



# INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

## PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

September 25, 2008

TO: All Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Personnel **Memo #08-22**

FROM: Lawrence H. Sedgwick, Jr. *LS*  
Fire Chief

RE: Departmental Furlough Plan

I would like to first thank everyone for your patience and understanding during the furlough planning process. Economically, this is a very difficult time for us all. While none of us are pleased with the current state of affairs, it is important that we remain positive and continue to provide optimal service to the citizens of Prince George's County.

On September 16, 2008, the Prince George's County Council passed a resolution approving the Furlough Plan proposed by the County Executive. According to the County's Furlough Plan, all "active employees in the classified or exempt service in any County department, agency or office who is entitled to earn annual leave will be required to take leave without pay as a furlough." Full-time employees must take exactly fifty-six (56) hours of leave without pay furlough hours by March 28, 2009, and a total of eighty (80) leave without pay furlough hours by June 20, 2009. The furlough requirement for part-time employees, and other special cases as outlined in CR-81-2008, will be pro-rated.

In accordance with the provisions set forth in the County Resolution, as outlined in the County's Furlough Plan, our Department has developed a Departmental Furlough Plan that specifies the manner in which sworn and civilian personnel shall fulfill their furlough obligation. The Departmental Furlough Plan has been designed to comply with the County's Furlough Plan, while creating the least possible fiscal impact for our personnel.

This is the first time in over a decade that the County has implemented a furlough plan. As a result, the guidelines and parameters that will govern the furlough process are still evolving. It is imperative that all Departmental personnel remain flexible and cooperative throughout this process, as the content of the attached Directive may change.

LHS/kdb/slt

2008.09.25 AFEMSP Memo #08-22 – Departmental Furlough Plan.doc

Attachment



## **FIRE/EMS DIRECTIVE**

### **Furlough Operating Plan**

September 2008

#### **POLICY**

Pursuant to County Resolution 81-2008, all full- or part-time active employees in the classified or exempt service in any County department, agency, or office paid in part or in full by the General Fund and who is entitled to earn annual leave will be required to take leave without pay as a furlough, in accordance with the terms described below.

#### **DEFINITIONS**

##### **Holiday Leave without Pay (HLWOP)**

**Code 084** – Employee's "request" is approved for furlough leave without pay on a holiday

An employee is eligible for an annual leave credit up to 24 hours (hour for hour). Annual leave credit will be posted after January 2010 leave rollover. Holiday compensatory leave awards ineligible for this credit.

##### **Furlough Leave without Pay (FLWOP)**

**Code 085** -Employee takes pre-approved furlough leave without pay. Same treatment as LWOP (004)

##### **Furlough Charge (FCHG) Code 086 -**

Employee works normal schedule. Use this code to adjust bi-weekly pay when an employee has previously worked furlough leave with pay (087) and must fulfill a furlough obligation

##### **Furlough Leave with Pay (FLWP) 087 -**

Employee takes approved furlough "with pay" on normal work day. Employee has opportunity to spread compensation reduction

over "future" pay periods using code 086. Furlough absence must be taken before code 086 can be used (see noted exception).

**Unit** – The term unit used in this procedure refers to a specific work assignment.

Example: Station 801 Day, Station 805 "A" Shift, or Battalion Chief 804 "B" Shift

#### **PROCEDURES**

##### **1. Implementation**

###### **Objective**

This policy is intended to reduce expenditures, while maintaining acceptable resource levels and ensuring that additional expenditures are not incurred. The Department is obligated to avoid situations that create overtime as it will compromise the savings that we must generate.

Employees and members shall not engage in any personal or professional conduct or performance that compromises the Fire/EMS Department's ability to comply with any furlough related mandates, policies, and/or procedures.

###### **General Parameters**

Fifty-six (56) hours of furlough leave must be charged to every employee by March 28, 2009. However, no more than 56 furlough hours may be taken by March 28, 2009. In addition, every employee must use, and be charged, a total of 80 hours of furlough leave without pay by June 20, 2009.



## PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS

Furlough Leave with Pay (FLWP) must be used before a Furlough Charge (FCHG) can be taken. Furthermore, a Furlough Charge may not exceed the number of Furlough Leave with Pay hours.

Exception: Employees may have payroll deductions taken before the approved furlough absence, **only if the employee has given written authorization for the deduction.** Requests must be submitted via the chain-of-command using the attached deduction authorization form, which will be maintained at Fiscal Affairs. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure that the hours coded on their timesheet are consistent with the hours noted on the deduction authorization form.

Personnel shall not exceed 40 hours of furlough per pay period. Furthermore, an employee cannot be required to participate in a furlough schedule that charges the employee more than 8 hours per pay period.

Personnel on a light duty, Injured on the Job Leave, or Family Medical Leave status will be directed on a case-by-case basis to ensure obligations are met.

Personnel returning from or departing to active military service before the end of FY2009 will be pro-rated four (4) furlough hours per pay period. Furthermore, employees starting or concluding active County employment (i.e. new hires and retirees) before the end of FY2009 will be pro-rated four (4) furlough hours per pay period.

Any issues not specifically addressed within this directive will be handled on a case-by-case basis as they arise, i.e., leave donation requests, extended leave, etc.

### Furlough Scheduling Assignments

Furlough participation must comply with the guidelines set forth in County Administrative Procedure 284-B, "Employee Furloughs." Employees will be assigned furlough schedules by their command. Employees assigned to non-operational positions will be afforded wider latitude to exercise the various furlough options.

### Uniform Personnel

Personnel in assignments considered operational will be assigned a furlough schedule by unit. Once assigned to a unit furlough schedule, adjustments can only be approved by the appropriate Lieutenant Colonel.

Operational personnel placed in a non-operational status due to unforeseen circumstances will continue to furlough with their assigned unit, unless administrative guidelines or operational concerns require a temporary adjustment until a return to full duty status.

### Civilian Personnel

All Prince George's County Fire/EMS civilian employees will be afforded the following furlough options:

- Use Furlough Leave in increments of 5 hours per pay period beginning September 28, 2008 (pay period ending October 11, 2008) for a total of 16 pay periods, equaling 80 hours. The employee will be charged 5 hours of Furlough within the same pay period.
- Submit a custom furlough schedule to your supervisor for approval. All parameters herein must be adhered to for a custom schedule to be valid.



# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS

A furlough schedule including leave usage and charges plan must be submitted and approved for each employee by September 26, 2008.

## Station Staffing

Furloughs for Operational personnel will take place from 0700 to 1500 or 2300 to 0700, daily. Specific unit furlough days will be detailed in a separate schedule as set forth by the Emergency Operations Commander.

Battalion Officers shall ensure that Volunteer Chiefs are informed of furlough schedules. Volunteer Chiefs that are able to provide staffing during their furlough periods shall coordinate with their respective Battalion Officer.

Stations that are able to provide transfer companies during any furlough period shall notify their respective battalion officer for assignment, if needed. After 1500 hours weekdays and on weekends, Sixth and Seventh Battalion stations that have transfer companies shall contact the on-duty Fourth or Fifth Battalion officer respectively.

## Responsibility

Majors and Managers are to ensure compliance. All employees and their supervisors are responsible for the accurate accountability of the furlough used and charged to ensure that full savings is realized, to include proper utilization and posting of payroll code and hours each payday.

### 2. Fiscal Affairs

Fiscal Affairs will generate reports as provided by the Office of Finance bi-weekly for review and comparison by command personnel to ensure accountability and

obligations are on track. Review of posted items will be part of the normal timesheet review.

