

Vacation Carryover or Forfeiture

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PURPOSE

To outline the process for requesting and approving or declining vacation carryover requests.

OVERVIEW: Section 3.12.190(E) of the King County Code provides:

Employees eligible for vacation leave may accrue up to sixty days of vacation leave, prorated to reflect their normally scheduled work day. Such employees shall use vacation leave beyond the maximum accrual amount prior to December 31 of each year. Failure to use vacation leave beyond the maximum accrual amount will result in forfeiture of the vacation leave beyond the maximum amount, unless the appointing authority has approved a carryover of such vacation leave because of cyclical workloads, work assignments or other reasons as may be in the best interests of the county.

It is the responsibility of departmental management to actively educate employees about maximum vacation accrual issues and to administer the work unit in a manner which limits the potential for vacation accrual carryover requests. Likewise, it is the responsibility of each employee to manage his or her workload and vacation usage in a manner which would avoid the potential for requesting a vacation accrual carryover.

PROCEDURES

Vacation carryover requests are approved by department directors and are processed as follows:

1. The employee submits the written vacation carryover request to the division appointing authority. The written request should detail the reason for the request, including the circumstances which prevented him or her from requesting and/or using vacation accruals prior to the end of the year.
2. The division appointing authority reviews the request and verifies the reason for the request. If the division appointing authority concurs, he or she should provide any additional information which may be helpful to the department director's determination, including a description of the circumstances which prevented management of the work unit from avoiding the necessity of a carryover request. The division appointing authority recommends approval or denial, and forwards the recommendation to the department director or designee.
3. The department director or designee reviews the request. The request for vacation carryover may be approved if the department director or designee determines that approving the request is in the best interest of the county. Among the reasons for approving a carryover are cyclical workloads or work assignments that prevented the employee from reasonably scheduling enough vacation to avoid forfeiture. When deciding whether to grant a request, the department director or designee should consider whether the employee has made requests in consecutive years. Also to be considered is whether the employee's manager has managed the workforce in such a way as to make it unreasonably difficult for the employee to schedule enough vacation to avoid forfeiture.
4. The employee and payroll personnel are notified of the decision.

5. All vacation accrual carryover requests must be fully processed no later than December 15th of every year.

Questions concerning an employee's vacation leave carryover may be addressed to the department's Human Resources Services Delivery Manager.

In the event that any provision of this Human Resources Bulletin conflicts with an applicable provision of a collective bargaining agreement or binding past practices thereunder, the latter shall prevail.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Any questions related to this bulletin should be directed to the HR SDMs or to the Human Resources Division.