

PORT OF SEATTLE
MEMORANDUM

COMMISSION AGENDA
ACTION ITEM

Item No. 6a
Date of Meeting October 13, 2015

DATE: September 23, 2015
TO: Ted Fick, Chief Executive Officer
FROM: Tammy Woodard, Assistant Human Resources Director – Total Rewards
Paula Edelstein, Senior Director, Human Resources
SUBJECT: Motion to Adopt a New Paid Parental Leave Program

ACTION REQUESTED

Request Commission adopt a motion affirming its support of a new paid parental leave program for non-represented Port of Seattle employees.

BACKGROUND

Paid parental leave is a benefit that is increasingly common among local and national employers. While the Port currently maintains a comprehensive leave program for non-represented employees, a specific paid parental leave benefit is not currently offered. In addition to the time off employees are entitled under federal and state laws (12 weeks of unpaid leave), Port employees may use accrued paid time off (PTO) to spend time with new children. In some situations extended illness (EI) can also be used for time off following the birth or adoption of a baby. Shared leave may also be available to employees who have limited amounts of PTO or EI.

A paid parental leave program will explicitly provide paid time off for new parents following the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of a child. This time will be offered in addition to the accrued PTO or EI the employee has available. Human Resources staff intends to incorporate this new program into the 2016 Salary and Benefits Resolution. Thus on January 1, 2016, it will be effective for any qualifying birth, adoption, or foster care placement.

The proposed parental leave plan will offer four weeks of paid time off to both men and women. The time must be taken in one consecutive block and will need to be used within the 12 months immediately following the birth, adoption, or foster care placement. Four weeks of paid leave will ensure Port employees have time away from work to bond with and care for their new child. This leave will be in addition to accrued PTO and employees will be able to decide if they take Parental Leave before or after their PTO, and how much of their available PTO they use in conjunction with their Parental Leave.

While limited data is available on paid parental leave plans offered by local employers, the available information indicates that plans, where they exist, vary considerably in how much paid parental leave is available to employees. For example, City of Seattle offers four weeks, King

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County is considering offering up to twelve weeks, REI offers two weeks, and Weyerhaeuser offers none.

The proposed four week plan for the Port's non-represented employees has an estimated annual cost of \$250,000 based on an estimated 32 eligible non-represented employees each year. The factors considered in determining the estimate of eligible employees include: the births reported on the Port's self-insured medical plan for 2013 and 2014, the assumption that the same percentage of employees covered by the Group Health medical option will have babies each year, an assumption for annual adoptions and foster care placements, and an average 2016 non-union salary of \$101,587.

We anticipate this new program will help enhance the Port's reputation as an employer of choice among current and future employees with the skills and abilities to help the Port achieve its mission.

ATTACHMENTS TO THIS REQUEST

- Motion of the Port of Seattle Commission endorsing a new paid parental leave program.

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS

- None