



Levy County Board of County Commissioners
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To: The Board of County Commissioners
From: Mary-Ellen Harper, County Manager
Date: September 16, 2025
Subject: Master Collective Bargaining Agreement between Levy County Board of County Commissioners and Levy County Professional Paramedic and EMTs, IAFF, Local #4069

Florida's House Bill 929

Florida's House Bill 929, effective July 1, 2025, encourages firefighter employers to limit work shifts to a maximum of 42 hours per week, replacing the common 24 hours on duty / 48 hours off duty that is in use in Levy County which is equivalent to a 56-hour work week.

While not a strict mandate, the law encourages limiting standard firefighter shifts to 42 hours per week. This provision acknowledges that excessive work hours can lead to both physical exhaustion and mental stress, potentially compromising both the safety of firefighters and the public. The bill explicitly seeks to move away from the 24/48 schedule model.

Key Provisions of the Proposed Contract

1. 24 hours on / 72 hours off schedule
 - Transitioning Levy County Department of Public Safety to the 24 hours on / 72 hours off schedule, reducing employees from the equivalent of a 56-hour work week to the equivalent of a 42-hour work week. The reduced schedule is still in excess of the traditional 40-hour work week.
 - The primary goal of the schedule change is to create a less demanding work environment through shorter shifts, allowing for better physical and mental recovery.
 - Across the United States, and particularly in Florida, there is a severe and ongoing shortage of first responders, especially paramedics. This crisis is primarily caused by poor retention due to low wages and high burnout, which is not being offset by new recruits. Florida's demand for EMS personnel is far greater than the national average. Population growth, a large number of retirees, and year-round tourism all increase the pressure on emergency medical services. Counties across Florida are now offering sign-on bonuses as high as \$10,000 and actively moving to the 24/72 schedule to recruit new employees.
2. 100% paid health insurance for employees.
3. \$1,000 pay increase for current employees.



Commissioners

Charlie Kennedy, District 1
Rock Meeks, District 2
Desiree Mills, Chair, District 3
Tim Hodge, Vice Chair, District 4
Johnny Hiers, District 5



4. Reduce leave accruals; while this is a cost savings for the County, it is difficult to calculate accurately.
5. Reduction in overtime; reduced from 16 hours average per week to 2 hours per week.
6. Eliminate 12 hours of holiday pay for all union employees for 12 designated holidays in addition to compensation for hours worked on the approved holiday.
7. Prohibit Annual Leave from counting toward Over Time.
8. Eliminate Bonus / Free Sick Day.
9. Eliminate Floating Holiday.
10. Reduce Accrual Banks by 25%.
11. Eliminate Longevity Bonus.
12. All contract changes and first year costs are accounted for in the BOCC approved tentative budget.

Summary

Transitioning to the 24/72 shift is a significant change for Levy County that will require hiring approximately 19 additional personnel but will provide for a healthier and more sustainable work environment for our employees. In return for this modified schedule, employees have agreed to significant concessions that save the county money.

By proactively adopting this anticipated industry-wide schedule change, Levy County will position itself as a leader in the region. Implementing the new schedule ahead of the mandate will give Levy County a competitive edge in recruitment and allow the County to be more selective in the hiring process before other agencies follow with the 24/72 schedule.