

Frequently Asked Questions About the Furlough

- **What is the purpose of the furlough program?**

Due to a 41 billion dollar shortfall, the state needs to reduce spending. The furloughs are intended to decrease the need for layoffs, though layoffs are also proposed as a means to recoup necessary budget dollars.

- **Have the Federal Receiver and the Coleman Court agreed to the furlough plan which reduces court ordered salaries?**

DPA met with the Receiver's office and the Coleman principles. Neither have they have produced a court order to block the furlough program.

- **How will the furlough program affect my salary?**

Your salary of record will remain the same. However, your gross pay will be reduced by two days, approximately 10%.

- **How will 24 hour facilities determine the days to be taken for the furlough program?**

The state proposes giving workers in 24 hour facilities two 8-hour days each month to be used at the workers discretion with approval from the workers supervisor. The time is to be taken within 24 months from the expiration of the furlough program.

- **Can workers use leave credits instead of participating in the furlough program?**

No, as the purpose of the furlough program is to realize savings.

- **Will the 10% reduction be off the gross or the net of the payroll warrant?**

It will be taken from the gross.

- **What happens if a worker in an alternate work schedule has a regular day off of Friday, which is a designated furlough day?**

During the week of the furlough day a worker would revert from their alternate work week schedule to five eight hour days. The Friday furlough day would complete the 8 hours of a 40 hour work week.

- **How many hours is each furlough day?**

Eight (8) hours. Two furlough days will be equal to sixteen (16) hours each month.

- **Will alternate work week schedules be maintained?**

Yes, they will be maintained and you will revert to a five day, 8-hour per day work week during the week in which a furlough day occurs. Departments may submit plans to DPA requesting to stay open five days per week during furlough weeks if they choose to do so. There is no guarantee the state will approve the department's request. Departments or divisions that do not close the first and third Friday of each month will be able to provide some flexibility when determining RDO's.

- **What happens when the furlough day falls on a holiday?**

Workers will earn 8 hours of holiday credit which will remain on the books to be used in the future at the workers discretion.

- **How will this program be administered in 24 hour facilities such as prisons and hospitals?**

Workers will accrue two furlough days per month to be taken when feasible. Furlough days that cannot be taken within the same month must be taken within two years following the end of the furlough program. Furlough days will not be cashed out.

- **Will the furlough days affect my retirement?**

Benefits remain the same. Your retirement contributions remain the same (based on your current salary). The furlough doesn't affect payouts for unused leave, service credit, health, dental or retirement benefits.

- **Will the Persability for recently negotiated salary increases be impacted by the furlough program?**

No, it will not be affected.

- **Will Merit Salary Adjustments and step increases be paid?**

Yes, as you move through a salary range you will usually receive a salary increase of 5%. The exception to that rule would be if a final step in a range does not equal 5% you would receive the value of that step.

- **What happens to the current cap on annual leave and vacation accrual?**

The cap is a negotiable item and can be discussed at the main bargaining table.

- **Will the 10% reduction apply to Recruitment and Retention Differentials that have not been incorporated into the base of a worker's salary?**

The reduction will not apply to R and R's that are separate from a salary.

- **What happens if you work part time and your schedule does not include a Friday?**

The furlough plan will still apply and the amount of time for each furlough day will be prorated according to your time base.

- **Will our workers be expected to shoulder their current workload during the furlough program?**

Workers will prioritize their workloads with their supervisors and will be required to only perform thirty-two hours of work during the furlough weeks.

- **Will telecommute schedules be affected during the furlough program?**

The only impact may be that schedules are changed during the weeks of the furloughs.

- **How will the furlough program affect me if I am in the voluntary PLP program?**

The union may negotiate an early out for our members.

- **What is the timeframe for the furlough program?**

The program is expected to start on February 1, 2009 and continue until June 30, 2010.

- **What are the expected savings to the state from furloughing BU 19 workers?**

The projected savings for 08-09 is \$16 million. The projected savings for fiscal year 09-10 is \$38.4 million. The total saving for the duration of the furlough program is \$54.4 million.

- **Were proposals passed by BU 19 to mitigate the impact of the furlough program?**

AFSCME passed proposals to allow the use of leave credits to mitigate loss of salary; maintain telework and alternate work week schedules; grant a Golden Handshake to eligible workers; and a change from restricted "furlough" days to personal leave days that could be maintained on the books and cashed out at the workers discretion. The state rejected the proposals for a Golden Handshake and for the use of accumulated leave credits to mitigate the loss of salary. The state has taken the proposal for a personal leave program under consideration. The union was told that alternate work schedules and telework assignments will be allowed to continue, with some modification to the schedules during furlough weeks.

- **Will AFSCME meet again with DPA?**

We have not set a date to meet with DPA again. Due to full schedules we are not available to meet until after January 29th when the Superior Court of Sacramento will rule on the unions legal challenge to the Governors Executive Order S-16-08.

- **If I have additional questions where should they be directed?**

Please send your questions to Pam Manwiller at pam.manwiller@ca.afscme57.org.