

Northwest Regional Council - Regular Meeting
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM
December 12, 2024

Hybrid

NWRC – Mount Vernon Office
Cascade Conference Room
301 Valley Mall Way, Suite 100
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Zoom

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82888185069?pwd=JrBay6imgZRs2WgQ5sAVtI7B9cZNw9.1>

Meeting ID: 828 8818 5069

Passcode: 509357

AGENDA -

Agenda Topic	Action Required
1. Call to Order	
2. Public Comment	
3. Announcements	
4. Consent Agenda All matters listed with the Consent Agenda have been distributed to each Council Member for reading and study, are considered to be routine, and will be enacted by one motion of the Northwest Regional Council with no separate discussion. If separate discussion is desired, that item may be removed from the Consent Agenda and placed on the Regular Agenda by request of a Council Member. Consent Agenda: a) Approval of the Minutes, July 18, 2024 b) Approval of June, July, August, September, and October 2024 Expenditure Listings c) 2024 Budget to Actual Report (Jan to Sept 2024) d) Cancellation of Warrants, Resolution #24-02 e) Annual Internal Fiscal System Review f) Routine Contracts and Amendments	Motion to Approve Motion to Approve Motion to Approve Motion to Approve Motion to Approve Motion to Approve
5. Executive Director's Report a) Legislative and Agency Updates b) Funding Review	Information Only Information Only
6. Regular Agenda a) NWRC 2024 Budget, Resolution #24-03 b) Proposed Policy Updates c) Proposed Meeting Schedule	Motion to Approve Motion to Approve Information Only
7. Executive Session a) Executive Director Performance	Information Only

8. Other Issues

County Information Sharing

Verbal Reports

9. Adjournment

Proposed Future NWRC Meetings

April 17, July 17, and December 18, 2025, Venue to be determined

For more information, please contact the NWRC office at (360) 676-6749,
600 Lakeway Drive, Bellingham, WA 98225

**MINUTES OF THE
NORTHWEST REGIONAL COUNCIL
July 18, 2024**

BOARD MEMBERS:

Island County Commissioner Melanie Bacon, San Juan County Council Member Jane Fuller, Skagit County Commissioners Peter Browning and Ron Wesen, Whatcom County Executive Satpal Sidhu, Whatcom County Council Member Mark Stremmer

STAFF: Amanda McDade, Sarah Silvas, Darla Smith, Holly Fletcher-Love, Shu-Ling Sun, Elizabeth Anderson

PUBLIC: none present

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 am by San Juan County Council Member Jane Fuller.

There was no public comment.

Consent Agenda

Motion was made by Whatcom County Executive Satpal Sidhu and seconded by Skagit County Commissioner Ron Wesen to approve the Consent Agenda items a – f; Approval of the Minutes, April 18, 2024; Approval of March, April, and May Expenditure Listings; 2024 Budget to Actual Report; Routine Contracts and Amendments; Resolution #20-02; County Contribution. Motion passed unanimously.

Executive Directors Report

NWRC Executive Director Amanda McDade reviewed the legislative advocacy efforts including:

- \$12 million in funding was approved to support nutrition programs in 2024 to meet the rising costs and rising need. This was one-time funding. The state AAA association (W4A) is asking for \$13 million to continue supporting the nutrition programs for both congregate and home meals.
- The request to fund \$2.58 million for In-Home Case Managers for Long-term care clients without caregivers was not successful. We know that this need will continue to grow as more people are growing older, there are more clients with dual diagnoses, and more younger people need care and are not connected to services. This is compounded by the fact that there are fewer people available to be caregivers. This ask is being refined for the coming legislative session.
- Amanda McDade attended the Governors Aging and Longevity Summit last month. WA state is working to become a more aging friendly state. There was discussion about the aging graphics provided in the packet, the continued shortage of caregivers, and some of the barriers to becoming a caregiver.
- The agency has been looking at joining an insurance pool. While the agency was approved, we discovered the pool didn't provide some of the coverage that we currently have and want to keep. It was determined that the agency should stay with our current insurance provider.
- Amanda McDade informed the Board that we have been working with legal counsel to update client forms to include more specific language to inform clients that we are not a caregiving agency, and that we can not work with POA's that we are unaware of nor have the forms for. The form is being finalized and will then be implemented.

- TSOA is a smaller state program that has been out about 6 years. Amanda McDade informed the group that we will be providing those services for both San Juan and Island Senior Resources as they don't have many clients and have found it difficult to support.
- NWRC has been providing nursing services at the jail for the last 10 years. We are working with the County to determine the best path forward for medical services. While nursing services is not a primary focus of the agency, we have placed a Care Coordinator at the jail. This aligns well with the Agency's mission and is a necessary service.

Regular Agenda

a) WA Cares – Initiative 2124

Amanda McDade reviewed Initiative 2124. The initiative would make participation optional. It is believed if this passed the program wouldn't be funded at a level to make it a viable program. There was discussion about how the model works if WA Cares continues. Amanda McDade explained that WA Cares fits well into everything NWRC does to support our communities with Long Term Care options and care. ADR staff provide benefit counseling and WA Cares would be another benefit option.

b) Proposed Staffing Adjustments (moved to front of meeting)

Amanda McDade reviewed the requested staffing change memo including:

- 2 Care Coordinators due to shifting influences on Medicare plans increasing Care Coordinator Case Loads.
- 1 Care Case Management position due to increasing caseloads. The additional position will assist in keeping caseloads at a ratio of 1:75.
- Reclassify 1 existing FTE Case Manager to a Lead Case Manager in Community Programs
- 1 Agency Administrator role to provide management level support

There was discussion around tracking rates. Peter requested a report at the next meeting on how the costs of an FTE are covered with cases. There was discussion about the cost and availability of funding next year.

Motion was made by Whatcom County Executive Satpal Sidhu and seconded by Skagit County Commissioner Ron Wesen to authorize the proposed staffing adjustments resulting in the addition of 2 FTE in the Care Coordination unit, 1 FTE in the Case Management unit, 1 reclassification to a Lead Case Manager and the addition of 1 FTE Agency Administrator effective August 1, 2024. Motion passed unanimously.

c) Supplemental Budget Resolution #24-01

Executive Director Amanda McDade reviewed the supplemental budget memo.

Motion was made by Skagit County Commissioner Ron Wesen and seconded by Skagit County Commissioner Peter Browning to approve Resolution 24-01 for the 2024 Supplemental Budget #1. Motion passed unanimously.

d) Emergency Response Planning

NWRC is reviewing our Emergency Response Plan. We are looking at our plan and are interested in how it interacts with the counties. There was discussion about emergency planning and how to work with the counties.

County Information Sharing:

Board Members shared current issues in their areas including jail planning, emergency shelter, budgeting, changes in the legal system, and Medical Officers in the 4 areas.

Announcements

None made

Executive Session

An Executive Session was called at 11:45 am to discuss potential upcoming litigation. The Chair estimated the session would last up to 15 minutes.

The regular board meeting reconvened at 11:55 am

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.

Prepared and submitted by:

Darla Smith

Darla Smith, Administrative Manager

NORTHWEST REGIONAL COUNCIL

EXPENDITURE APPROVAL

We, the undersigned Northwest Regional Council, do hereby approve payments in the amount of \$2,309,463.95 this 12th day of December 2024.

June 2024

Month of Expenditures

Amanda McDade
Executive Director

Melanie Bacon
Island County Commissioner

Janet St. Clair
Island County Commissioner

Jane Fuller
San Juan County Councilmember

Christine Minney
San Juan County Councilmember

Peter Browning
Skagit County Commissioner

Ron Wesen
Skagit County Commissioner

Satpal Sidhu
Whatcom County Executive

Mark Stremmer
Whatcom County Councilmember

NORTHWEST REGIONAL COUNCIL

EXPENDITURE APPROVAL

We, the undersigned Northwest Regional Council, do hereby approve payments in the amount of \$2,273,777.70 this 12th day of December 2024.

July 2024

Month of Expenditures

Amanda McDade
Executive Director

Melanie Bacon
Island County Commissioner

Janet St. Clair
Island County Commissioner

Jane Fuller
San Juan County Councilmember

Christine Minney
San Juan County Councilmember

Peter Browning
Skagit County Commissioner

Ron Wesen
Skagit County Commissioner

Satpal Sidhu
Whatcom County Executive

Mark Stremmler
Whatcom County Councilmember

NORTHWEST REGIONAL COUNCIL

EXPENDITURE APPROVAL

We, the undersigned Northwest Regional Council, do hereby approve payments in the amount of \$2,540,133.32 this 12th day of December 2024.

August 2024

Month of Expenditures

Amanda McDade
Executive Director

Melanie Bacon
Island County Commissioner

Janet St. Clair
Island County Commissioner

Jane Fuller
San Juan County Councilmember

Christine Minney
San Juan County Councilmember

Peter Browning
Skagit County Commissioner

Ron Wesen
Skagit County Commissioner

Satpal Sidhu
Whatcom County Executive

Mark Stremmer
Whatcom County Councilmember

NORTHWEST REGIONAL COUNCIL

EXPENDITURE APPROVAL

We, the undersigned Northwest Regional Council, do hereby approve payments in the amount of \$2,294,303.92 this 12th day of December 2024.

September 2024

Month of Expenditures

Amanda McDade
Executive Director

Melanie Bacon
Island County Commissioner

Janet St. Clair
Island County Commissioner

Jane Fuller
San Juan County Councilmember

Christine Minney
San Juan County Councilmember

Peter Browning
Skagit County Commissioner

Ron Wesen
Skagit County Commissioner

Satpal Sidhu
Whatcom County Executive

Mark Stremmer
Whatcom County Councilmember

NORTHWEST REGIONAL COUNCIL

EXPENDITURE APPROVAL

We, the undersigned Northwest Regional Council, do hereby approve payments in the amount of \$2,563,327.41 this 12th day of December 2024.

October 2024

Month of Expenditures

Amanda McDade
Executive Director

Melanie Bacon
Island County Commissioner

Janet St. Clair
Island County Commissioner

Jane Fuller
San Juan County Councilmember

Christine Minney
San Juan County Councilmember

Peter Browning
Skagit County Commissioner

Ron Wesen
Skagit County Commissioner

Satpal Sidhu
Whatcom County Executive

Mark Stremmer
Whatcom County Councilmember



Memorandum

To: Northwest Regional Council
From: Amanda McDade, Executive Director
Date: December 12, 2024
Subject: January through September 2024 Budget to Actual Report

We are pleased to present you with the Budget to Actual Report for the period January through September 2024. Through that period, NWRC earned 75% of projected revenues with 75% of the year elapsed. Overall expenditures for the reporting period are 72% of the annual projections.

Proposed Motion: The Northwest Regional Council approves the January through September 2024 Budget to Actual Report.



