

**City of Tucson  
City Manager Town Hall  
FAQ: April 22, 2020**

TOPIC	Question	Response
<b>Police/Fire</b>	1. Before, police were able to use the 80 hours of city pandemic leave for childcare/homeschool reasons due to closed schools. I'm now being told that while 160 hours of city pandemic leave are available, none of those hours can be used to care for others. Are you considering expanding any of the city pandemic leave for police beyond covid symptoms and covid diagnosis of the employee?	The expansion will be focused on covid symptoms or diagnosis of employee or immediate family members. Pandemic Leave has restrictions for emergency response personnel to ensure essential services can be maintained at safe levels for community response times and overall safety. A revised Sick Leave AD will be issued this week clarifying this question.
	2. Just had to sign a paper saying i was unable to use city pandemic 80 relief for family care. only for myself if sick. what is actually the case	Emergency Responders were provided a notice of leave restrictions and informed they are provided 160 hours of Pandemic Leave for COVID related symptoms or diagnosis of employee or immediate family member. Pandemic Leave has restrictions for emergency response personnel to ensure essential services can be maintained at safe levels for community response times and overall safety. A revised Sick Leave AD will be issued this week clarifying this question.
	3. TFD suppression personnel have been told the 160 hours of pandemic leave is hour for hour, and not rated for the 56 hour schedule like sick/vacation leave. Why is this?	Pandemic Leave Hours for Fire Suppression Employees with a 56-hour schedule will draw down in the same manner as for sick and vacation time (at a factor of 0.66).  i.e., An employee charging 12:00 FRPLV hours will draw down 7:55 hours from the Pandemic Leave Balance.
<b>Vacation Leave</b>	4. With the likelihood of a hiring freeze continuing into the next FY, some areas will find it difficult to allow vacation leave, with the 288-hour maximum vacation leave for some positions being exceeded and the 56-hour alternative leave account cap quickly being reached. Can that alternative leave cap be extended, with the benefit of allowing staff to be able to transfer leave for their colleagues who may need it?	At this time, an extension to the alternative leave cap has not been considered. Thank you for this feedback; moving forward these considerations will be reviewed.
	5. Would it be possible to allow employees choose to accrue extra leave in lieu of some of their pay?	The City Manager's Office is considering many options.

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	(would require higher caps on leave balances)	
<b>ICMA</b>	6. Will the city authorize ICMA to allow employees affected by COVID emergency withdrawals under CARES act? ICMA states they must be authorized by plan administrator.	The City has submitted the appropriate documentation with ICMA-RC to allow the provisions outlined in the CARES act as they relate to your deferred compensation account. It is important to note that the CARES Act provides relief for a “qualified” participant: 1) who is diagnosed with COVID-19; or 2) whose spouse or dependent is diagnosed with COVID-19; or 3) who experiences adverse financial consequences as a result of being quarantined, furloughed, or laid off; having work hours reduced; being unable to work due to lack of child care due to COVID-19; or closing or reducing hours of a business owned or operated by the individual due to COVID-19. Employees will be able to acknowledge that they meet one of the above qualifying criteria by completing a self-certification form provided by ICMA-RC.
	7. Is the merge from ICMA to the new company going to be delayed?	No. Some employees have expressed concern about transitioning from ICMA to Empower for the management of deferred compensation plans. The transition will proceed as planned because the overall value of the market does not have a direct impact on the transition from IMCA to Empower. For more information visit <a href="http://www.retiretucsonaz.com">www.retiretucsonaz.com</a>
	8. Can you change the rules so that an employee can purchase more than 5 years of service credit?	No, the rules cannot be changed, because this rule is set by the IRS. The IRS states that an employee can purchase up to 5 years of credit, but no more. If you have some prior government service and you wish to purchase that time as a service credit that is not subject to the 5-year limit.
<b>Retirement</b>	9. If you're laid off, does that interrupt your pension calculation under TSRS - so that if you're rehired, you now have to work 5 more years for your salary from that period to count toward your benefit calculation?	It depends on whether you have been employed by the City for 5 years in a non-commissioned (i.e. public safety) role. If you have been employed by the City for 5 years or more and are laid off and then re-hired, you can pick up where you left off. This means you continue to build on the time you have put into the system and your benefit will be based on wages earned during the time worked. In other words, the time away from work does not count towards your retirement but it does not count against your retirement either.

