

STAFF REPORT



MEETING DATE:	June 25, 2019
SUBJECT:	Approve Update to SRTA Human Resources Policies and Procedures
AGENDA ITEM:	8
STAFF CONTACT:	Monika Long, Chief Fiscal Officer

SUMMARY:

SRTA's Human Resources (HR) policies and procedures routinely need to be updated to stay current with changing laws and regulations. The 2019 update of the policies and procedures addresses the most current changes. Additionally, the new policies include adding two new employee benefit policies: telecommuting and a supplemental vacation leave program (SVLP).

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the board of directors approve an update to SRTA's HR Policies and Procedures Manual.

DISCUSSION:

Staff has been working with SRTA's HR Committee, HR contract provider (O2 Employment Services), and legal counsel to update SRTA's personnel policies. The attached mark-up version is provided for board consideration. Most changes merely clarify inconsistencies or reflect new state and federal laws; however, there are three areas of substantive change: 1) Telecommuting; 2) Supplemental Vacation Leave Program (SVLP); and 3) Meal Periods.

Meal Periods (5.05.080, Subsection 11) – The meal period policy was updated to bring it into alignment with current practices, and the most up to date regulation applicable to SRTA. Additionally, the new policy allows for more flexibility regarding timing of employee meal periods.

Recruiting and retaining the most skilled and professional staff can be difficult, as remaining competitive with wages offered in the private sector or at other regional planning agencies is a challenge. To recruit and maintain the best employees, SRTA can offer other employee benefits that are cost neutral to the agency. The two new proposed voluntary benefits are summarized below.

Telecommuting (Section 5.05.080, Subsection 12) – The ability for employees to telecommute is added. Telecommuting is a type of work schedule that allows an employee to work at a location other than the Agency's office, such as an employee's home or satellite office. Per the new policy, full-time employees would be eligible to telecommute periodically on a case-by-case basis with approval by their supervisor. The policy does not allow for the establishment of a regular telecommute schedule.

Supplemental Vacation Leave Program (Section 5.10.180) – Employees who voluntarily participate would accrue an additional eight hours of vacation leave credit per month in exchange for a four- and one-half percent reduction in pay. The program is similar to one offered to employees of the State of California.

SRTA employees currently receive vacation leave, based upon years of service, as described in the table below:

Years of Continuous Service	Vacation Hours Accrued Per Hour	Equivalent Days Per Year
0 through 3	.0385	10
4 through 9	.0577	15
10 through 15	.0654	17
16 and thereafter	.0769	20

Employees who have been with SRTA less than four years receive only 10 vacation days per year, which can be challenging for newer employees in dealing with varying family and life circumstances. For example, new employees, single parents, or families with two working parents may use their vacation as fast as it accrues because necessary time off does not qualify for sick or flex time. This SVLP helps employees who would like to accrue more vacation time in exchange for a reduced wage.

The program is cost neutral to the agency. Under the proposed policy, employees who participate would be “buying” into the program; meaning they would be paying for the extra vacation time by opting to receive four and a half percent less pay. Employees who participate will still be subject to the same overall vacation cap for their respective years of employment (78 times the bi-weekly rate of accumulation for a non-management employee). The additional vacation accrual would be subject to the same rules and regulations that govern regular vacation accrual.

Employee participation is voluntary and subject to the executive director’s approval. The SVLP is available to permanent, full-time employees only.

Staff recommends the board of directors approve the update to the HR Manual as attached.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

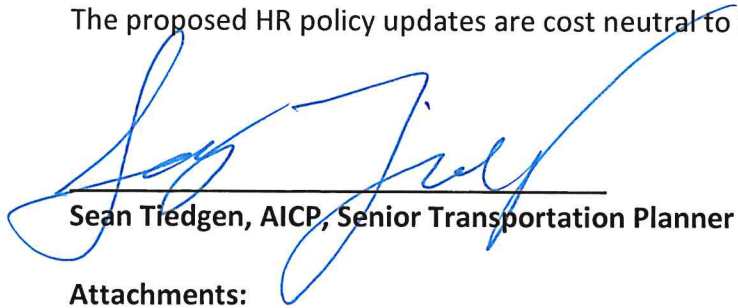
SRTA’s HR Committee reviewed the policy updates, provided feedback, and recommended this item be presented to the board of directors for discussion. SRTA’s legal counsel and human resource’s provider have reviewed and signed off on the updated policies.