Budget to Actual Report January through September 2024

	January - September 2024 Actuals								2024 Revised Budget		
	Clinical Programs	Community Programs	Long-Term Care	Other Subcontracting	Non-Emergency Medical Transportation	Jail Health Program	Other Activities (ARPA, DSP, SSF, and Misc Other)	NWRC Total	2024 Revised Budget	Remaining Budget	% of Budget Used
Revenue											
Grant Revenue	174,490	2,605,447	4,892,434	1,745,287	-	-	923,846	10,341,503	13,272,956	2,931,452	78%
Contract Revenue	4,423,155	-	20,032	60,000	5,468,575	1,345,007	65,237	11,382,005	15,825,353	4,443,348	72%
Local Contributions	-	-	-	-	-	-	107,058	107,058	107,058	-	100%
Interest Revenue	-	-	-	-	-	-	60,348	60,348	75,000	14,652	80%
Miscellaneous Revenue	14,227	-	-	-	17,194	-	3,321	34,741	2,000	(32,741)	1737%
Donations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,500	2,500	0%
Revenue Write Offs	(1,443)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(1,443)	-	1,443	-
Total Revenue	4,610,428	2,605,447	4,912,465	1,805,287	5,485,768	1,345,007	1,159,810	21,924,213	29,284,867	7,360,654	75%
Expense											
Salaries & Wages	2,267,342	1,075,121	2,123,358	67,632	542,425	948,231	345,567	7,369,677	10,395,831	3,026,154	71%
Benefits	951,843	462,312	938,950	25,714	241,041	366,968	142,315	3,129,142	4,318,438	1,189,296	72%
Supplies	9,388	12,229	7,401	278	1,609	1,877	6,430	39,212	85,375	46,163	46%
Professional Services	83,489	11,039	89,371	2,522	28,953	5,940	5,042	226,355	378,419	152,064	60%
Telecommunication	24,933	10,505	21,529	537	2,407	2,864	3,181	65,955	90,000	24,045	73%
Postage	2,972	1,405	3,084	36	453	774	379	9,103	36,250	27,147	25%
Staff and Board Travel	2,995	4,185	4,694	499	1,000	7,357	1,140	21,869	55,242	33,373	40%
Mileage	64,286	8,614	27,251	410	551	1,289	5,522	107,922	157,328	49,406	69%
Advertising	9,199	13,435	3,624	488	835	9,148	1,189	37,919	82,000	44,081	46%
Building Rent	78,656	43,171	95,981	1,739	23,436	4,597	10,896	258,475	338,422	79,947	76%
Misc Rent	5,289	1,524	3,353	75	965	251	409	11,866	19,060	7,194	62%
Insurance	27,484	13,717	26,448	1,131	6,801	11,103	2,141	88,824	119,600	30,776	74%
Utilities	10,158	5,582	12,374	225	3,050	599	1,422	33,410	48,000	14,590	70%
Repairs & Maintenance	35,670	19,482	43,486	798	10,373	2,148	4,665	116,622	182,000	65,378	64%
Miscellaneous	14,816	38,876	6,474	208	1,620	1,594	12,845	76,433	145,328	68,895	53%
Printing and Copying	8,493	5,380	8,736	145	1,163	1,879	1,137	26,932	47,400	20,468	57%
Meals and Refreshments	2,140	631	2,168	53	284	524	301	6,101	5,750	(351)	106%
Staff Training	5,635	2,541	4,077	126	970	2,244	3,382	18,975	105,608	86,633	18%
Small Tools	22,265	7,588	11,740	162	3,216	4,505	1,255	50,732	92,000	41,268	55%
Interfund Transfers	-	(43,051)	12,642	(11,681)	-	-	42,090	-	0	0	0%
Subtotal of NWRC Expense	3,627,053	1,694,285	3,446,740	91,092	871,152	1,373,893	591,309	11,695,524	16,702,051	5,006,527	70%
Subcontracted Services and Supplies	1,277,026	713,527	414,770	1,714,195	4,628,137	-	492,711	9,240,366	12,393,201	3,152,835	75%
Total Expense	4,904,080	2,407,811	3,861,511	1,805,287	5,499,288	1,373,893	1,084,020	20,935,890	29,095,252	8,159,362	72%
Net Revenue Less Expense	(293,652)	197,636	1,050,955	-	(13,520)	(28,886)	75,790	988,323	189,615	(798,708)	521%

**NORTHWEST REGIONAL COUNCIL
RESOLUTION NO. 24-02**

**ORDERING THE CANCELLATION OF CHECKS
MORE THAN A YEAR OLD**

WHEREAS, the Revised Code of Washington, Section 63.30, requires public agencies to report abandoned checks more than a year old to the Washington State Department of Revenue, Unclaimed Property Division; and

WHEREAS, Northwest Regional Council has compiled a list of checks that were issued prior to July 1, 2023, but never presented.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Northwest Regional Council hereby cancel the checks listed below. Payment has been issued to the Washington State Department of Revenue.

Checks issued before July 1, 2023				
Fund	Check No.	Check Date	Payee	Amount
NEMT	9039	7/1/2022	Max Hileman	48.80
NEMT	9041	7/1/2022	Michel McKinnon	55.30
NEMT	9057	7/1/2022	Yolanda Ortiz	114.15
NEMT	9178	7/21/2022	Amy Deutscher	27.30
NEMT	9301	8/4/2022	Leonardo Milian	40.60
NEMT	9442	8/18/2022	Sahar Najibi	69.65
NEMT	9523	9/1/2022	Michel McKinnon	39.55
NEMT	9790	10/6/2022	Sam Villiott	14.70
Jail Health	10763	2/8/2023	Ariel Field	20.96
				<u>431.01</u>

APPROVED by the Northwest Regional Council this 12th day of December 2024:

Melanie Bacon
Island County Commissioner

Janet St. Clair
Island County Commissioner

Christine Minney
San Juan County Council Member

Jane Fuller
San Juan County Council Member

Peter Browning
Skagit County Commissioner

Ron Wesen
Skagit County Commissioner

Satpal Sidhu
County Executive, Whatcom County

Mark Stremmer
Whatcom County Council Member

ATTEST:

Amanda McDade, Executive Director
Northwest Regional Council



Internal control checklist for local governments

This self-assessment checklist has been compiled to assist city/county managers, clerks, treasurers, and auditors to assess their own internal control environment for accounting and financial reporting and to provide guidance in placing controls where weaknesses are perceived. Your entity's system of internal controls includes all of the policies and procedures needed to provide reasonable assurance that your financial information is reliable, that operations within your office are effective and secure, and that you are complying with applicable laws and regulations.

Answer each of the questions by circling "Y" (Yes) or "N" (No) in response to each question.

After completing the questionnaire, scan down your answers in the "Response" column, noting whether they are aligned to the left or right side of the column. The questions that you have been able to answer on the left side indicate the internal control is in place. Your answers on the right side indicate an internal control weakness. This checklist should give you a good indicator of the number and type of internal controls that might need attention in your operation. Please give your auditor or the Washington State Auditor's Office (360) 902-0370 a call if you need assistance.

General	Response	Comments
1. Is management aware that internal control is their responsibility?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> N	
2. Does management show commitment to establishing and maintaining controls?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> N	
3. Does your entity have an organizational chart defining the activities and persons responsible for them?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> N	
4. Are the duties of officials and employees clearly defined and assisted?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> N	
5. Does management consistently exhibit high ethical and professional standards in its conduct, setting the standard for the entire organization?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> N	
6. Are personnel involved in accounting functions required to take an annual vacation?	<input type="radio"/> Y <input checked="" type="radio"/> N	Vacations are highly encouraged and responsibilities are covered by other staff
7. Are accounting functions performed by other personnel during the vacation of primary accounting personnel?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> N	
8. Is other staff trained in the accounting functions to provide backup in the case of vacation or other absence of the primary bookkeeping employee(s)?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> N	
9. Is responsibility for accounting duties ever rotated among staff?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> N	

General		Response	Comments
10.	Is a current, accurate and accessible policy and procedures manual in place, including an official code of conduct/ethics or an official set of policies governing employee conduct/ethics?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
11.	Are the policies governing employee conduct communicated in an effective way to staff and reviewed with them periodically?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
12.	Is confidential or sensitive material (e.g. payroll records and taxes) maintained separately from non-confidential records?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
13.	Is insurance coverage reviewed periodically by qualified individuals to determine adequacy.	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
14.	Does the comprehensive liability policy include liability coverage for all officials and employees?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	Jail Health staff are covered by Whatcom County
15.	Is a budget system (including monthly or quarterly budget reports) used by management for watching income and expenses?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
16.	Are cash projections made and periodically compared by management to the operational accounting information?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
17.	Do surety and/or performance bonds cover all employees/officials who handle the city's/county's funds?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
18.	Are surety bonds of a sufficient amount, as prescribed and approved by the Council or Commission?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
19.	Are authorizations for all bank accounts and check signers updated annually?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	Updated as needed throughout each year

Financial Records		Response	Comments
20.	Do you have different staff responsible for a) authorizing a transaction, b) recording the transaction in the accounting records, and c) maintaining custody of the assets resulting from the transaction?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
21.	Is an accounting system in use that allows management to record financial transactions, view the data by category, and create timely reports to maintain accountability for the government's assets?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
22.	Are detailed cash receipts journals maintained?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
23.	Are detailed cash disbursement journals maintained?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	

Financial Records		Response		Comments
24.	Are Council records (if separate records other than orders are kept) reconciled with the clerk/treasurer's records monthly?	Y	N	Not applicable to NWRC
25.	Are the general ledger and its subsidiary ledgers kept up to date and reconciled monthly?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	
26.	Is a chart of accounts used?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	
27.	Are records properly guarded from fire, theft and manipulation?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	Guarded from theft and manipulation in locked file cabinets. Not fire proof.
28.	Is computerized data backed up daily and source documents retained until backup?	Y	N	Backups of accounting system are performed on a daily basis.
29.	Is a copy of electronic data properly stored off-site?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	
30.	Are all financial recording documents (receipts, purchase orders sequentially prenumbered, retained, and accounted for, including spoiled or voided forms?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	
31.	Are automatic duplicates of certain forms (receipts & purchase orders) provided to individuals (e.g. vendors, taxpayers, etc.)?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	
32.	Is the person who does the bank reconciliation different from the person authorized sign to checks and make deposits?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	
33.	Is the bank reconciliation procedure documented?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	
34.	Are bank statements reconciled monthly, preferably within 15 days after the statement date?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	
35.	Does a responsible official, other than the preparer, review completed bank reconciliations?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	
36.	Is the completed bank reconciliation initialed and dated by both the preparer and the reviewer?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	
37.	Are the following monthly procedures currently performed:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	
	• Reconcile cash accounts?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	
	• Reconcile accounts receivable to the detail invoices?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	
	• Reconcile payroll withholdings to the payroll reports?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	
	• Reconcile accounts payable subsidiary ledger to actual invoices?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y	N	
	• Reconcile property tax receipts to the property tax receivables?	Y	N	Not applicable to NWRC

Cash Receipts	Response	Comments
38. Is receipt of currency (which include checks) adequately controlled until deposited or remitted to the treasurer (within 24 hours as required by state law)?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	Approved extension on file from Whatcom County Treasurer
39. Is a copy kept of the treasurer's signed and dated endorsement of the tax collector's receipts, payments and any abatements?	Y N	Not applicable to NWRC
40. Have safeguards been provided to prevent officials or employees from cashing checks payable to the city/county?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
41. Are monies received by one employee, documented and then deposited by another employee?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
42. Are all monies received by the city/county turned over intact daily to the person who makes the bank deposit?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
43. Does the clerk/treasurer keep separate accounts of all money received as highway or school taxes?	Y N	Not applicable to NWRC
44. Is the person who handles cash (receipts, bank deposits, purchases) different from the person who keeps the cashbooks/accounting records?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
45. Are funds received over the counter controlled by sequentially numbered counter receipts?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	

Purchasing	Response	Comments
46. Is Council/Commission or Manager approval:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
a. Required for all purchases?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
b. Signed by a majority of the board and dated?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
47. Does the treasurer keep a book recording all pay orders (outstanding payables) that are not paid?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
48. Are the functions of purchasing goods, receipt of goods, and cash payment for goods performed by separate employees?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
49. Are:	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
Checks pre-numbered?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
Unused checks controlled?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
Check signature stamps secured and not provided for staff use?	Y N	Not applicable to NWRC. Checks are signed manually
Checks prepared and signed by separate employees?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
Checks are never written to "Cash"?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	

