH POSITION: An employee may be assigned a nine month position. The employee would work for a total of nine months and take three consecutive months off. The employee would be paid the entire 12 month period. The monthly pay would be calculated by taking the annual pay and dividing by 12 for a monthly total. The hourly rate (for purposes of calculating overtime) will be the annual salary divided by 9, divided by 173.3. Vacation, sick, and holiday hours would be calculated at a .75 FTE rate. The employee would be eligible for Health, Dental, Vision, and Life insurance benefits for 12 months/year at a cost equivalent to a .75 FTE.

32.5.4 RECALL: An employee who was laid off as a result of a change in available resources needed to deliver services may be re-employed in his/her former classification, in a similar classification for which s/he is qualified, in a lower classification within the same series, or any other classification upon City Manager approval. Re-employment may be in any department or work group in the City organization. An employee is considered, at the sole discretion of the department director, to be "qualified" if they are fully able to perform the duties of the job.

- a. An employee who is laid off or has experienced a reduction in hours will be automatically placed on the City's Recall List.
 1. Employees on the Recall List will have reinstatement rights for 2 years from the date of layoff.
 2. City will make reasonable effort to notify the employee of all positions that meet the above criteria.
 3. Employees may remain on the Recall List even if they accept other employment outside the City.

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4. Employees will only be removed from the Recall List, within the 2 year period, if the Human Resources Department receives a written request by the employee to do so.
 5. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure the Human Resources Department has current contact information (address, phone number, etc.)
- b. We will consider employees on the At Risk list and Layoff list simultaneously.
 - c. For 0.50 FTE or greater vacancies, those on the At Risk/layoff list that were in a 0.50 FTE or greater will be given priority over those previously assigned to 0.49 FTE or less, for that vacancy. For 0.49 FTE or less vacancies, all employees 0.10 – 1.00 FTE on the At Risk/layoff list will be considered simultaneously.
 - d. Employees on the Recall List, while searching for another job will have access to a designated workstation at City Hall. Within reason or in compliance with the terms of a specific agreement, employees may use City computers, printers, telephones, fax machines and copiers for their job search efforts. These services are specifically made available to assist the laid-off employee in job search, and no other reason.
 - e. Laid-off employees on the Recall List may be required to participate in a competitive selection process if more than one employee is eligible for the vacancy, which may include pre-employment tests, background checks, a physical examination, drug test, or other process deemed necessary by the hiring supervisor.
 - f. The City reserves the right to determine the job class and rate of pay to which an employee will be assigned if recalled to work. Upon re-hire, salary, benefits, and leave will be based on the policies in place at the time of reinstatement. Salary will be determined based on Administrative Guideline 5.5.2 (promotion), 5.5.3 (demotion), or 5.5.5 (lateral). Vacation accrual rates will be based on the employee's adjusted re-hire date. Any un-accessed Sick Leave will be reinstated upon hire.
 - g. At the discretion of the department director, re-hired employees may be required to complete a new probationary period, up to six months.

32.5.5 **BENEFITS CONTINUATION:** Unless directed otherwise, the City will continue providing health benefits for the employee who is laid off for 90 days after the employee stops work as a full-time regular employee. The effected employee may choose to either continue the benefits for 90 days or receive the cash value of the City's portion of the premium for health insurance (medical, dental and vision). If the affected employee chooses the cash-out option, the employee's benefits will cease on the last day of the month in which the employee is laid off and the cash-out will be considered compensation and therefore taxable. The cash-out option is available only for the employees who are receiving benefits and qualify for the 90 day extension of benefits.

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