ALTERNATIVES:

The board of directors may choose to add to, modify, or decline the proposed revisions. The board of directors may request more information and continue this item to the next board meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The proposed HR policy updates are cost neutral to the agency.



Sean Tiedgen, AICP, Senior Transportation Planner

Attachments:

Attachment A: Policy Excerpt: Meal Periods: Section 5.05.080, Subsection 11; Policy Excerpt: Telecommuting: Section 5.05.080, Subsection 12; and Policy Excerpt: Supplemental Vacation Leave Program: Section 5.10.180

Final Draft Human Resources Policies and Procedures update is available online at:
<https://www.srta.ca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4675/SRTA-Human-Resources-Policies--Procedures-Manual---2019-06-17-DRAFT?bidId=>

Attachment A

5.05.080 - HOURS OF WORK

11. Meal Periods

All non-exempt employees must take at least a 30-minute unpaid meal period during the day if the employee will work more than five hours. This meal period must be taken during the day and not at the beginning or end of the employee's scheduled work hours. During the meal period, the employee must be relieved of all duties.

Non-exempt employees should take their meal period in order to avoid unapproved or unnecessary overtime or compensatory time off. SRTA will provide the opportunity for meal periods, but it is up to the employee to schedule and take the meal period allocated. Non-exempt employees may not waive their meal period for the day without prior written approval by the executive director or his/her designee. If an employee misses a meal period, it is the responsibility of the employee to notify their supervisor and record all hours worked.

12. Telecommuting

Full time SRTA employees report to work at a regularly assigned work site. Telecommuting allows an employee to work at a location other than the conventional office, such as an employee's home or a satellite office. Telecommuting may be allowed on a case-by-case basis, where both SRTA and the employee would benefit from such an arrangement.

- a. The supervisor may approve telecommuting on a case-by-case basis for employees whose circumstances are such that they are able to work but are unable to physically get to the office. This is generally limited to whole workday increments, and infrequent occasions when travel to the work site would not be reasonably possible, however the employee is available to work from another location.
- b. The employee must request the telecommuting schedule in advance on a form provided by SRTA. The form should list specific work tasks to be completed by the employee. No telecommuting may occur prior to the form being completed and approved.

- c. Telecommuting is not a substitute for sick leave, child or elder care. The telecommuter must provide child or dependent care in a manner that allows job responsibilities to be successfully met. The duties, obligations, responsibilities, and conditions of an employee are not changed by telecommuting. The employee should be readily accessible by regular communication methods during their normal working hours.
- d. Telecommuting is available to all non-exempt employees that have completed their first evaluation and are not subject to a corrective action plan.

5.10.180 – Supplemental Vacation Leave Program (SVLP)

A. POLICY

The Supplemental Vacation Leave Program (SVLP) is available to permanent, full-time employees. Participants are eligible to purchase an additional 8 hours of vacation leave per month in exchange for a 4.5 percent reduction in pay. This SVLP helps employees who want to accrue extra time off.

B. GUIDELINES

1. Employees wishing to participate must sign a SVLP agreement.
2. Employee participation in the program shall be on a voluntary basis, subject to the Executive Director's approval.
3. Once approved, employees must remain in the program for at least 12 months. In the case of a financial hardship, an employee's request to cancel participation may be approved on a case-by-case basis. The agency reserves the right to cancel the SVLP at any time with 30 days written notice to the employee.
4. Supplemental Vacation Leave (SVL) shall be requested, accrued and used by the employee in the same manner as regular vacation leave.
5. SVL shall be subject to the same terms, conditions, policies and procedures as regular vacation leave, including the employees normal vacation cap amount.
6. Upon termination from employment, the employee shall be paid for unused SVL in the same manner as vacation leave.