Purchasing		Response	Comments
50.	Are materials and supplies inspected for condition and counted when received?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
51.	Does invoice processing include a mathematical check of footings, extensions and discounts?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
Cash Disbursements		Response	Comments
52.	Are all cash disbursements, except petty cash items, made by check?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	Automated Clearing House (ACH) debits and direct deposits also used
53.	Are checks signed and immediately sent out but not returned to the check preparer to distribute?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
54.	Are pre-numbered checks used?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
55.	If checks are produced manually, is a controlled, mechanical check protector used?	Y N	Not applicable to NWRC. All checks are signed by an authorized employee of NWRC
56.	Are checks produced on an automated financial system?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
57.	Is all investment activity by the clerk/treasurer approved by the Council/Commission and documented?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	The NWRC Council appoints a Fiscal Officer who approves all investments
58.	Is petty cash handled through a fixed amount account with limited purchases that are reviewed by another individual?	Y N	Not applicable to NWRC. Petty cash funds were dissolved in December 2021
Property and Equipment		Response	Comments
59.	Are schedules of fixed assets and depreciation maintained?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	Depreciation not applicable to cash basis
60.	Are periodic inventories taken and compared with the schedules of fixed assets?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
61.	Is all property and equipment purchased or leased with city/county funds held in the name of the city/county?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
62.	Are invoices maintained to support the purchase or lease of equipment?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	
Notes and Investments		Response	Comments
63.	Are schedules maintained of all borrowing and investing activities?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Y N	

Grand List and Tax Records		Response		Comments
64.	Is a system used (ideally a tax map) to be certain that all taxable property is included in the grand list?	Y	N	Not applicable to NWRC
65.	Are newly constructed or remodeled structures updated timely?	Y	N	Not applicable to NWRC
66.	Does the delinquent tax collector turn all receipts over to the clerk/treasurer so that the collector's fees can be entered into the city's/county's books as wages?	Y	N	Not applicable to NWRC
67.	Does the city/county have adequate follow-up policies with delinquent taxpayers?	Y	N	Not applicable to NWRC
68.	Does the entity maintain adequate records to support discounts or credits?	Y	N	Not applicable to NWRC
69.	Does someone other than the tax collector (delinquent or current) reconcile taxes?	Y	N	Not applicable to NWRC
Enterprise Funds (Water, Sewer, etc.)		Response		Comments
70.	Do accounting practices for enterprise funds follow guidelines listed above for all other city/county funds?	Y	N	Not applicable to NWRC
71.	Is the follow-up on delinquent accounts adequate?	Y	N	Not applicable to NWRC

References:

Internal Control Guidebook 2010, National Association of State Comptrollers (as modified by the Washington State Auditor's Office. http://www.sao.wa.gov/EN/ClientSupport/AccountabilityFraud/Documents/Prevention_IC_guidebook.pdf

"Evaluating Internal Controls, A Local Government Manager's Guide", S. Gauthier, Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), Chicago, IL., 2004.

Part 3, Chapter 9, Section 24 of the Washington State Auditor's Budget, Accounting and Reporting Systems Manual for Cities, Counties and Special Purpose Districts (GAAP): Accounting Principles and Internal Control http://www.sao.wa.gov/EN/ClientSupport/FinancialReporting/LGS/BarManuals/Documents/BarManuals/GAAP_p3ch1s3.pdf



Memorandum

TO: Northwest Regional Council

FROM: Amanda McDade, Executive Director

DATE: November 27, 2024

SUBJECT: NWRC Routine Contracts/Amendments

Background

Northwest Regional Council receives funding from various sources and, in turn, contracts for a variety of community services. An update of contracted activity is provided at each NWRC Board meeting.

Issue

Since July 1, 2024, we have received the following contracts or amendments:

Contracts

Contract No.	Purpose	Amount	Dates
2469-5707	AAA Agreement State/Federal	\$9,647,028.00	07/01/24 - 06/30/25
2469-57440	AAA Agreement Caregiver Training	Fee For Service	07/01/24 - 06/30/25
2469-52925 [02]	Contract Amendment Older Americans Act	Additional \$8,849 (total \$2,314,058)	01/01/24 - 09/30/25
No Number Assigned	OIC-MIPPA Contract for Client Services	\$110,888.00	10/01/24 - 09/30/26

Subcontracts for Services

Contract No.	Contractor	Purpose	Dates
250034-HC	Homewatch Caregivers of Western Washington	In-Home Personal Care, In-Home Respite, Caregiver Training, Relief Care H&E, Bath Aid, Skills Acquisition Training	08/01/24 - 06/30/25
280097-HH	Nooksack Central Management (dba Nooksack Tribal Health)	Health Home Care Coordination	07/01/24 - 12/31/24

260130-FCSP-C	Richard Evans, LMHC; Mindful Arts, LLC	FCSP Caregiver Consultant: Licensed Mental Health Counselor	09/01/24 - 06/30/26
2412-58366	Mindful Arts, LLC	Behavior Support Services	09/01/24 - 06/30/26
2412-57203	Alert Medical Alarms, Inc	Personal Emergency Response System (PERS)	07/01/24 - 06/30/26
2412-53595	East to West Aging Services & Consulting	Community Choice Guiding	11/01/24 - 06/30/26
260354-DSP	Healing Through Hope	Star-C Caregiver Consultation	08/01/24 - 06/30/26
No Number Assigned	Gregg Coad	IT Consulting Agreement	11/16/24 - 03/31/25

Terminated Contracts

Contract No.	Contractor (Term Date)	Purpose	Dates
2212-42769	Infusion Solutions (08/26/24)	Skilled Nursing Services	07/01/22 - 06/30/26
2212-42850	Infusion Solutions (08/26/24)	Client Training	07/01/22 - 06/30/26
2212-42941	SOAS LLC (dba Island Drug) (08/26/24)	Client Training	07/01/22 - 06/30/26
2412-53180	Kaaren Burk - KB Nurse PLLC (12/12/24)	Skilled Nursing Services	01/01/24 - 06/30/26
2212-42906	VKSWEN (10/31/24)	Client Training	07/01/22 - 06/30/26
2412-54151	Ava Loftin (07/21/24)	Community Choice Guide	02/01/24 - 06/30/26
260112-FCSP-C	Maureen Kane (09/14/24)	FCSP Caregiver Consultant; Licensed Mental Health Counselor	07/01/22 - 06/30/26

Amendments

Contract No.	Contractor	Purpose	Dates
280091-HH [02]	Asian Counseling & Referral Services	Announce DSNP rate change from 4 of 6 insurance plans effective 07/01/24	07/01/24 - 12/31/24
280093-HH [02]	Full Life Care	Announce DSNP rate change from 4 of 6 insurance plans effective 07/01/24	07/01/24 - 12/31/24
280094-HH [02]	Lummi Nation	Announce DSNP rate change from 4 of 6 insurance plans effective 07/01/24	07/01/24 - 12/31/24

280095-HH [02]	Sea Mar CHC	Announce DSNP rate change from 4 of 6 insurance plans effective 07/01/24	07/01/24 - 12/31/24
280096-HH [02]	Sunrise Services	Announce DSNP rate change from 4 of 6 insurance plans effective 07/01/24	07/01/24 - 12/31/24
243010-CM [01]	Island Senior Resources	Awarding Case Management additional program funding	07/01/24 - 12/31/24
243014-LEGAL [01]	Northwest Justice Project	Awarding Senior Legal Services additional program funding	07/01/24 - 12/31/24
23012-KCSP-KNAV	Opportunity Council	Awarding additional KCSP funding. Restricting KNAV funding through end of calendar year.	07/01/24 - 12/31/24

Agreements

Organization	Purpose	Dates
Molina Healthcare of WA	DSNP T2 Rate Increase	07/01/24 - Ongoing
Wellpoint Washington	DSNP T2 Rate Increase and Administrative Rate Increase	07/01/24 - Ongoing
Dementia Friends WA	Lead for Dementia Friends in San Juan County	08/09/24 - Ongoing
Whatcom County Health and Community Services, Jail Division	Bicillin Administration in Whatcom County Jail	09/11/24 - 06/30/25
United Healthcare	DSNP T2 Rate Increase	7/1/2024 - Ongoing
Health Care Authority	Term Extension, Special T&C Updates, SOW Amendment for Health Homes Lead Contract	01/01/25 - 12/31/25
Wellpoint Washington	DSNP T2 Rate Increase	01/01/25 - Ongoing
Interlocal Agreement	Working Advance Long-Term Payable Agreement Amendment [01]	07/01/24 - 06/30/25

Proposed Motion:

The NWRC Governing Board approves the above referenced contracts and agreements.



Northwest Regional Council

2025 Budget

600 Lakeway Drive
Bellingham WA 98225
(360) 676-6749
www.nwrcwa.org

*An association of county governments serving the
people of Island, San Juan, Skagit, and Whatcom.*

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Memorandum

To: Northwest Regional Council
From: Amanda McDade, Executive Director
Date: December 12, 2024
Subject: 2025 Budget

I am pleased to submit the enclosed 2025 Budget for your consideration and approval. The proposed budget totals \$31.31 million, reflecting an 8% increase from the current year. Below, I have outlined the key changes and significant updates that have influenced this budget proposal.

Revenue Changes

- **Total Revenue Increase:** \$2.28 million, representing an 8% rise in overall funding.
- **Health Homes Program:** The largest contributor to this revenue increase is the Health Homes program, which will see a \$2.24 million rise (61%) in revenue. This increase is primarily driven by the expansion of Health Homes eligibility, which is set to begin January 1, 2025. Washington State is extending eligibility to Dual Special Needs Plan (DSNP) beneficiaries to better coordinate services and align Medicaid and Medicare benefits. As a result, a new population of eligible clients will be served in our region.

Additionally, NWRC's care coordination program funded by Humana for the past several years sunsets on December 31, 2024. Most of these Humana clients will transition to become Health Homes DSNP clients, effective January 1, 2025.

- **Disaster Relief Funding:** We anticipate a \$692K decrease (-94%) in disaster relief funding, as most of the remaining COVID-19 emergency response funds have been expended in 2024. Only a small balance of \$41K is expected to carry forward into 2025.
- **Senior Nutrition:** NWRC received a one-time \$748K increase in senior nutrition funding for state fiscal year 2024-2025. Half (\$374K) was subcontracted to providers for the second half of 2024, with the remaining \$374K to be distributed in the first half of 2025. Since this funding was notified after the July 18, 2024 board meeting and was not included in the 2024 Revised Budget, the 2025 Budget reflects a \$374K (348%) increase for senior nutrition.

- **Other Revenue Changes:** The remainder of the revenue changes consist of routine annual contract amendments and updates to revenue estimates based on actuals.

