



**To:** Commissioners, First 5 Ventura County

**From:** Lauren Arzu, Director of Human Resources & Operations (on behalf of the Administration/Finance Committee)

**Date:** September 23, 2021

**Re:** Recommendation to approve updated Employee Handbook

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### **Background**

The Commission approved an updated Employee Handbook in June 2021, and asked staff to further explore the topics of religious holidays and marijuana use. Staff presented these two items, along with vacation, confidentiality, and staff vaccinations to the Administration/Finance committee in September. Based on the Administration/Finance committee's discussion, staff recommends the following updates to the Employee Handbook:

- Giving the Executive Director authority to grant exceptions to the policy requiring employees to wait until they have completed the introductory period to utilize accrued vacation
- Adding a confidentiality policy
- Requiring coronavirus vaccinations for staff

Legal Counsel also reviewed and approved the vaccine mandate. The Administration/Finance committee also recommended that F5VC maintain the existing paid holiday calendar, which is aligned closely with the federal calendar. The committee suggested focusing on performance issues if there are marijuana use concerns. Staff will also continue to research the use of a per diem for travel expenses for later review by the Commission.

### **Recommendation**

The recommended action is to update the Vacation policy in the Employee Handbook and add sections on Confidentiality and Vaccines, as attached.

## **Update to Existing Employee Handbook**

### **Vacation**

Vacation time is a benefit that is earned before it can be taken. It is based on actual hours worked. Employees on any type of leave without pay do not accrue vacation credits. New employees are not entitled to take accrued vacation until they have successfully completed the introductory period. [The Executive Director has authority to grant exception to this 90 day requirement.](#)

## **New Additions to Employee Handbook**

### **Confidentiality Policy**

F5VC employees must keep sensitive information regarding the children and families we serve in the strictest of confidence. Names and identifying characteristics of children and families should only be shared on a “need to know” basis. Personnel, hiring, and certain financial information is also confidential. Employees who disclose or discuss confidential information with individuals not directly related to the situation may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Employees should not discuss children’s developmental needs and family information in public places, including an employee lounge or hallway. This also pertains to conversations off site. Protection of the interests of each child and family, F5VC employees, and the organization is vital in maintaining a standard of professionalism and privacy.

### **Covid-19 Staff Vaccination Requirement Policy**

Effective November 1, 2021, First 5 Ventura County staff are required to be fully vaccinated\* or submit to weekly coronavirus testing (PCR molecular or antigen). Vaccination records are maintained in confidential employee files. Un-vaccinated employees will need to submit test results weekly. Unvaccinated or incompletely vaccinated employees must also observe all other infection control requirements, and are not exempted from the testing requirement even if they have a medical contraindication to vaccination, since they are still potentially able to spread the illness. Previous history of COVID-19 from which the individual recovered more than 90 days earlier, or a previous positive antibody test for COVID-19, does not waive this requirement for testing.

\*Fully vaccinated is at least 14 days from the final vaccination dose, as recommended by the manufacturer.