



Understanding Work-Share: A Supervisor's Guide

❖ Your roles as a Supervisor

- Understanding Workshare process and impacts on employees
- Supporting employees by:
 - communicating important messages about the program
 - steering employees toward resources
 - helping them manage changes in workload
- knowing where the resources are
- ensuring participating employees are informed of deadlines and information
- Approving payroll

❖ Where do I start?

Step 1: Read this document

Step 2: Set up your Work Unit in consultation with the management team in your agency

Step 3: Send communication to all team members

Step 4: Set up meetings to discuss details with team members

❖ Which departments, agencies, or work units are good candidates?

The following are characteristics that would make a work-share program in your department, agency, or work unit more successful:

- » **Available Capacity.** Work can be reduced by 10 percent without resulting in overtime. Participation, which results in overtime, mitigates potential salary savings to the City.
- » **Broad Application.** The work-share plan can be applied to most people or everyone in the work unit. A broad application prevents immediate colleagues from being treated differently.
- » **Seasonal, Hourly, or New Employees.** These employees are not permitted to participate in a work-share plan. Employees must be employed with the City for at least 3 months to participate.
- » **Primarily funded by City/levy funds.** Savings generated on grant, federal, or other externally funded positions will not be available to offset the City's budget deficit; however, these employees should still be allowed access to participate when possible.

You can create work units that capture some, but not all, employees. For example, an agency with field staff working overtime and office administrative staff with available capacity may find a suitable work-share plan that focuses on the administrative staff.

❖ How much of a work hour reduction should I include in my Work-Share plan?

Because extensive use of work-share and other leave can impact an employee's WRS retirement calculations, it is recommended that managers consider 10 percent work hour reductions. If you have a special circumstance where a larger work hour reduction would be appropriate, please contact your human resources analyst.

❖ **Should work unit managers and supervisors also participate in the work-share program?**

Yes. This is an opportunity to lead by example. Where possible, managers and supervisors are encouraged to participate in the work-share plans. Managers with multiple work units participating in Work-Share plans should only participate in one of the Work-Share plans.

❖ **How should managers address workload and work plans under a work hour reduction?**

Supervisors, managers, and directors should plan to slow, pause, or cancel anticipated tasks and projects to reflect a reduction in hours. Supervisors should work with their teams to set new expectations and should clearly communicate the reduction in work.

It is not ok for other employees to work more to offset other employees' work hour reductions.

❖ **How do I address potential differences between staff on my team that are eligible for Work-Share and those who are not?**

The City's overall goal is to prevent layoffs and reduce or eliminate the mandatory furlough hours that would impact everyone. This is a difficult conversation because only a certain percentage of our workforce is eligible.

Acknowledge that it is causing differing reactions from employees – some welcome it, some want it and aren't eligible, and others that don't want it are forced to participate. Please help staff focus on the larger objective of Work-Share participation, which is to take advantage of federal money for the city and reduce the financial burden of furloughs for employees.

Please encourage them to ask questions and if their stress related to the situation is overwhelming or impacting their family, remind them of our EAP resources.

❖ **How do I prove that the Work-Share plan will prevent layoffs?**

Layoff and furlough calculations will be addressed from a citywide perspective by Human Resources and Finance. You do not need to prove that your department's Work-Share plan will prevent layoffs in your department.

The Work-Share program is aimed at the roughly 1,700 general municipal employees in the city. A 10% reduction in hours for the next two months for all 1,700 employees would save approximately \$1.4 million in General and Library Fund spending -- more than enough to close the \$1.2 million budget gap.

The table below shows the savings at various participation rates:

	\$ in millions			
	Participation Rate			
	100%	75%	50%	25%
Total Savings	\$ 2.3	\$ 1.7	\$ 1.2	\$ 0.6
General and Library Funds	\$ 1.4	\$ 1.0	\$ 0.7	\$ 0.3
Other Funds	\$ 0.9	\$ 0.7	\$ 0.5	\$ 0.2

Participation by approximately 700 employees, or a little more than 40% of the workforce, would get us about halfway to the \$1.2 million goal.

Greater participation in the Work-Share program now will reduce the number of mandatory furlough days. It also gives participating employees the opportunity to benefit from the \$300 weekly federal pandemic unemployment compensation that is available until mid-March.

❖ How do FLSA exempt employees need to manage their time while on a Work-Share plan?

FLSA-exempt employees are compensated based on total work effort and are not eligible for overtime. If they participate in a Work-Share plan, they should effectively reduce their hours worked and not exceed the new weekly amount.

❖ How do FLSA non-exempt employees need to manage their time while on a Work-Share plan?

FLSA non-exempt employees are compensated based on hours of work performed and are eligible for overtime. While on a workshare plan, FLSA-exempt employees may not work more than 38.75 hours or 40 hours, depending on their classification, **less the Work-Share reduction**. For example, an employee with a 38.75 full-time appointment on a 10 percent work-share plan should work no more than 34.875 hours. During the hours when employees are on a Work-Share reduction, they may not check email, schedule meetings, chat over Skype, or engage in any other work-related activities. Even a slight overage may cause the employee to be denied unemployment benefits. Additionally, any time cashed out will be reflected as wages paid, and the employee may also be denied unemployment benefits.

❖ Is participation voluntary or mandatory for employees in a Work-Share plan?

The decision as to which employees will participate in a work-share plan is up to the manager. In general, it is preferable for all employees in a work unit to participate in the plan at the 10 percent reduction level to provide equitable treatment among colleagues and maximize savings.

❖ Will all employees be held harmless or better off under the Work-Share Program?

Most employees will not see a salary reduction and may see a bit of an increase during Work-Share participation. There may be some exceptions with employees at a higher salary level. Employees working multiple jobs may also not be eligible for unemployment compensation.

❖ What is a “Work Unit” as defined by Work-Share and how do I determine one?

Work-Share uses the term “Work Unit” to group employees participating in Work-Share. This group may include more than one worksite, job role, shift, or service group. In general, there should be a reasonable distinction between work units. This may include criteria like:

- » Shifts (day/night)
- » Service or agency as defined in the City budget
- » Field or office-based functions
- » Location

If your entire department is not participating in Work-Share, it may be best to not list your Department as your unit and instead be more specific as this might impact Work-Share eligibility for your entire department if it is needed in the future. If you have questions or would like help determining a Work Unit, as defined by Work-Share, please contact your Human Resources Analyst.

❖ How will Work-Share plans impact employees who are participating in voluntary furloughs?

In general, Work-Share plans should only extend through March 14. Employees should not schedule voluntary furloughs prior to April 1st. This is when the voluntary and any mandatory furlough program is set to begin.

When employees signed up for voluntary furloughs, they committed to taking those days so that the City could plan for the level of mandatory furloughs needed. If the work-share program generates substantial savings, the City will evaluate the voluntary furlough program at that time. At this time, employees should still plan to complete their voluntary furlough program as approved.

❖ How will a Work-Share plan impact employees during vacations, sick time, and holidays?

Vacation, sick time, and holidays are counted as hours worked for the week under a work-share program. The time is reported to the City as usual and is paid by the City. City vacation time or cashing out comp time cannot be used to offset or reduce workshare time.