Personnel Expenses

- **Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA):** A 3% COLA is included for staff salaries to maintain competitiveness in the market and support recruitment and retention efforts.
- **Four additional Care Coordinators** needed to meet the significant increase in cases expected for the Health Homes program as outlined in the revenue section above.
- **One additional Care Management Program Supervisor** to maintain an adequate supervisor-to-staff ratio as the result of the new positions planned for 2025, as well as the added positions in 2024.
- **Two additional TXIX Case Managers** to maintain the required 75:1 caseload ratio. Our region has experienced a continued increase in long-term care cases during 2024. This trend is expected to continue into 2025. Additionally, there is a further increase in cases expected due to client presumptive eligibility rules being implemented at the beginning of 2025.
- **Reclassification of the HR Manager to HR Director** in response to expanded job responsibilities required for the role, along with a corresponding market rate adjustment to address wage disparity.
- **Reclassification of one existing Jail Health RN to a new Lead Jail Health RN** to provide needed training and technical support for the program with a corresponding wage range that is 4% greater than the regular RN role.
- **Market rate adjustment of 5% for the Jail Health Medical Assistant** to address wage disparity for the position.

Operating Expenses

- **Inflationary Increases:** Routine operating expenses reflect inflationary and contractual increases in the 3% to 5% range.
- **Capital Expenditures:** The budget includes \$20,000 for the purchase and installation of two mini-split HVAC units. Further details are provided in the capital expenditure plan at the end of this budget document.
- **Other Operating Costs:** There are no other significant new or non-recurring operating expenses anticipated for 2025.

Subcontracted Expenses

- **Overall Increase:** A \$646K increase in subcontracted expenses, reflecting a 5% rise from the current year.
- **Key Changes:** Consistent with the reasons outlined in the revenue section of this memorandum, the most significant changes occurring next year in subcontracted expenses are from:
 - Health Homes: 29% increase of \$541K
 - Disaster Relief Funding: 100% decrease of \$394K
 - Senior Nutrition: 28% increase of \$354K

Fund Balance

NWRC has strengthened its reserves during the past year. As of September 30, 2024, the accrual basis fund balance positions are as follows:

- **Restricted Fund Balance**

○ DSHS TXIX Medicaid Aging Network Programs	3,501,446
○ DSHS Medicaid Transformation Project	1,354,836
○ DSHS Working Advance	<u>1,652,032</u>
○ Total Restricted Fund Balance	\$6,508,314
- **Unrestricted Fund Balance** \$1,149,532
- **Total Combined Fund Balance: \$7.66 million**, which is approximately 3.3 months of operating expenditures—an amount considered reasonable for an agency of our type.



The 2025 Budget includes an anticipated \$255K increase to the fund balance for the upcoming year.

Summary

The 2025 Budget reflects NWRC's commitment to optimizing funding and expenditures to meet our community's needs while maintaining fiscal responsibility. The changes in revenue streams and expenditures are designed to enhance service delivery, while ensuring sustainability and strategic growth for the agency.

If you have any questions or require further details, please feel free to contact me.

Proposed Motion

The Northwest Regional Council hereby approves the Resolution 24-03 for the 2025 Budget.

**NORTHWEST REGIONAL COUNCIL
RESOLUTION NO. 24-03
2025 BUDGET**

WHEREAS, the attached Budget for calendar year 2025 has been presented to the Northwest Regional Council for review; and

WHEREAS, the Northwest Regional Council has reviewed said document and is in agreement with the funding and expenditure levels set forth in said document;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northwest Regional Council does ordain as follows:

The Northwest Regional Council 2025 Budget is hereby approved as presented. Included in the Budget is a 3% cost of living adjustment for all eligible Northwest Regional Council employees, effective January 1, 2025.

APPROVED by the Northwest Regional Council this 12th day of December 2024:

Melanie Bacon
Island County Commissioner

Janet St. Clair
Island County Commissioner

Jane Fuller
San Juan County Council Member

Christine Minney
San Juan County Council Member

Peter Browning
Skagit County Commissioner

Ron Wesen
Skagit County Commissioner

Satpal Sidhu
County Executive, Whatcom County

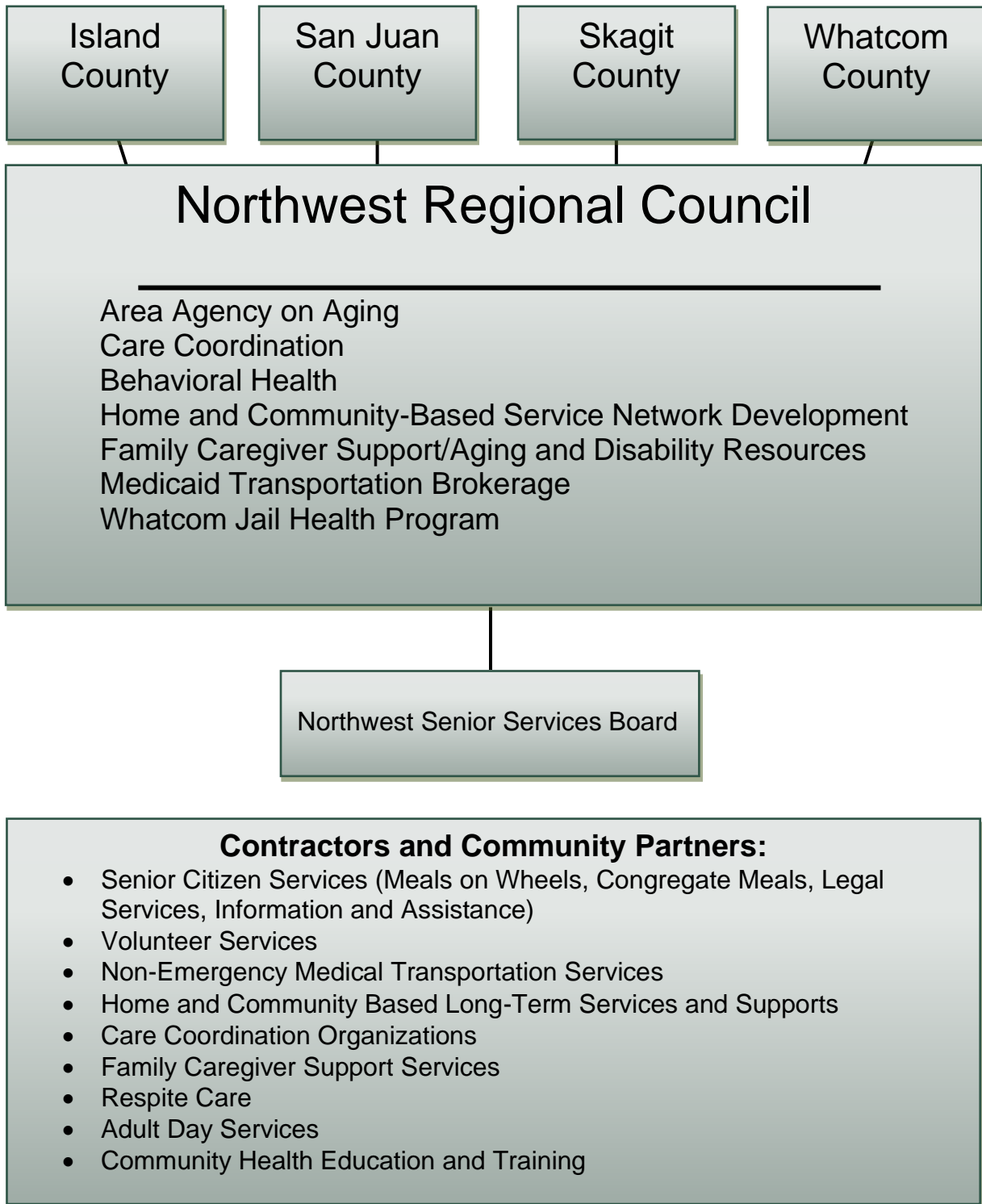
Mark Stremmer
Whatcom County Council Member

ATTEST:

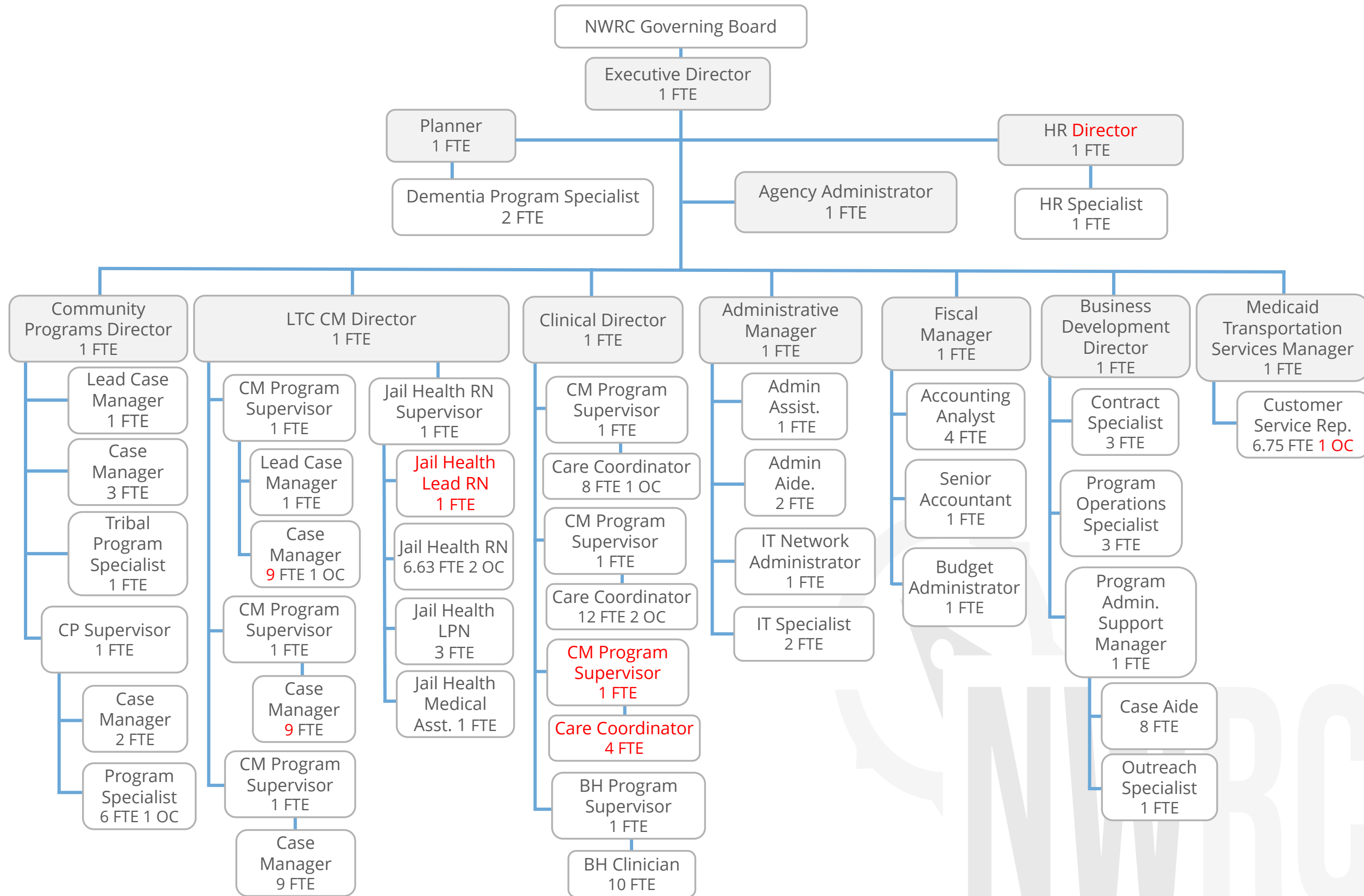
Amanda McDade, Executive Director
Northwest Regional Council

Organizational Charts

NWRC's Overall Structure



NORTHWEST REGIONAL COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONAL CHART