## Conditions and Guidelines

The following conditions and guidelines shall apply:

- All furlough time off and recoveries must be in one-hour increments.
- The FLSA status of furloughed "exempt" employees temporarily changes to "non-exempt" (or FLSA covered).
  - These employees, as well as those currently classified as FLSA covered, who are furloughed for a partial week must refrain from working any overtime hours during pay periods when codes 086 or 085 or 084 are used.
  - Employees who are FLSA-exempt cannot work any overtime during a week in which they are furloughed or have their salary reduced because of previous furlough hours. Employees who receive overtime under a collective bargaining agreement are not affected by this clause.
- When exigent circumstances require work during a furlough period, applicable compensation will apply pending approval by the appropriate Lieutenant Colonel.
- Furlough compliance will be monitored by Fiscal Affairs and each Command by use of the Bi-weekly Payroll Register and an Agency Furlough Report.



## **PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND FIRE/EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDERS**

- Non-operational employees must submit a written request to repay more than 8 hours in single pay period.
- Combined total furlough hours (sum of 084 – 085 – 086) must meet applicable March 28, 2009 and June 20, 2009 requirements.
- The Fire Chief will resolve any furlough deficiencies or non-compliance.
- Furloughed employees will be “held harmless” for leave accruals, pension/retirement credits, and other benefits.
- Furlough repayments due as a result of the use of Code 087 must equal a zero balance by June 20, 2009.

### **Annual and Compensatory Leave Awards**

All full-time non-operational personnel who elect to satisfy their required furlough hours on a holiday designated by County law or union contract will be credited with an amount of annual leave equal to the number of furlough hours taken on the holiday, up to a maximum total of 24 hours.

All part-time personnel who elect to take their required furlough hours on a holiday designated by County law or union contract will be credited with an amount of annual leave equal to the number of furlough hours taken on the holiday, up to a maximum total of 8 hours.

A shift-work employee who is scheduled to work on the holiday, and elects and is approved to use the holiday as a furlough, is entitled to the annual leave award, but this option does not constitute the contractual comp time award, in accordance with Section 7.20 Holiday Pay of the Labor Agreement.

Annual leave credits, as noted above, will be posted to the employee's new annual leave

balance at the beginning of the 2010 leave year, and upon satisfaction of the required leave without pay furlough hours.

### **REFERENCES**

CR-81-2008

Administrative Procedure 284-B

Personnel Law Section 16-229, Furloughs

IAFF Local 1619 (Fire Fighters, Paramedics and Fire Fighter/Medics) Labor Agreement July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2009

FY2009 Furloughs Memorandum to All Appointing Authorities, dated September 24, 2008.

### **FORMS/ATTACHMENTS**

Employee Authorization for Payroll Deduction

## EMPLOYEE AUTHORIZATION FOR PAYROLL DEDUCTION

I, \_\_\_\_\_, authorize Prince George's County, Maryland to  
(PRINT NAME)

reduce my wages by payroll deduction to satisfy the FY2009 furlough requirement. These biweekly payroll deductions may occur before my actual approved furlough leave of absence. The number of hourly furlough pay deductions must adhere to the scheduled indicated below:

<u>PAY PERIOD</u>	<u>HOURS OF PAY DEDUCTED</u>
09/14/08 – 09/27/08	_____
09/28/08 – 10/11/08	_____
10/12/08 – 10/25/08	_____
10/26/08 – 11/08/08	_____
11/09/08 – 11/22/08	_____
11/23/08 – 12/06/08	_____
12/07/08 – 12/20/08	_____
12/21/08 – 01/03/09	_____
01/04/09 – 01/17/09	_____
01/18/09 – 01/31/09	_____
02/01/09 – 02/14/09	_____
02/15/09 – 02/28/09	_____
03/01/09 – 03/14/09	_____
03/15/09 – 03/28/09	_____
03/29/09 – 04/11/09	_____
04/12/09 – 04/25/09	_____
04/26/09 – 05/09/09	_____
05/10/09 – 05/23/09	_____
05/24/09 – 06/06/09	_____
06/07/09 – 06/20/09	_____

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Agency Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date