



M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Joya Hayes, Human Resources and Civil Service Director

THRU: Anne Morgan, Interim Deputy City Manager

DATE: December 9, 2021

SUBJECT: Paid Parental Leave for Public Safety Personnel

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide requested information per the Fiscal Year 2022 Approved Budget Rider regarding Paid Parental Leave for Public Safety Personnel.

The City Council issued a Budget Rider directing the City Manager to develop implementation and funding options to extend parental leave benefits, including new mother provisions and alternate return to work options, to sworn employees of Austin Police Department (APD), Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and Austin Fire Department (AFD).

In response to the budget rider, the Human Resources Department has created the following costing analysis.

Each department has an overtime budget. The cost to potentially backfill the absences for those employees who utilize parental leave, is reflected in Table A and would require a budget increase in order to pay for the increased overtime.

Table A – ESTIMATED Parental Leave Program Annual Backfill Cost (Sworn Employees)			
	APD	EMS	AFD
Backfill Percentage	25%	100%	100%
Total Number of Backfill Hours	60	252	318
Average OT Rate (Current)	\$64.00	\$46.00	\$47.00
Total Direct Backfill OT Cost	\$ 399,360	\$ 336,168	\$ 941,598
Total FICA/Medicare	\$ 30,551	\$ 25,717	\$ 72,032
Total Direct Backfill Costs	\$ 429,911	\$ 361,885	\$ 1,013,630
Total Direct Backfill Cost - All Three Sworn Departments			\$ 1,805,426

For those employees who do not have enough of their own paid leave, the City provides Short Term Disability coverage to all City full-time equivalent (FTE) employees for off-the-job injuries, illnesses, and pregnancies. Additionally, all City FTE employees may participate in the Shared

Leave program where coworkers may donate leave to employees in need.

All employees who meet the eligibility for Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) protection are provided 12 weeks of time off and may use their accrued leave to remain in a paid status. Non-sworn employees are eligible for up to 240 hours of Paid Parental leave (PPL) and can supplement this by using other accrued leaves. Although sworn employees do not receive PPL, they have previously negotiated and obtained higher accrual rates on Sick and Vacation leaves than non-sworn employees.

Staff will be working with public safety department staff on including new mother provisions and alternate return to work options into this program during this years' contract negotiations. As best we can tell this issue was not part of previous negotiations. Recently, AFD received a request from AFA President Bob Nicks that no discussions occur on subjects of bargaining until negotiations. The Labor Relations Office recommends that paid parental leave benefits be left to negotiations for all three sworn departments since this provision would be subject to bargaining.

cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
Rey Arellano, Assistant City Manager