2025 NWRC Budget

	2025 Original Budget								Comparison to Prior Budget		
	Clinical Programs	Community Programs	Long-Term Care	Other Subcontracting	Non-Emergency Medical Transportation	Jail Health Program	Other Activities (ARPA, DSP, SSF, and Misc Other)	2025 Original Budget	2024 Revised Budget	Difference	% Change
Revenue											
Grant Revenue	166,345	3,673,709	6,606,529	2,618,172	-	-	386,109	13,450,864	13,272,956	177,908	1%
Contract Revenue	7,935,118	-	27,876	150,048	7,672,800	2,268,157	-	18,053,999	15,825,353	2,228,646	14%
Local Contributions	-	-	-	-	-	-	110,270	110,270	107,058	3,212	3%
Interest Revenue	-	-	-	-	-	-	86,400	86,400	75,000	11,400	15%
Miscellaneous Revenue	20,000	-	-	-	-	-	1,200	21,200	2,000	19,200	960%
Donations	-	-	-	-	-	-	500	500	2,500	(2,000)	-80%
Revenue Write Offs	(161,682)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(161,682)	-	(161,682)	-
Total Revenue	7,959,781	3,673,709	6,634,405	2,768,220	7,672,800	2,268,157	584,479	31,561,551	29,284,867	2,276,684	8%
Expense											
Salaries & Wages	3,844,139	1,706,333	3,352,104	87,344	737,987	1,594,293	296,432	11,618,632	10,395,831	1,222,801	12%
Benefits	1,599,368	727,819	1,438,696	34,196	336,461	588,772	125,849	4,851,161	4,318,438	532,723	12%
Supplies	22,537	11,628	21,911	1,013	3,904	5,753	1,454	68,200	85,375	(17,175)	-20%
Professional Services	38,629	12,451	130,974	3,081	18,025	6,102	2,338	211,600	378,419	(166,819)	-44%
Telecommunication	51,302	17,601	34,514	844	3,731	4,678	3,110	115,780	90,000	25,780	29%
Postage	7,910	3,982	8,052	170	1,376	2,288	522	24,300	36,250	(11,950)	-33%
Subscriptions for Software and IT Services	92,061	8,551	15,988	1,401	21,246	5,867	1,909	147,024	-	147,024	-
Staff and Board Travel	3,824	5,469	5,924	536	752	13,250	2,245	32,000	55,242	(23,242)	-42%
Mileage	99,073	13,840	42,524	246	1,202	2,193	2,822	161,900	157,328	4,572	3%
Advertising	15,222	31,116	5,160	36	1,793	12,488	15,781	81,596	82,000	(404)	0%
Building Rent	107,439	62,631	131,256	2,574	30,179	5,932	7,313	347,324	338,422	8,902	3%
Misc Rent	14,791	6,737	14,010	323	3,782	743	894	41,280	19,060	22,220	117%
Insurance	34,836	16,982	33,020	1,077	8,530	13,847	3,034	111,325	119,600	(8,275)	-7%
Utilities	14,341	8,387	17,536	362	4,241	834	1,019	46,720	48,000	(1,280)	-3%
Repairs & Maintenance	55,861	32,793	68,386	1,490	17,472	3,434	4,164	183,600	182,000	1,600	1%
Miscellaneous	10,068	24,683	6,611	130	1,592	1,410	4,469	48,963	145,328	(96,365)	-66%
Printing of Client Materials	300	4,379	-	-	-	-	271	4,950	47,400	(42,450)	-90%
Meals and Refreshments	3,830	1,104	4,202	93	376	775	670	11,050	5,750	5,300	92%
Staff Training	24,712	6,703	8,920	626	2,842	5,183	1,614	50,600	105,608	(55,008)	-52%
Small Tools	44,521	19,476	32,935	409	4,677	1,059	6,124	109,200	92,000	17,200	19%
Interfund Transfers	-	6,384	11,512	(17,896)	-	-	-	-	0	(0)	-100%
Subtotal of NWRC Expense	6,084,762	2,729,050	5,384,235	118,056	1,200,169	2,268,901	482,033	18,267,206	16,702,051	1,565,155	9%
Subcontracted Services and Supplies	2,387,258	940,369	570,221	2,646,834	6,420,000	-	75,000	13,039,682	12,393,201	646,481	5%
Total Expense	8,472,020	3,669,419	5,954,456	2,764,890	7,620,169	2,268,901	557,033	31,306,888	29,095,252	2,211,636	8%
Net Revenue Less Expense	(512,239)	4,290	679,949	3,330	52,631	(744)	27,446	254,663	189,615	65,048	34%



2025 Budget for Revenue

	2025 Original Budget	2024 Revised Budget	Difference	% Change
Grant Revenue				
<u>DSHS Older Americans Act Contract</u>				
Title 3B Supportive Services	1,202,480	925,255	277,225	30%
Title 3C1 Congregate Nutrition Services	172,291	208,988	(36,697)	-18%
Title 3C2 Home Delivered Nutrition Services	722,873	681,997	40,876	6%
Title 3D Disease Prevention and Health Promotion	45,383	55,534	(10,151)	-18%
Title 3E National Family Caregiver Support Program	249,332	287,651	(38,319)	-13%
Title 7 Elder Abuse Prevention	4,419	4,013	406	10%
Nutrition Services Incentive Program	236,328	257,142	(20,814)	-8%
Subtotal	2,633,106	2,420,580	212,526	9%
<u>DSHS State/Federal Contract</u>				
TXIX Case Management/Nursing Services	6,016,146	5,925,099	91,047	2%
TXIX Core Services Contract Management	382,891	394,733	(11,842)	-3%
TXIX Requested Match - Administrative Claiming	159,000	159,000	-	0%
TXIX Requested Match - Case Management	116,434	116,434	-	0%
Senior Citizens Services Act - Case Management	91,058	91,058	-	0%
Senior Citizens Services Act - Info and Assistance	475,657	458,097	17,560	4%
State Family Caregiver Support Program	723,374	725,697	(2,323)	0%
Care Transitions	166,345	207,025	(40,680)	-20%
Kinship Caregiver Support Program	118,766	69,812	48,954	70%
Kinship Navigator Program	124,834	156,750	(31,916)	-20%
Senior Nutrition	481,609	107,620	373,989	348%
Home Delivered Meals Expansion	40,388	39,521	867	2%
Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program	54,000	54,000	-	0%
Volunteer Services	140,091	101,554	38,537	38%
Senior Drug Education	12,612	12,612	-	0%
Subtotal	9,103,205	8,619,012	484,193	6%
<u>Other Grant Funding</u>				
Disaster Relief Funding	41,109	733,098	(691,989)	-94%
Medicaid Transformation Project	538,000	513,448	24,552	5%
Dementia Resource Catalysts	345,000	375,000	(30,000)	-8%
WA Cares	315,000	250,958	64,042	26%
Medicare Improvement for Patients and Providers Act	55,444	48,060	7,384	15%
HCA Agency Workers Health Insurance	42,000	52,800	(10,800)	-20%
HCA Caregiver Training	378,000	260,000	118,000	45%
Subtotal	1,714,553	2,233,364	(518,811)	-23%
Total Grant Revenue	13,450,864	13,272,956	177,908	1%



2025 Budget for Revenue

	2025 Original Budget	2024 Revised Budget	Difference	% Change
Contract Revenue				
Clinical Programs				
Behavioral Health	1,321,000	1,309,360	11,640	1%
Health Homes	5,936,350	3,694,000	2,242,350	61%
Hospital Care Transitions	180,329	109,130	71,199	65%
Humana	-	458,550	(458,550)	-100%
Jail Care Transitions	167,000	125,000	42,000	34%
Recovery Care Coordination	330,439	318,280	12,159	4%
Subtotal	7,935,118	6,014,320	1,920,798	32%
Long-Term Care				
LEOFF Case Management	2,500	2,500	-	0%
Island County - TXIX Case Management	25,376	25,376	-	0%
Subtotal	27,876	27,876	-	0%
Other Subcontracting				
Foundational Community Supports	90,048	85,725	4,323	5%
Whatcom County - Nutrition	60,000	60,000	-	0%
Subtotal	150,048	145,725	4,323	3%
Non-Emergency Medical Transportation				
Health Care Authority - Administrative Services	1,252,800	1,150,800	102,000	9%
Health Care Authority - Service Delivery	6,420,000	6,420,000	-	0%
Subtotal	7,672,800	7,570,800	102,000	1%
Jail Health Program				
Whatcom County - Juvenile Detention Center	41,616	41,616	-	0%
Whatcom County - Nursing Services	2,068,819	1,882,895	185,924	10%
Whatcom County - MOUD	157,722	142,121	15,601	11%
Subtotal	2,268,157	2,066,632	201,525	10%
Total Contract Revenue	18,053,999	15,825,353	2,228,646	14%
Other Revenue				
Local Contributions	110,270	107,058	3,212	3%
Interest Revenue	86,400	75,000	11,400	15%
Miscellaneous Revenue	21,200	2,000	19,200	960%
Donations	500	2,500	(2,000)	-80%
Revenue Write Offs - Behavioral Health	(132,000)	-	(132,000)	-
Revenue Write Offs - Health Homes	(29,682)	-	(29,682)	-
Total Other Revenue	56,688	186,558	(129,870)	-70%
Total Revenue				
Total Revenue	31,561,551	29,284,867	2,276,684	8%



