



# Travis County Commissioners Court Voting Session Agenda Request

**Meeting Date:** Tuesday, August 24, 2021

**Agenda Language:**

Consider and take appropriate action to implement a Travis County employee COVID-19 vaccination incentive program, including receipt of personal leave hours and voluntary proof of vaccination. (Commissioners Travillion & Gómez)

**Prepared By/Phone Number:** Monica Flores-rojo, Administrative Assoc, 512-854-1104

**Elected/Appointed Official or Department Head:** Shannon Weidauer

**Commissioners Court Sponsor(s):** Commissioners Gomez and Travillion

**Press Inquiries:** Hector Nieto, PIO@traviscountytexas.gov or (512) 854-8740

**Background/Summary of Request:**

In response to COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations continuing to surge to pre-vaccine levels, Austin Public Health (APH) raised the area's risk-based guidance to Stage 5, its highest level, stressing the importance of individual responsibility in halting the spike of infection and severe illness caused by the Delta variant.

**Proposal:**

As an incentive for employees to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine, Travis County is offering a voluntary incentive of sixteen (16) hours of Personal Leave for employees who have received the prescribed number of COVID-19 doses (two doses of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine and one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine\*). This incentive is effective beginning September 1, 2021, and will expire August 31, 2023. It will not be paid out upon termination, as Personal Leave is not a vested benefit.

*\*and/or any other future CDC/court approved vaccinations*

**Eligibility:**

All current and future regular, special project and temporary employees who voluntarily submit their request, by showing proof of their valid vaccination card, prior to June 30, 2022, will be eligible for a maximum of sixteen (16) hours of COVID-19 Personal Leave. The leave will be prorated for part-time regular and special project employees based on scheduled work hours. Temporary employees will be prorated based on the same methodology prescribed for COVID-19 Paid Sick Leave under the Families First Coronavirus Act (FFCRA), which is the average number of hours worked during a two-week period.

**Procedure:**

- Employees will have the option to complete an online "COVID-19 Vaccination Incentive Request" form through Employee Self Service (in SAP), and attach an image of their COVID-19 Vaccination Card.

**AGENDA REQUEST & BACKUP MATERIALS DEADLINE:** Agenda requests and backup materials must be added to CivicClerk by **12 noon on Tuesday** in order to be considered for inclusion in the following week's voting session.

- Employees will complete the “COVID-19 Vaccine Incentive Request” form once they have been fully vaccinated.
- The Incentive Request will then be routed to their designated Department Verifier. Each Department Head/Elected Official may designate who has this responsibility within their department; Verifiers will only see information for employees within their respective department.
- Upon verification by the designated Department Verifier, the attached image of the vaccine card will be automatically purged from SAP. The leave hours will be uploaded to the employee’s accrual bucket at least bi-weekly.
- The effective start date of the leave will be the date on which the request is verified.
- For employees who do not have access to Employee Self Service or need assistance, the designated Department Verifier will have the ability to submit the request on their behalf.
- This process safeguards employee information by limiting the number of Verifiers involved while ensuring data integrity, that leave requested is loaded to the correct employee and by verifying employee ID upon login and submission.

**Exemptions:**

- Should an employee have a religious or medical exemption, they will be asked to acknowledge the exemption on the validation form to qualify for COVID-19 Personal Leave hours. Medical exemption will require a physician’s note.

**Staff Recommendations:**

Approve the vaccine incentive program, which provides 16 hours of COVID Personal Leave to Travis County employees who voluntarily show proof of a valid COVID-19 vaccination per the proposed eligibility and procedural processes outlined above.

**Issues and Opportunities:**

NA

**Fiscal Impact and Source of Funding:**

\$4,000,000.00.

Assumptions of costs include:

1. Elected Officials, Election Day Workers, Stipend Employees and Non-Employees (Contractors) are not eligible for incentive leave.
2. The number of hours awarded is based on the Annual Working Hours (% FTE) recorded in SAP. This is usually 2080 for temporary employees, even though

most do not work that many hours and would not receive the full 16 hours of incentive leave.

3. The cost is based on the employee's salary as of August 19, 2021.
4. Grant funding ability is not factored into costs.
5. Costing includes base salary, retirement, FICA, and worker's comp expense

**Required Authorizations:**

Paul Hopingardner, County Executive, Technology & Operations

Shannon Weidauer, Director, HRMD

Travis Gatlin, Director, PBO

**Attachments:**

None