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		<p>If have been employed by the City for less than 5 years. You must take your money out of the retirement plan. Your money can be rolled over to an IRA or it can be refunded directly to you. (Refunds may have significant tax consequences.) When you are re-hired you will be starting over.</p> <p>If this circumstance were to occur sometime in the future, the specific details of your employment can have an impact on these two options; the Retirement Office would be able to offer specific information at that time.</p>
	<p>10. Will the retirement funds be affected? <b><i>*NOTE: The response provided is based on TSRS only. Please contact PSPRS for information on Public Safety Personnel Retirement System: <a href="http://www.psprs.com">www.psprs.com</a></i></b></p>	<p>The City's non-commissioned pension system, the Tucson Supplemental Retirement System, will be impacted by the stock market volatility that has persisted since the onset of COVID-19. However, this will not impact the ability to retire presuming all other eligibility requirements have been met.</p> <p>With respect to ICMA-RC retirement accounts/funds, these funds will be impacted, and the severity of the impact is based on the individual investment allocations selected by each participant.</p>
<b>Overtime</b>	<p>11. Will we look at rules for accruing Overtime? Are employees still able to accrue OT even if they didn't work over 40 hrs/week? For example, using 8 hrs of leave on Monday, and working 36 hrs the rest of the week - can employees accrue 4 hrs OT for that week? Seems they should be required to reduce the amount of leave to avoid OT.</p>	<p>Vacation time continues to count for the purposes of overtime, but sick leave does not. To reduce overtime expenditures, department Directors may adjust the work hours of non-exempt employees to meet the demands of the department.</p>
<b>Safety</b>	<p>12. with emphasis on safety how do you protect field employees that still have contact with the general public while working in neighborhoods and why hazard pay hasn't been addressed yet</p>	<p>The decision to require face masks is being made by departments. COVID Premium pay is under consideration.</p>
	<p>13. Emergency personnel need to be prioritized - if they are unable to work, the City could be greatly impacted. Are all hazards being identified and prioritized?</p>	<p>The City's Emergency Operations Center along with individual departments are taking precautions to ensure that emergency personnel can continue to do their jobs safely and effectively.</p>
	<p>14. Heard about two City employees tested positive, what measures are being taken if any of other city employees testing positive, not sure if these two that had tested positive have spread it to other City</p>	<p>The City has established a location to house employees who need to be isolated due to COVID-19 exposure or infection. Learn about more at <a href="https://www.tucsonaz.gov/files/pdfs/Isolation_Request_Procedure.pdf">https://www.tucsonaz.gov/files/pdfs/Isolation_Request_Procedure.pdf</a></p>

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	employees, as we still work on the field with each other?	
	15. I saw a story on the news about a gentleman who is tired of large gatherings in parks. When asked if he has called the police, he said, "No. I prefer to go through the mayor's office." Do the police have the authority to break up gatherings of more than 10 people?	City staff from Parks and Recreation and TPD have been actively working in city parks to discourage the gathering of groups.
	16. Sir, I understand the gloomy perspective and the concern for the pandemic. Why are we looking at the "stay-at-home" order beyond May 1? (still 9 days away and we are running on yesterday's stats, stay at home for most vulnerable) Could there be a better projection of opening some business slower and re-starting our community. We are all aware of "social distancing" and why. Are we cutting off our nose to spite our face?	The City is following the Pima County Health Department's criteria for beginning of phased reduction of COVID-19 physical distancing restrictions. You can find more details on the criteria at <a href="https://www.tucsonaz.gov/files/Pima_Co_Criteria_-_Ph1.pdf">https://www.tucsonaz.gov/files/Pima_Co_Criteria_-_Ph1.pdf</a>
<b>Benefits</b>	17. Is open enrollment for insurance still going to happen next month?	Open Enrollment for benefits will take place from June 1-15. More to come!
	18. Is City of Tucson still considering a change in Health Care providers? One of my physicians is leaving Cigna in July, so I was wondering if we are still shopping around...	The City will be going out to bid for medical, pharmacy and dental benefits for fiscal year 2022 (the plan years that will begin July 1, 2021). We do have one carrier change this year. The Hartford won the long-term disability (LTD) contract through a competitive bid process and will become the new LTD carrier July 1st, 2020.
	19. Are we negotiating cost reductions with vendors for continuous maintenance cost and specifically Health Insurance	Yes. Rates are based on actual claims of City participants, expected changes in risk of our group's population, administrative costs, and inflation as it relates to the services that our plans cover. Each year, actuaries perform a thorough analysis to determine the rates that we should pay based on our usage. Negotiations occur until actual rates align with levels that we'd expect. We also go out to bid every 5-7 years in order to understand shifts in industry pricing and in best practices. The City Manager has tasked the Benefits team with looking at alternatives that may offer additional ways to save money going forward. This may include making changes to what services are covered, how services are offered, where they are delivered, and what participants pay at the time of service.