2025 Budget for Subcontracted Services and Supplies

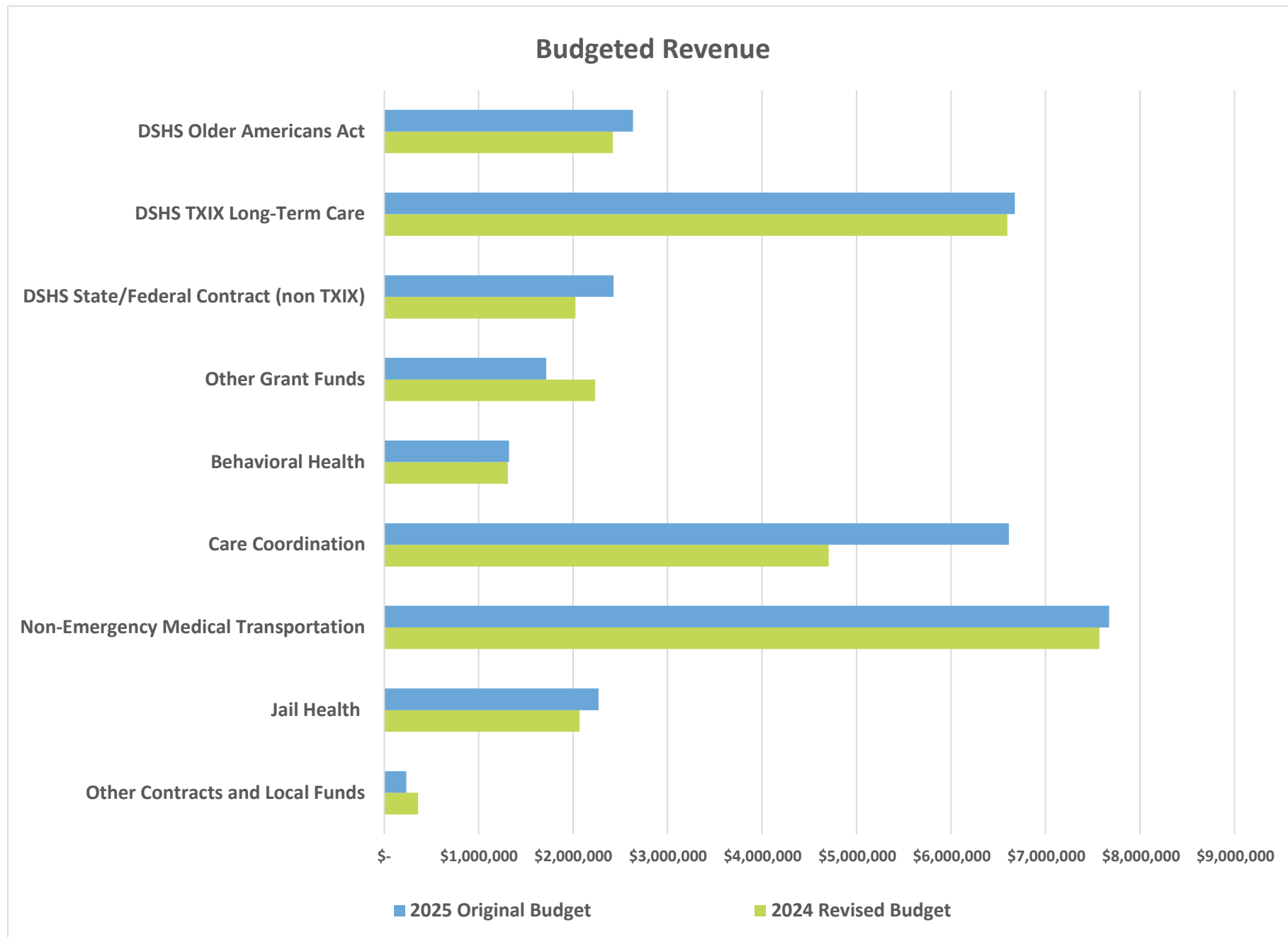
	2025 Original Budget	2024 Revised Budget	Difference	% Change
Clinical Programs				
Health Homes	2,387,258	1,846,479	540,779	29%
Subtotal	2,387,258	1,846,479	540,779	29%
Community Programs				
Information & Assistance	257,800	244,179	13,621	6%
Family Caregiver Support Program	87,679	154,048	(66,369)	-43%
TXIX Administrative Claiming	37,778	37,778	-	0%
Evidence Based Programs	25,000	51,323	(26,323)	-51%
Caregiver Consultants	159,600	160,189	(589)	0%
Caregiver Support Groups	31,200	31,200	-	0%
Respite Care	262,200	275,000	(12,800)	-5%
Supplemental Services and Supplies	66,500	41,362	25,138	61%
Senior Drug Education Supplies	12,612	-	12,612	-
Subtotal	940,369	995,079	(54,710)	-5%
Long-Term Care				
TXIX Case Management	535,221	531,994	3,227	1%
TXIX Nursing Services	35,000	35,000	-	0%
Subtotal	570,221	566,994	3,227	1%
Other Subcontracting				
Foundational Community Supports Housing	80,400	76,200	4,200	6%
HCA Workers Health Insurance	42,000	52,800	(10,800)	-20%
HCA Caregiver Training	360,000	247,000	113,000	46%
Kinship Caregiver Support Program	118,766	69,812	48,954	70%
Kinship Navigator Program	124,834	156,750	(31,916)	-20%
Legal Services	102,573	54,714	47,859	87%
Nutrition Program - Congregate and Home-Delivered Meals	1,620,211	1,266,169	354,042	28%
Nutrition Program - Senior Farmers Market	54,000	54,000	-	0%
Ombudsman Program	3,959	3,959	-	0%
Volunteer Services	140,091	101,554	38,537	38%
Subtotal	2,646,834	2,082,958	563,876	27%
Non-Emergency Medical Transportation				
Non Emergency Transportation Brokerage	6,420,000	6,420,000	-	0%
Subtotal	6,420,000	6,420,000	-	0%
Other NWRC Activities				
Dementia Support Program	35,000	45,040	(10,040)	-22%
Disaster Relief Funding	-	393,951	(393,951)	-100%
Supplemental Services Fund	40,000	42,700	(2,700)	-6%
Subtotal	75,000	481,691	(406,691)	-84%
Total Subcontracted Services and Supplies				
	13,039,682	12,393,201	646,481	5%

**NORTHWEST REGIONAL COUNCIL
FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT STAFF COMPARISON
2025 BUDGET**

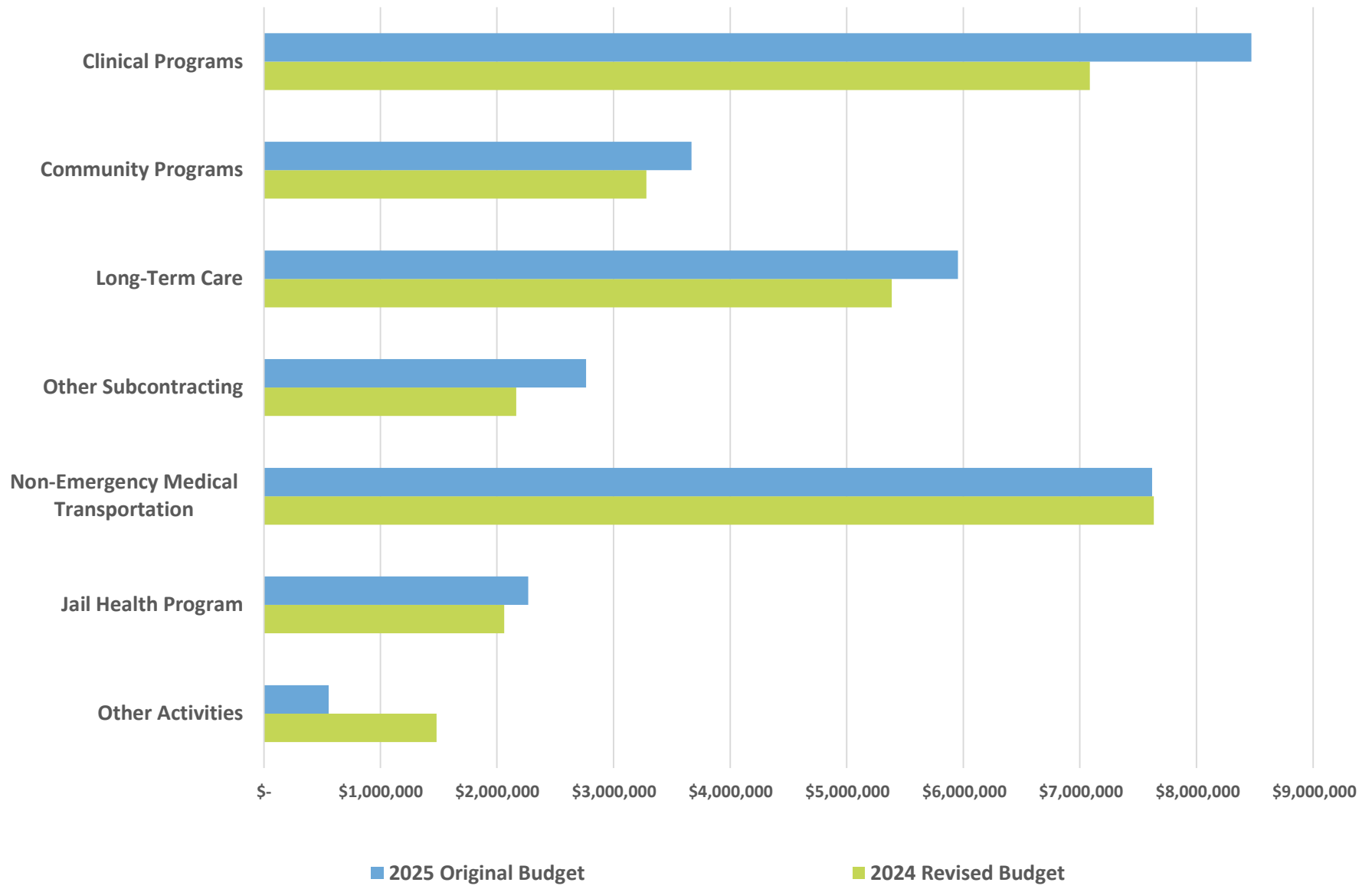
	Revised 2024 FTE	Original 2025 FTE	Change
Position			
Accounting Analyst	4.00	4.00	-
Administrative Assistant	1.00	1.00	-
Administrative Manager	1.00	1.00	-
Agency Administrator	1.00	1.00	-
Behavioral Health Clinician	10.00	10.00	-
Behavioral Health Program Supervisor	1.00	1.00	-
Budget Administrator	1.00	1.00	-
Business Development Director	1.00	1.00	-
a. Care Coordinator	20.00	24.00	4.00
b. Care Management Program Supervisor	5.00	6.00	1.00
Case Aide	8.00	8.00	-
Case Manager - FCSP and MTP	5.00	5.00	-
c. Case Manager - TXIX	25.00	27.00	2.00
Clinical Director	1.00	1.00	-
Community Programs Director	1.00	1.00	-
Community Programs Supervisor	1.00	1.00	-
Contract Specialist	3.00	3.00	-
Customer Service Representative	6.75	6.75	-
Dementia Program Specialist	2.00	2.00	-
Executive Director	1.00	1.00	-
Fiscal Manager	1.00	1.00	-
d. HR Manager	1.00	0.00	(1.00)
d. HR Director	0.00	1.00	1.00
HR Specialist	1.00	1.00	-
IT Network Administrator	1.00	1.00	-
IT Specialist	2.00	2.00	-
Jail Health Medical Assistant	1.00	1.00	-
Jail Health Nursing Supervisor	1.00	1.00	-
e. Jail Health RN/LPN	10.63	9.63	(1.00)
Lead Case Manager - FCSP and MTP	1.00	1.00	-
Lead Case Manager - TXIX	1.00	1.00	-
e. Lead Jail Health RN	0.00	1.00	1.00
Long-Term Care Case Management Director	1.00	1.00	-
Medicaid Transportation Services Manager	1.00	1.00	-
Outreach Specialist	1.00	1.00	-
Planner	1.00	1.00	-
Program Administrative Support Manager	1.00	1.00	-
Program Operations Specialist	3.00	3.00	-
Program Specialist	6.00	6.00	-
Receptionist/Administrative Aide	2.00	2.00	-
Senior Accountant	1.00	1.00	-
Tribal Program Specialist	1.00	1.00	-
Total FTEs	137.38	144.38	7.00

Changes for 2025 Budget:

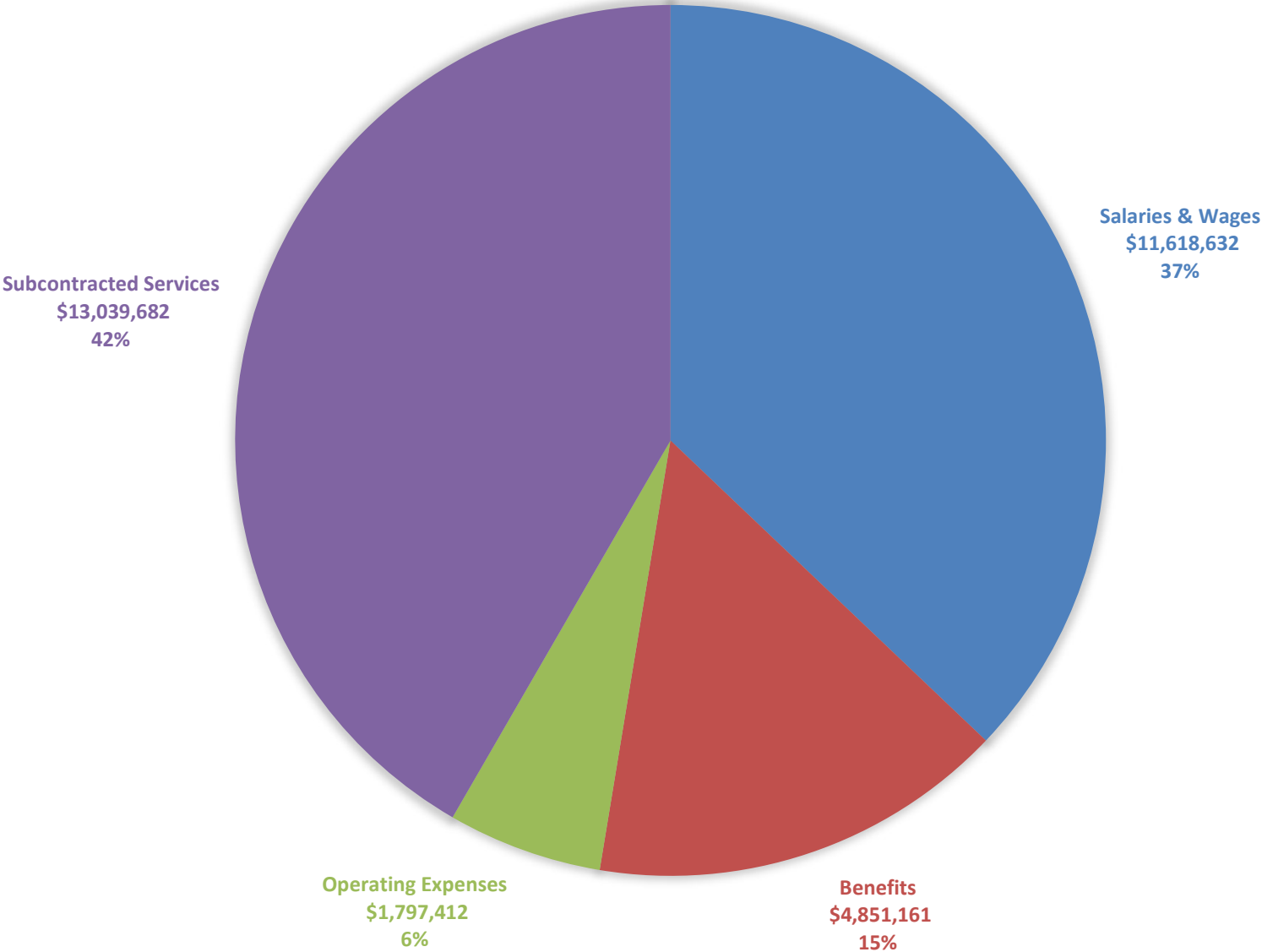
- a. Add four Care Coordinators to increase capacity for projected Health Homes cases
- b. Add one Care Management Program Supervisor to maintain an adequate supervisor-to-staff ratio
- c. Add two TXIX Case Managers to maintain required 75:1 caseload ratio
- d. Reclass HR Manager to HR Director commensurate with increased job responsibilities
- e. Reclass one Jail Health RN position to a Lead Jail Health RN position



Budgeted Expenditures by Department



2025 Budgeted Expenditures by Type



Funding Sources

Northwest Regional Council (NWRC) administers programs funded by grants received from Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) along with other significant programs supported by various state agencies, healthcare organizations, local governments, and private pay sources.

Grant Revenue - DSHS Older Americans Act Contract

Older Americans Act (OAA): Federally funded programs and services to help older adults live independently and remain active in their communities. Individuals receiving services must be 60 years or older (with some limited exceptions).

- | | | |
|-------------------|---|---|
| OAA Title III-B | - | Supportive Services |
| OAA Title III-C-1 | - | Congregate Nutrition Services |
| OAA Title III-C-2 | - | Home Delivered Nutrition Services |
| OAA Title III-D | - | Disease Prevention and Health Promotion |
| OAA Title III-E | - | National Family Caregiver Support Program |
| OAA Title VII | - | Elder Abuse Prevention |

Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP): These funds provide cash reimbursement for the senior nutrition programs based on the proportionate total of statewide meals served by nutrition projects.

Grant Revenue - DSHS State/Federal Contract

TXIX Long-Term Care:

TXIX Case Management: Medicaid funded program to providing case management services to assist functionally impaired adults who are at risk of institutionalization in accessing, obtaining, and effectively utilizing the necessary home and community-based long-term care services.

In addition to case management services, funding also pays for nursing services, contract management in support of the program, and providing information and assistance to potentially eligible clients. Funding from DSHS includes these sources:

- TXIX Case Management/Nursing Services
- TXIX Core Services Contract Management
- TXIX Requested Match

Non TXIX Funding:

Senior Citizens Services Act (SCSA): Provides funding to develop, expand, or maintain programs for senior citizens which provide an alternative to institutional care when that form of care is premature, unnecessary, or inappropriate.

State Family Caregiver Support Program (SFCSP): Comprehensive program which includes specialized caregiver information and assistance, support groups, education/training, consultation/counseling, and respite care services for family or other unpaid caregivers who provide the primary care to adults with functional disabilities. These adults could be at risk of being placed in a long-term care facility if these services were not available.

Care Transitions: Provides state funding to support transitions of care from acute care hospitals and community-based settings.

Kinship Caregiver Support Program (KCSP): Program to support kinship caregivers (grandparents and relatives raising children) who are at risk of being unable to maintain their caregiving role, by providing funding for emergent needs.

Kinship Navigator Program: Program to connect grandparents and relatives who are raising children with needed community resources. These links between kinship caregivers and services can help families establish the support and long-term stability needed to keep children out of foster care.

Senior Nutrition: Additional state funding to support senior nutrition programs.

Home Delivered Meal Expansion: Additional state funding to provide home delivered meals to new or underserved populations or areas.

Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP): Program designed to provide low-income seniors with locally grown produce from state approved farmers' markets, roadside stands, and community supported agriculture programs. The SFMNP allows for the distribution of prepaid cards that can be used as payment at the above-mentioned locations.

Volunteer Services: Program to provide volunteer chore services to persons aged 18 and over who are unable to perform personal care tasks due to functional or cognitive impairment. The program aids with housework, laundry, shopping, cooking, moving, minor home repair, yard care, limited personal care, monitoring, and transportation.

Senior Drug Education: Program intended to inform and train seniors in the safe and appropriate use of prescription and nonprescription medications.

Grant Revenue - Other

Disaster Relief Funding: Remaining balance of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding received from DSHS for COVID-19 emergency response.

Medicaid Transformation Project (MTP): Funding from DSHS to perform services for the two related Medicaid programs: Medicaid Alternative Care (MAC) and Tailored Supports for Older Adult (TSOA).

- MAC: Provides support for unpaid family caregivers caring for Medicaid-eligible people who are not currently accessing Medicaid long-term services and supports. MAC helps unpaid family caregivers provide high-quality care for their loved ones, while also tending to their own health and well-being.
- TSOA: Establishes a new eligibility category and benefit package for people who may need Medicaid long-term services and supports in the future. TSOA helps people and families avoid or delay impoverishment and the future need for Medicaid-funded services. TSOA also provides support to unpaid family caregivers.

Dementia Resource Catalysts: Funding from DSHS to support NWRC's pilot of the Dementia Support Program to help people with possible or diagnosed dementia to live their best lives and stay at home as long as possible.

WA Cares: Funding from DSHS to support the implementation of the new WA Cares program through outreach and network development efforts. Outreach includes informing audiences about key aspects of WA Cares, including how contributions work, optional exemptions, using benefits, and covered services. Network development includes planning and development of a service network for the WA Cares Fund beneficiaries, with a focus on services that support people who want to receive care in their home.

Medicare Improvement for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA): Funding from the Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner to help Medicare beneficiaries enroll in Medicare Part D or to apply for the Medicare Low-income Subsidy & Medicare Savings Plans.

HCA Agency Workers Health Insurance (AWHI): Pass-through funding from DSHS to Home Care Agency (HCA) service providers. The HCA vendor rate includes a designated portion which must be used solely to purchase health benefits for eligible workers directly providing in-home care.

HCA Caregiver Training: Pass-through funding from DSHS to Home Care Agency (HCA) service providers. HCA workers who provide personal care services to DSHS's in-home clients are required to complete specific caregiver training classes. NWRC passes through hourly training reimbursements from DSHS to the HCAs.

Contract Revenue - Clinical Programs

NWRC's clinical programs include behavioral health counseling and a variety of care coordination services. These programs are predominately funded through contracts with the State of Washington Health Care Authority (HCA) and its network of Managed Care Organizations (MCOs), along with local government contracts, private contracts, and a small portion of grant funding.

Behavioral Health: Funding from the MCOs to provide in-home mental health and substance abuse disorder counseling on a fee-for-service basis. Behavioral Health services are designed to promote mental health stabilization, enhance coping mechanisms, and facilitate recovery and resilience.

Care Coordination:

Health Homes Care Coordination: Funding from the HCA and the MCOs to provide comprehensive care management and coordination services to high-risk individuals living with complex medical conditions, ensuring they receive necessary medical, behavioral health, and social services to improve overall health outcomes.

Hospital Care Coordination: Care coordination services in support of transitions of care from acute care hospitals. Contract funding is received from PeaceHealth in Whatcom County and Skagit Valley Regional Hospital. The program is also supported in part by state grant funding received from DSHS.

Jail Care Coordination: Funding from Whatcom County to assist inmates of the Whatcom County Jail with transition to other settings and to connect these individuals with community resources and referrals.

Recovery Care Coordination: Funding from Skagit County to provide support and coordination services for people in all stages of recovery from substance abuse disorders.

Contract Revenue - Other Major Programs

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT): Program funded through State of Washington Health Care Authority to coordinate non-emergency medically related transportation for people who are on Medicaid.

Jail Health Program: Funding from Whatcom County for management and delivery of health care services in the Whatcom County Jail.

Other Contracts and Local Funds

Case Management

- Local match funding received from Island County to support Title XIX core case management services.
- Funding from City of Bellingham and Whatcom County for non-core case management services for City and County Law Enforcement Officers and Firefighters (LEOFF) Boards.

Foundational Community Supports: Program funded by Wellpoint to help Medicaid clients with complex needs access and maintain stable housing.

Nutrition: Funding received from Whatcom County that is passed through to the subcontractor to support the senior nutrition program.

Local Contributions: Funding received from each of NWRC's four member counties used to support NWRC operations and cover funding shortfalls for programs as needed.

Miscellaneous Revenue: Other funding that may be periodically received and is not contractually guaranteed.

Cost Allocation Plan Summary

Effective January 1, 2025

GENERAL INFORMATION

All costs are direct charged whenever possible.

Personnel Costs

All NWRC staff complete a timesheet that includes actual hours worked, all paid and unpaid leave, and holidays. Where appropriate, staff working in clearly defined programs will record the actual time spent on each program on their semi-monthly timesheet. Fringe benefits and payroll taxes follow the same distribution as salaries for all employees.

Indirect Costs

Costs that cannot be direct charged are allocated based on the appropriate methodology for each cost pool. The basis for this allocation is calculated using a three-month look back period beginning with the current month. For example, August allocation is based on total disbursements for June, July, and August. Using a three-month basis will level the effect of large expenditures to a particular activity in a single month.

Terminal Leave

Under the cash basis of accounting, terminal leave is an allowable cost and is recognized in the period that the leave is paid per CFR Part 200.431 and 45 CFR Part 75.431. Payments for unused leave when an employee retires or terminates employment are allowable in the year of payment.

