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Date: November 17, 2025

To: All Employees

From: Greg Brockmeyer
Director of Administration

Subject: Temporary Exception to the Employee Benefit Handbook – 2026 Budget Adjustments

To address the 2026 Budget deficit, the County Executive has proposed several initiatives. These initiatives include an incentive to retire, temporary wage reduction of 1%, and strengthened use of Voluntary Time Away.

Dane Co. Ord. §18.24(5)(a) authorizes the Director of Administration to make temporary exceptions to the Employee Benefit Handbook after reasonable notice to interested stakeholders. If concerns regarding the implementation of this proposed exception are raised, I will schedule a meeting with the parties. Interested stakeholders have until the end of business on December 2, 2025 request a meeting with me to discuss their concerns.

2026 Budget Adjustments

Section 1 Temporary Wage Reduction and Additional Holiday Time

1. The Employee Benefit Handbook for all EGs is modified as follow:

SUBJECT: HOLIDAYS

Section 1:

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h. 2026 Additional Benefit Time – Effective, PP1 employees will receive 21 holiday hours. These hours are being provided due to the 1% reduction in salary. This grant of holiday hours is only for 2026 and their usage shall follow the current policies and procedures for using holiday time. For part time employees, the grant of additional holiday hours under this section shall be prorated by their FTE status.

2. The Wage Appendix is updated to implement the 1% salary reduction.
3. This wage reduction ends at the conclusion of PP26 of 2026.

Section 2 Retirement Incentive

1. This Retirement Incentive program is available to all employees who are eligible to retire under the rules of the Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS).
2. To receive this incentive, Employees must:
 - a. Provide notice to Dane County that they intend to retire between December 14, 2025 and April 4, 2026.
 - b. Retire and separate from Dane County by April 4, 2026
 - c. Employees who have previously provided notice of their intent to retire with a retirement date within the window of December 14, 2025 to April 4, 2026 are also eligible for this incentive.
 - d. Employees who have retired and separated from Dane County before this exception is effective are not eligible for the incentive.
3. Employees who separate from Dane County between December 14, 2025 and April 4, 2026 will receive a six percent increase (6%) in their accumulated hours of sick leave, vacation earned, and sabbatical hours. These hours are only available for conversion during retirement. The increase does not apply to accumulated balances of Holiday, Wellness, or Comp Time.
4. The total sick leave, earned vacation, and sabbatical balances may exceed their respective thresholds by virtue of this 6% enhancement.
5. If an employee uses Voluntary Time Away and retires within the December 14, 2025 to April 4, 2026 window, the employee may not use the Voluntary Time Away option to spread out the reduction in pay over the 2026 payroll year.

Section 3 Voluntary Time Away

1. The Employee Benefit Handbook for all EGs is modified as follows:

SUBJECT: VOLUNTARY/LEAVE PROGRAM (UNPAID)

Section 1:

Unpaid Voluntary leaves (referenced below as Program) are permitted under the following conditions:

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- a. Employees who wish to volunteer for the program shall so advise their supervisor **and shall send a copy of the request to the Department of Administration**. A leave of absence form shall be completed prior to the requested dates of leave. This leave cannot be used in place of Family Medical Leave.

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- d. Employees who are not approved for the program by their department head, may appeal by following the grievance procedures of this Handbook. **Department heads shall send a copy to the Department of Administration of all denied requests.**