

Draft Supplemental Paid Parental Leave Policy Discussion



Background

- At Council's Strategic Planning Workshop in February 2016, Councilmembers asked staff to return with information on paid parental leave for City employees.
- December 5, 2016, Council discussed this and other external workforce regulations.
- Council directed staff to bring forward a draft policy for discussion.

Draft Supplemental Paid Parental Leave Policy

- This policy would supplement accrued leave banks to ensure employees can take up to 12 weeks paid leave when welcoming a child through birth, adoption or foster care placement.
- The draft policy is in Attachment A of the staff report and substantially mirrors King County's recently piloted and continued program.

Discussion: Existing Leave Benefits

- The size of an employee's leave balance is a function of sick leave and vacation accrued, used and carried over each year.
- Sick leave accrues at 2.4 weeks a year
 - 26 weeks is the maximum balance.
- Vacation is tied to tenure. Accruals range from 2.4 weeks 4.6 weeks (year 1 and year 15 respectively.)
 - 2 years accrual is the maximum carryover from one year to the next.

Discussion: Employee Demographics

- 46% of the workforce have less than 5 years tenure and a leave balance of 4.6 weeks on average.
- 40% of the workforce have 10 years or more tenure and a leave balance of 12 weeks on average.

Discussion: Estimated Value of Supplemental Paid Parental Leave

- Valued between \$50,000 to \$100,000 a year assuming up to three employees access the full 12 week benefit.
- Value is not necessarily added cost.
 - Added cost only occurs if a position has to be backfilled. Otherwise, work is redistributed or delayed.

Discussion: An Equitable Alternative

- An equitable option for all regular employees, rather than solely parents, could include supplemental paid leave for other family matters of parallel importance.
- Federal and State laws address these needs but don't provide paid leave.
- Reasons for taking leave could mirror the FMLA.

Discussion: An Equitable Alternative

- Reasons for FMLA leave, in summary, include:
 - Becoming a parent, caring for an immediate family member with a serious health condition, the employee's own serious health condition, and the exigencies of an impending military leave.
- Staff would recommend that such a policy be substantially mirrored on the suggested policy for Supplemental Paid Parental Leave and if adopted, be reviewed in two years. The alternative draft policy is in Attachment B of the staff report.