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<b>Furloughs</b>	20. Regarding furloughs or cut in pay are we eligible for unemployment if that occurs	Yes, there are additional Unemployment Insurance benefits available through July 31 <sup>st</sup> through provisions allowed under the CARES ACT if employees are furloughed. The Arizona Department of Economic Security determines eligibility of benefits.
	21. In the case of furlough: Can the The federally funded pandemic leave hours be used to pay salary during furlough time off?	The Pandemic Leave Hours are a separate benefit offered by the City. A furlough would be considered a temporary layoff and is unpaid. However, increased Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits are available through CARES funding to employees that are eligible. If employees are furloughed, information and resources for UI will be made available.
	22. If furloughs are implemented do you know how soon those would take effect? Would those be implemented in similar fashion as the U of A, which was basing the number of furlough days on employee salaries?	The City is aware of the UA furlough plan but has not yet made any decisions in relation to furloughs in our organization.
<b>Pay Implications</b>	23. Several millions of dollars are to be paid out during the recent pay adjustment, some employees received several dollars while others long term employees received nothing, are we going to be asked again to carry the weight of the City while others keep raking in the money, for the most part most of us don't even make 50k , This is not towards Police & Fire I truly appreciate what they do .	The City Manager's Office is considering many options.
<b>Employment</b>	24. If someone is doing a temp assignment somewhere and, in that area, they are lowest on the totem pole, however in their "permanent position" they have higher seniority and still belong to that org #.....how would this affect if layoffs do occur? Wouldn't I be looked at in my previous position and not my temp assignment position?	Layoffs are not being considered at this time; however, the layoff AD serves as the guidelines for bumping rights, seniority and probation. A temporary assignment does not hold probationary rights.
<b>Return to Work</b>	25. Will testing be required for employees to return to work?	Testing requirements for returning to work have not yet been determined.
	26. When we go back to working in office and not remotely. Will we all go back at once or will we maybe rotate office days and remotely to keep contact down in the office?	When city staff return to work and what that return looks like have not yet been determined.

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	27. Could we possibly put some thought into developing "second skill" employees, employees who maintain a skill set separate from their primary duties, in order to support the City in times of need?	Thank you for your suggestion.
	28. If there is a budget cut, what happens to the new hires? Will they be the first to go? 29. If staff cuts happen, would you think Temps and probationary would be the first even if temporary? 30. If layoffs are determined will they be based on seniority or years of service?	While the City will certainly need to make budget cuts moving forward, the nature of those cut has not yet been determined. Budget impacts in relation to staff have not yet been determined.
	31. What is the plan if we go back to work and this virus starts infecting people again?	Working in conjunction with the Pima County Health Department, we will take the necessary actions to mitigate the spread of the virus immediately.
Telecommuting	32. Have we done a study on how much can be saved (for example, utilities) by continuing telecommuting?	No. We have not done a study on cost savings to the City as a result of large-scale telecommuting.
	33. I actually enjoy working from home, is there any possibility that jobs can be done from home permanently? 34.	Work from home options will be explored as an outcome of the current virtual City services arrangement.
	35. Do we have instructions on what to do if we lose the internet? Say Ransom ware. How do we report. Phone tree?	The City has an emergency texting service to communicate with employees. Please make sure you have provided the Executive Assistant in your department the best number to reach you at in the event of an emergency.
	36. Is there potential to save money on real estate assets if people work remotely?	The City will be exploring all opportunities for cost savings moving forward, including this suggestion.
LWOP	37. What about voluntary LWOPs - people could volunteer to take blocks of unpaid leave to lower expenses.	Thank you for your suggestion, all options are being considered.
City of Tucson	38. Will the city be joining other states and municipalities in filing an international lawsuit against the Republic of China for their culpability in our economic devastation?	The City is not currently considering a lawsuit in regard to the pandemic.
	39. Can parents expect to not have Parks & Rec Summer Camp available this year?	The future programing of Parks and Recreation activities, including summer camps, has not yet been determined



