



# COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 12/20/2022

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File #: 22-1667

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**To:** Board of Supervisors

**From:** Human Resources

**Agenda Section:** Consent

**SUBJECT:**

Modification to New Employee Orientation Format

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct all new County of Humboldt employees, effective January 9, 2023, to attend in-person New Employee Orientation on the first Monday of every pay period, in accordance with the specifications outlined by Human Resources in this report.

**SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

N/A.

**DISCUSSION:**

The Human Resources Department desires to modify the current format for our New Employee Orientation. The County of Humboldt is the best employer in the County, and we want to demonstrate that to our new employees. The current New Employee Orientation is held once per month on the third Thursday of each month via Zoom. All new employees are invited to attend, but they are not required to attend. We have determined several ways that our orientation format can be improved for a better experience for employees and the County as a whole.

The most significant issue with the current format is that orientation could be a much more welcoming and positive experience for new employees. Currently, new employees may start County employment any day of the week, so it is possible that an employee does not attend New Employee Orientation for an entire month after their start date. Further, the current New Employee Orientation is not mandatory. This means that many employees who do not attend orientation are unaware of the important information that we discuss. We want employees to start their County employment on a positive note, so our proposed format requires all employees to attend a mandatory, in-person New Employee Orientation on their first day as a County employee. Attending New Employee Orientation in-person will allow new employees to meet Human Resources staff and the County Administrative Officer face-to-face rather than on a computer screen. Additionally, employees receive a wealth of information about how great the County is as an employer on their very first day at work.

Finally, new employee onboarding paperwork is currently done online in Neogov and is facilitated by the individual County departments. The current onboarding process puts us at risk for non-compliance with different agencies such as CalPERS, US Citizenship and Immigration Services, and the California Franchise Tax Board. We are proposing to centralize the onboarding process by having all new employees complete their onboarding paperwork during the mandatory New Employee Orientation. This will be a significant improvement for the County because Human Resources are the experts on these forms and can ensure they are completed correctly to avoid non-compliance.

To remedy the issues discussed above, our proposed changes to the New Employee Orientation format are as follows and are to be effective January 9, 2023:

- All new hires must start on the first Monday of a pay period. \*
- All new hires must attend New Employee Orientation on their start date.
  - If the first Monday of a pay period is a County holiday, New Employee Orientation will be held on the first Tuesday of that pay period.
- New Employee Orientation will be in-person in the Board of Supervisors' Chambers within the Humboldt County Courthouse and will take place from 8 AM - 12 PM.
- New hires will complete their onboarding paperwork in-person at New Employee Orientation. \*\*
- New hires will schedule benefits appointments with Risk Management during New Employee Orientation.

\* Start date exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis and must be submitted in writing to the Director of Human Resources or their designee, along with a justification for the exception. Reasons for an exception include, but are not limited to the following:

- Compliance issues resulting in liability to the county
- Potential loss of funding
- Critical need that requires a modified start date

If an exception is approved by Human Resources, the new hire must report in-person to Human Resources at Room 100 of the Humboldt County Courthouse to complete their onboarding paperwork between 9 - 11 AM on their start date. The employee must attend the next available New Employee Orientation.

Exceptions will not be approved for start dates later than the second Monday of a pay period, due to payroll processing deadlines.

\*\* County Policy forms will still be assigned in Neogov, and the completion of these forms will still be facilitated by individual departments.

In summation, we request that your board approves the modification to the New Employee Orientation format to provide for a better experience for new employees and to ensure compliance with onboarding form requirements. Studies show that organizations with a strong employee onboarding program can improve employee retention and boost productivity. The County of Humboldt strives to be a high-performance organization and modifying our New Employee Orientation process will help us achieve this.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

N/A.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board's Strategic Framework by investing in county employees.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

N/A.

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board could deny this request to modify the New Employee Orientation format.

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A.

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A.

Meeting of: N/A.

File No.: N/A.