

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS  
ACTION AGENDA SUMMARY

DEPT: Chief Executive Office

BOARD AGENDA # \*B-11

Urgent  Routine

AGENDA DATE April 14, 2009

CEO Concurs with Recommendation YES  NO   
(Information Attached)

4/5 Vote Required YES  NO

SUBJECT:

Approval to Implement the Voluntary Time Off (VTO) Policy

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Approve the implementation of a Voluntary Time Off (VTO) Policy.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The proposed Voluntary Time Off (VTO) policy will provide a new process for regular full-time County employees to request a reduced work schedule with a corresponding reduction in salary. County departments may utilize this policy to reduce salary costs in an effort to meet departmental budget targets and to potentially reduce the need for reductions-in-force (RIF). Potential salary savings will vary by County department and will depend upon the number of individual employees volunteering to work reduced work hours with a reduced salary.

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS:

No. 2009-227

On motion of Supervisor Monteith, Seconded by Supervisor Chiesa  
and approved by the following vote,

Ayes: Supervisors: O'Brien, Chiesa, Grover, Monteith, and Chairman DeMartini

Noes: Supervisors: None

Excused or Absent: Supervisors: None

Abstaining: Supervisor: None

1) X Approved as recommended

2) \_\_\_\_\_ Denied

3) \_\_\_\_\_ Approved as amended

4) \_\_\_\_\_ Other:

MOTION:

ATTEST:

  
CHRISTINE FERRARO TALLMAN, Clerk

File No.

**DISCUSSION:**

The purpose of the Voluntary Time Off (VTO) Policy (see attached) is to provide uniform guidelines for all County departments in implementing a voluntary time off program for regular full time County employees. This program will provide County Department Heads the discretion to implement Voluntary Time Off (VTO) procedures as a cost savings measure during times of fiscal uncertainty. This cost savings measure may also help reduce the need for reductions-in-force (RIF).

Under the proposed policy, regular full-time County employees may voluntarily request to his/her Department Head participation in unpaid VTO as a reduced work schedule. VTO may include a minimum four hours per pay period to a maximum of 32 hours per pay period, but may not exceed 104 hours per fiscal year. County Department Heads are responsible for determining if the proposed VTO Policy is a viable option for the department based upon individual employee requests and department service demands. Once the employee has received approval from the Department Head, the individual employee's VTO schedule may be implemented.

Employees leave time accruals will not be affected by participating in VTO. Health insurance will continued to be fully covered provided the employee works a minimum of 22 hours per week per existing County policy. Retirement service credit will be calculated on an hour for hour basis consistent with current policies for reducing service credit for unpaid time. County seniority will not be affected by participating in this program. The specific details of this draft policy are included in the attached draft policy.

Existing County policy provides a process for full time employees to request a reduced percentage work schedule with a corresponding reduction in leave accrual benefits. The proposed VTO policy will not replace the existing percentage employment policy, but will provide for an alternate plan with reduced impacts to employee leave accruals for the first 104 hours of VTO per fiscal year. Reduced work schedules exceeding 104 hours in the fiscal year will continue to be administered through the existing percentage work schedule policy.

The proposed VTO policy has been reviewed with County departments and negotiated with labor representatives in a formal meet and confer process. Implementation of the new policy will begin immediately upon approval of the Board of Supervisors in an effort to identify potential voluntary salary savings for departments in Fiscal Year 2009-2010. County staff has also worked with departments and labor representatives to evaluate proposed agreements for employee furloughs for additional cost savings opportunities in next fiscal year. Proposed furlough agreements are currently being evaluated by individual bargaining units and will be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors in the coming weeks upon ratification by individual employee groups.

**POLICY ISSUE:**

The implementation of a Voluntary Time Off (VTO) Policy will support the Board of Supervisors' priority of maintaining the Efficient Delivery of Public Services through anticipated fiscal savings for County departments.

**STAFFING IMPACT:**

Direct staffing impacts will vary by department. Departments will utilize the proposed VTO policy where possible to reduce employee salary costs on a voluntary basis.



**STANISLAUS COUNTY  
BOARD OF SUPERVISOR'S RESOLUTION  
RESOLUTION #2009-227  
VOLUNTARY TIME OFF (VTO) POLICY  
APRIL 6, 2009**

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**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide uniform guidelines for all County departments in implementing a voluntary time off program.

**VOLUNTARY TIME OFF POLICY**

It is the policy of the County that County Department Heads have the discretion to implement Voluntary Time Off (VTO) procedures as a cost savings measure to assist County budgets and to help reduce the need for a reduction-in-force (RIF).

Regular full-time County employees may voluntarily request unpaid VTO as a reduced work schedule. VTO may include a minimum four hours per pay period to a maximum of 32 hours per pay period, but may not exceed 104 hours per fiscal year. Employees requesting reduced work schedules exceeding 104 hours per fiscal year may utilize the existing provisions of the County's Percentage Employment Policy (Tab 10, page 7 of the personnel manual).

Employees approved for VTO will be required to sign an agreement to confirm the total number of hours in the fiscal year they will go unpaid. This agreement is to assist the Department for budget planning purposes and may only be changed during the fiscal year if approved or required by the Department Head or designee (exceptions may be provided if the employee can demonstrate a financial hardship such as loss of other family income, etc).

If the County implements a mandatory furlough program during the same fiscal year an employee has participated in the VTO program, the employee shall be eligible to use the VTO as credit towards the mandatory furlough requirement.

**GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE VOLUNTARY TIME OFF POLICY**

The following guidelines apply to the County's VTO Policy:

1. No form of salary compensation may be taken in lieu of the unpaid voluntary time off hours, including sick, compensatory, and/or vacation time.
2. County seniority would not be affected. VTO is not considered a break in service for the purposes of calculating seniority under the County's Reduction-in-Force Policy. Employees' evaluation dates, including probationary review dates and eligible step increases will not be changed based on participation in the VTO program.

3. Scheduled VTO days may not result in the need for any other employee to work overtime/comp time or create any additional cost to the department. VTO eligibility would typically not include posted positions which require another employee to backfill behind them (detention facilities, etc).
4. Health benefits would continue as if the VTO was not in place provided the employee receives a minimum of 22 paid hours per week.
5. Leave time accruals (vacation, sick leave, etc.) would not be impacted by the use of VTO.
6. Retirement service credit and contributions would be calculated on the actual hours worked when an employee elects to participate in the VTO program. The VTO hours of the work week that are not worked, will not be eligible for purchase as a retirement service credit. A "year of service" will be calculated as set forth in Government Code section 31640.5.
7. Vacation cash outs will not be considered in the same fiscal year an employee participates in the VTO program. If the employee provides a documented retirement date in the same fiscal year, the Department Head shall approve vacation cash outs provided the employee meets all eligibility criteria for cash out.
8. VTO agreements will be documented on forms provided by the Chief Executive Office and must be approved by the employee and Department Head or designee prior to the implementation of the VTO schedule.
9. VTO shall not be scheduled on a paid County holiday. Existing holiday provisions shall not be impacted by participating in the VTO program. Employees utilizing VTO during the same pay period as a paid County holiday are entitled to the same level of holiday pay provided in their existing MOU.