

STAFF REPORT



SUBJECT: Extension of COVID Sick Leave

DEPARTMENT: Administration

STAFF CONTACT: Allen Barnes, City Manager

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff respectfully recommends approval of the proposed action as delineated below.

BACKGROUND:

On March 18, 2020, the federal government enacted the Families First Corona Virus Relief Act (FFCRA). That Act required almost all employers of under 500 people to provide an additional 80 of sick-time for employees who are unable to work due to COVID-19. In addition to the 80 hours of COVID sick time, the Act provided that if an employee went beyond the 80 hours, the employer would pay 2/3 of any remaining time the employee is off due to COVID and the employee would be charged 1/3 of the time off to their sick time or vacation bank. The sick leave portion of Act was effective from April 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020. On December 27, 2020 President Trump signed the 5,593 page \$900 billion COVID relief legislation. This legislation did not renew the COVID-19 sick leave.

Even though the vaccines have been approved, there are significant supply chain issues. The State of Texas is tightly controlling the supply of vaccines to cities and counties. The state is determining who is eligible based on its own criteria. There is currently no way to know when the employees of the city will all be eligible to take the vaccine.

FISCAL IMPACT SUMMARY:

Even though we accounted for the Corona Relief Funds through allowable salary costs, we have kept the funds available for Corona Virus related expenses. Any financial impact can be accounted for by these funds. It might be noted that we have spent approximately \$300,000 of the \$1.2MM we received on COVID related programs.

PROPOSED ACTION

1. The City of Stephenville will not require its employees to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. However, the City strongly encourages all employees to take the vaccine when eligible and the vaccine is available.
2. The City of Stephenville will extend all of the provisions of the FFCRA pertaining to sick leave.
3. This extension will not be a reset of the program, but merely an extension.
4. This extension will expire on March 31, 2021.

ALTERNATIVES

Not take action thus requiring employees to take time from their sick or vacation time balance for COVID related absences.