



CITY OF AUBURN 2020 FURLOUGH LEAVE PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

1. *What is the difference between furlough days and personal holidays?*

Traditionally, a furlough day is a day of leave without pay. It affects the employee's pay check in the pay period in which it is taken and by the amount of the leave taken. Therefore, the more leave that is taken in any given pay period, the greater the impact on the employee's pay check.

The City has adopted an alternative to the traditional furlough in order to minimize the impact on any one specific pay check. The City will evenly spread the cost of forty-six (46) hours throughout the remainder of 2020. In essence, the City is having the employee buy forty-six (46) hours of furlough leave. These 46 hours of leave will be added into your floating holiday bank (for a total of 62 hours).

2. *How many hours of furlough leave must I take?*

Furlough leave must be pre-approved by the employee's supervisor or next level supervisor if the immediate supervisor is not available. Supervisors may only approve the use of this furlough leave if it does not create overtime or additional cost to the City.

A total of 46 hours must be taken during the calendar year. Non-exempt employees may use furlough leave in a minimum of one (1) hour increments.

3. *When can these furlough leave hours be used?*

Furlough leave hours must be used between May 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020.

4. *What happens to furlough leave hours if they are not used by December 31, 2020?*

Furlough leave hours not used by December 31, 2020 will be forfeited. Floating Holiday hours not used by December 31, 2020 will also be forfeited.

5. *What is the maximum amount of furlough leave hours that an employee can take at one time?*

An employee may take up to the full 46 hours of furlough leave at once with the supervisor's approval.

6. *Can an employee remain on an alternative work schedule while taking his/her furlough leave?*

Yes, employees may remain on an alternative work schedule.

7. *How do I code the furlough leave hours on my time card?*

The 46 hours of furlough leave hours will be “loaded” into your floating holiday bank at the beginning of May, 2020 (for a total of 62 hours). You will schedule them with your supervisor just as you would any use of floating holidays and record them the same cell on the time sheet. See Question 1 for further information.

8. *Will I accrue annual leave and sick leave while on furlough leave?*

Yes. Employees will continue to accrue annual leave and sick leave, at the same rate, while on furlough leave.

9. *How will my health care insurance benefits be impacted by the furlough leave program?*

Your health insurance will not be affected by the furlough leave program.

10. *How will the furlough leave impact my payroll deductions?*

Since your gross salary is being reduced by 3.79%, PERS, Social Security, Federal Income Tax, etc. and any other payroll deduction that is a percentage of your earnings will be reduced accordingly.

11. *Will the vacation accrual maximum be lifted to allow employees to carry over more than two years accrual at the end of 2020?*

No. Excess vacation accrual will be considered on an individual, non-precedent setting basis, depending on the circumstances, in accordance with the past practice of the City.

12. *Will the furlough leave days impact my PERS service credits?*

No. Employees must be paid a minimum of ninety (90) hours per calendar month to receive a full month of PERS service credit. Since employees will be paid for furlough leave hours used, this should not affect the employees' PERS service credits.

13. *Will the furlough leave days have any impact on overtime calculations?*

Overtime is based on 1.5 times the hourly rate. Since the hourly rate will be reduced, overtime pay will be reduced accordingly.

14. *Can I increase overtime to make up for the decrease in my pay due to furlough leave days?*

No. Furlough leave is designed to reduce the payroll expenses to the City. Although managers and supervisors can approve overtime for operational reasons, he/she cannot authorize overtime due to use of furlough leave.

15. *Can I check e-mail, voicemail, or perform other work while I am on furlough leave?*

No. Non-exempt employees may not perform any work while on furlough leave.

16. *Will the furlough leave days extend orientation periods for employees?*

No. However, management retains the right to extend the orientation period based on performance issues in accordance with City policy.

17. *Will employees hired in 2020 have to participate in the furlough leave day program?*

Yes. New hires will be subject to a pro-rated portion of wage reduction and furlough leave usage during the effective period. Employees hired during the first half of the pay period (the first 7 days) will be required to participate in the furlough leave for that pay period. Those hired in the second half of the pay period will be required to participate in the furlough leave program beginning the next pay period.

18. *Can I voluntarily cash out or substitute my annual leave, comp time, etc., in lieu of participating in the furlough leave program?*

No. Substituting accumulated leave balances does not assist the City in reducing expenses.

19. *Can temporary employees or consultants fill in for me while I am on a furlough leave day?*

No. Furlough leave is designed to reduce expenses. Hiring temporary agency workers or consultants will offset the savings realized from the furlough leave program. In addition, managers can not authorize use of furlough leave where additional expenses would be incurred by the City.

20. *Will Department Heads also participate in the furlough leave program?*

Yes. All unaffiliated employees will be participating.

21. *What is the Retirement Commitment and Furlough Exemption Form and how does it affect me?*

Employees who have committed to retiring from the City on or before December 31, 2020 will be exempted from the furlough leave program by providing a written request for exemption to the Human Resources Department. If for some reason the employee's actual retirement/separation occurs after December 31, 2020, the employee must take 46 hours of leave without pay, or have 46 hours deducted from his/her cash out leave accruals during the first pay period of January 2021 or prior to the employee's separation, whichever come first. Once the Furlough Exemption & Retirement Commitment form is

received by the Human Resources Department, the City will not reduce the employee's wage rate and the employee shall not receive the 46 hours of furlough leave.

22. *What if my supervisor/manager won't let me take furlough leave time off that I request?*

Scheduling of furlough leave is like scheduling vacations or floating holidays. It is subject to management approval to ensure there is adequate coverage for the work unit. In addition, managers cannot approve furlough leave which would increase costs to the City. Employees may request that furlough leave be substituted for previously approved vacation or comp time. Managers are being encouraged to allow employees to use furlough leave whenever possible.

23. *Can I volunteer to take more leave without pay than the forty-six (46) hours of furlough leave designated in this program?*

That depends on the employee's position and the operational needs of the department. Leave without pay will not be approved until all furlough leave is used. If approved, additional leave without pay is an additional cost savings to the City's payroll expenses. However, employees must understand that additional leave without pay will be deducted from the employee's pay in the payroll period in which it is taken. It will not be spread throughout the remainder of the year.

24. *When will pay be restored?*

The furlough leave program is planned for the remainder of 2020. Once the City has more definitive data on which to make budget projections for 2021, a decision will be made and employees will be notified.