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	<p>40. Can you speak a little more about the conversations the COT is having with the Governor's office? Statewide distribution of testing kits, when the Governor anticipates opening, are we working in conjunction with other states surrounding us to design a reopening plan, what are the biggest challenges our State is facing?</p>	<p>The City is following the Pima County Health Department's criteria for beginning of phased reduction of COVID-19 physical distancing restrictions. You can find more details on the criteria at <a href="https://www.tucsonaz.gov/files/Pima_Co_Criteria_Ph1.pdf">https://www.tucsonaz.gov/files/Pima_Co_Criteria_Ph1.pdf</a></p>
	<p>41. What's a non-virtual city?</p>	<p>Where the members of the public and city employees can interact in the same public space to complete business functions.</p>
	<p>42. I work with several people who are calling the stay at home order and the COVID-19 pandemic "nonsense" (that's my work-safe word, not theirs). Is there anything you can say to talk some sense into these people? I don't want to be within 10 miles of them, since I doubt they are taking proper precautions</p>	<p>The City Manager and each of the department directors are expecting all employees to act in accordance with CDC recommendations regarding safe hygiene and social distancing practices during the pandemic.</p>
	<p>43. Do you know what kind of staged opening Tucson will have to get back to a new normal?</p>	<p>The City is following the Pima County Health Department's criteria for beginning of phased reduction of COVID-19 physical distancing restrictions. You can find more details on the criteria at <a href="https://www.tucsonaz.gov/files/Pima_Co_Criteria_Ph1.pdf">https://www.tucsonaz.gov/files/Pima_Co_Criteria_Ph1.pdf</a> Department directors in conjunction with staff from the Emergency Operations Center are currently working to determine what that phased reduction will look like for our facilities and services</p>
<p><b>City of Tucson</b></p>	<p>44. CDC is predicting a 2nd wave next year. Will the City prepare if this does happen?</p>	<p>Yes, the City is aware of the possibility of other waves of COVID and will prepare appropriately.</p>
	<p>45. Is there a "15-20% budget" cut needed?</p>	<p>The City needs to immediately cut expenditures in reaction to the recent revenue losses. However, because the sales tax reporting lags 60 days, the amount of budget cut needed is not yet certain.</p>
<p><b>Suggestions</b></p>	<p>46. Maybe just to help figure everyone's budget, wouldn't it be a good idea for someone to take note of who and how many are actually retiring this year. If you let people go before knowing this information, it may be able to be avoided.</p>	<p>Thank you for your suggestion.</p>

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	<p>47. Cutting salaries for the employees making a mere \$10/ hr is not a good suggestion. They can barely survive. I would suggest managers and higher-ups who make quite a bit more (ie \$60,000 to \$200,000 per year) do so.</p>	<p>Thank you for your suggestion.</p>
	<p>48. Having the option to work four 9-hour days (36 hours a week) would be something I would be willing to do. (Provided benefits are maintained at full-time).</p>	<p>Thank you for your suggestion</p>
	<p>49. I would like to suggest that the City actually cut the fee's we charge. Advertise that the Tucson is open for business! Thought there is that we would get more folks paying the fee's instead of charging less people more. Your thoughts?</p>	<p>Thank you for your suggestion. The City has currently tabled all discussions regarding fee increases previously scheduled for this Budget cycle</p>