FEDERAL COST PRINCIPLES and REGULATIONS

As an Area Agency on Aging expending pass-thru funds from DSHS, originating from Health and Human Services, NWRC is subject to 45 CFR Part 75. This Cost Allocation Plan has been designed to be in compliance with Section .507(b)(6) and is a Public Assistance Cost Allocation Plan as described in Appendix VII of 2 CFR Part 200. NWRC does not use an indirect rate to charge or bill for administration costs.

COST POOLS

NWRC uses seven cost pools. The General Administrative Cost Pool, Fiscal Cost Pool, and Contract Management Cost Pool are used to allocate administrative costs, and the other pools are used to allocate direct service costs. Each pool is allocated using the methodology explained below.

General Administrative Cost Pool

Administrative costs that cannot be directly attributed to a specific program and/or funding source and that benefit the agency as a whole are captured in this pool. These costs are allocated based on personnel expenditures for the provision of services. After all personnel costs are assigned to the appropriate program area, the total personnel expenditures in each program are divided by the total agency dollars spent on personnel. The resulting percentages are applied to dollars accumulated in this pool and allocated to all NWRC funding sources.

Fiscal Cost Pool

Administrative costs for fiscal management that cannot be directly attributed to a specific program and/or funding source and that benefit the agency as a whole are captured in this pool. These costs are allocated based on total expenditures for the provision of services. After all costs are assigned to the appropriate program area, the total dollars spent in each program is divided by the total agency dollars spent. The resulting percentages are applied to dollars accumulated in this pool and allocated to all NWRC funding sources.

Contract Management Cost Pool

Administrative costs for contract management that cannot be directly attributed to a specific program and/or funding source are captured in this pool. This pool includes costs allocated for procurement, negotiation, execution, monitoring, training, and technical assistance on contract requirements. These costs are allocated based on subcontracted expenditures for the provision of contracted services.

Clinical Programs Cost Pool

Costs that cannot be directly attributed to a specific program and/or funding source and that benefit the clinical programs as a whole are captured in this pool. Clinical programs include Care Coordination and Behavioral Health activities. These costs are allocated based on total dollars disbursed for these activities.

Community Programs Pool

Costs that cannot be directly attributed to a specific program and/or funding source and that benefit Community Programs as a whole are captured in this pool. These costs are allocated based on total dollars disbursed for these particular activities.

Program Support Pool

Costs that cannot be directly attributed to a specific program and/or funding source and that benefit Clinical Programs, Long-Term Care Case Management, and Community Programs are captured in this pool. These costs are allocated based on total dollars disbursed for these particular activities.

Jail Health Pool

Jail Health programs include nursing services, and Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) nursing services for the Whatcom County jail. Costs that benefit these programs are allocated based on total dollars disbursed for these particular activities.

Financial Management Policies

The overall goal of the Northwest Regional Council's financial management policies is to establish and maintain effective management of financial resources.

The Northwest Regional Council will:

A. Establish and maintain a sound accounting system that:

1. Readily identifies all revenue sources and applicable costs.
2. Contains information pertaining to all projects, grants, subgrants.
Including detail of all:
 - a) authorizations and approvals, (except client services paid through ProviderOne)
 - b) obligations,
 - c) unobligated balances, and
 - d) assets, liabilities, expenditures, and revenues.

B. Establish and maintain adequate internal controls.

1. Provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of objectives in the following categories:
 - a) reliability of financial reporting,
 - b) effectiveness and efficiency of operations,
 - c) compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and
 - d) safeguarding assets.
2. Document policies and procedures and perform annual self-assessment.

C. Maintain an adequate audit trail.

1. Clearly identify all transactions and significant events.
2. Be readily available for examination, review, or audit.

To ensure the requirements are met, the Northwest Regional Council will adhere to the following:

A. Federal, State, and Local Regulations

B. DSHS Management Bulletins (MBs)

C. Washington State Auditor's Office Accounting and Reporting Requirements

D. Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP)

1. Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) as applicable to Cash Basis Governments
2. Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB)
3. American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA)

Purchasing Policies

Purpose

This document sets forth guidelines for the acquisition of goods and services by Northwest Regional Council (NWRC). This document should be used as a basic guide to assist NWRC managers and other employees in the procurement of goods and services of the necessary quality, at the lowest possible cost, and to minimize employee time devoted to purchasing functions. In determining quality, the NWRC may take into consideration responsiveness to the NWRC's requirements, the quality of the articles to be purchased or leased, availability of parts and service, delivery time, and prior dealings with the entity.

A. All purchases

Unless exempted as outlined below, purchases of goods and services must follow these requirements. Purchases may not be split to avoid bid requirements. All bid limits expressed as dollar values exclude sales tax and shipping. Exceptions to these processes may be made when:

1. There is a declaration of an emergency by the Executive Director pursuant to RCW 36.32.270.
2. Purchase is made upon the authority of another government's bid award that meets all the requirements of the NWRC policies. To participate in another government's bid, an Inter-local agreement between the governments must be in place. For example, NWRC is a paid subscriber in the State Purchasing Cooperative and, as such, can participate in certain contracts competitively negotiated by other governments.
3. Sole source provider. When only one source is available to purchase a particular product or service, bidding procedures are not necessary. If an item or service is clearly unique and another item or service cannot be substituted, then the purchase may qualify for the sole source exclusion. Requests for sole source purchases must be submitted to the Executive Director for consideration.

B. Purchases less than the uniform guidance threshold for micro-purchases, currently \$10,000: No bid or quote process, nor cost or price analysis is required. Purchases are distributed among a range of qualified vendors whenever possible. NWRC uses inter-entity agreements where applicable.

C. Purchases between \$10,000 and \$75,000: At least three (3) vendors shall be contacted to determine the best source for the purchase. Quotes can be obtained from interested vendors in writing or verbally. All quotes related to a specific purchase shall be documented in writing and retained per the records retention schedule (each quote shall be identified, including vendor name, vendor contact name, date, and telephone number, and proposed amount).

D. Purchases in excess of \$75,000: Formal bid procedures, as outlined below, shall be performed.

In developing specifications for bids or proposals, all reasonable efforts shall be made to ensure that a variety of vendors shall be capable of fulfilling the stated requirements of the NWRC. Performance considerations shall be included in the specifications. However, nothing in this section shall be construed to limit the NWRC from pursuing sole source procurement where adequate justification has been presented that such procurement is in the best interests of NWRC operations.

1. The Executive Director or his/her designee shall be responsible for the review and approval of specifications and the preparation of invitations to bid pursuant to provisions set forth in this chapter.
2. All bid specifications shall be in writing and placed on file for public inspection.
3. An advertisement indicating that written specifications are on file and available for public inspection shall be published in the official county newspapers throughout the region. Advertisements shall be published at least once prior to the last date upon which bids will be received and may be published for as many additional publications as shall be considered in the NWRC's interest. Such advertisement shall state:
 - a. The date after which bids will not be received;
 - b. The character of the work to be done, or the materials, equipment or service to be purchased; and
 - c. Where the specifications may be seen.
4. Bids received shall be opened on the date named in the advertisement for bids, or to such an adjourned time as may then be publicly announced.
5. After opening, all bids shall be reviewed by the Executive Director or designee with a recommendation for award.
6. After opening and award, all bids shall be filed for public inspection, and available by telephone inquiry.
7. Any or all bids may be rejected for good cause.
8. The NWRC may award to multiple bidders for the same commodity or service when the bid specifications provide for special circumstances in the determination of which vendor truly provides the best value to the NWRC. Special circumstances may include differences in ability to deliver, delivery time, availability of material, special loading or unloading conditions, total cost including transport or labor if not included with bid item, performance of the delivered material, location of the source, and proximity to the delivery point.

E. Unregistered or unlicensed contractors prohibited

No contract shall be entered into or executed with any contractor who is not registered or licensed as required by the laws of this state.

F. Joint purchasing

The NWRC may enter into agreements with the state or federal government, political subdivision, or unit of local government to purchase goods or services cooperatively. Joint purchasing services are hereby authorized and encouraged with any other municipal corporation in Washington State. Bids and quotes may be obtained jointly based on volume if it is in the NWRC's best interest to do so.

G. NWRC approval required

Execution of any contract that results from these processes must conform to NWRC bylaws, which state:

“The Executive Director shall have authority to execute approved contracts and associated contract amendments in the name of the NWRC, which are in conformance with the work program, budget, and which are in an amount of Seventy-five Thousand Dollars (\$75,000) or less. Upon execution of such contracts, the Executive Director shall notify the Chairperson and such committees as the NWRC may prescribe from time-to-time. A contract or contract amendment in which the NWRC is party and which is in the amount greater than Seventy-five Thousand Dollars (\$75,000) shall require the prior approval of the NWRC before execution by the Executive Director.”

Capital Expenditure Plan

General Policy and Information

A capital asset is defined by the Washington State Auditor's Office as an asset that:

- Is used in government operations,
- Has a useful life of more than one year,
- Meets a minimum value threshold (which varies by asset type).

Typical capital assets currently and historically held by Northwest Regional Council (NWRC) include information technology equipment, software systems, office equipment, and leasehold improvements. The dollar value threshold for recognizing these categories of expenses as capital assets is generally \$5,000 or more per individual item.

As a cash basis reporting entity for Washington State Auditor's Office purposes, NWRC reports capital expenditures in the year in which the expense is paid and does not maintain or report depreciation schedules over the useful lifespan of capital assets.

2025 Capital Expenditures

NWRC's budget for next year includes the following capital asset expenditures:

Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Improvements

The building housing NWRC's leased office space in Bellingham was built in the 1980s and has outdated HVAC infrastructure. Updates have been necessary to maintain a comfortable working environment for employees. There is \$20,000 budgeted for 2025 to purchase two additional HVAC mini-split units, costing approximately \$10,000 each, including installation fees.



Memorandum

TO: Northwest Regional Council

FROM: Amanda McDade, Executive Director

Date: December 12, 2024

SUBJECT: Policy and Procedure Manual Updates

Attached you will find a redlined version of the Policy and Procedure Manual as previously requested by the Governing Board to evidence the proposed changes. The updates are outlined below and incorporate additional and/or clarifying language around NWRC policies, procedures, and equity and inclusion in NWRC's workplace. In addition, NWRC's Equity Committee has been conducting a line-by-line review of the policy manual from an equity lens and have suggested language changes which are included in the redline version of the manual.

Section 2: Employment Policies and Procedures

- *2.01 Definitions.* Updated employment type definitions for clarity.
- *2.04 Pre-Employment and Continuing Requirements.* Removed COVID-19 vaccination language to reflect 2024 decision by the Governing Board. Added language required by HCS for background checks.
- *2.07 Trial Service Period (Other).* Provided discretion to the Executive Director for trial service periods as it relates to lateral job changes or demotions.
- *2.09 Rehires & Service Bridges.* Retitled section to include service bridges.

Section 3: General Policies and Procedures

- *3.03 Ethics Policy.*
 - Expanded language around Client Well Being to address expectations related to suspected abuse, neglect, abandonment or exploitation of a client.
 - Expanded language for Mandatory Reporting, including RCW reference.
 - *3.06 Drug Free Workplace* Updated language to provide guidance on reasonable suspicion testing.
 - *3.07 Workplace Violence* Added in RCW reference to address immediate threat to human health, life or safety.
 - *3.09 Smoke & Vape Free Workplace* Updated and expanded policy from non-smoking to include vaping and electronic smoking devices.
 - *3.11 Life Threatening Illnesses/Communicable Disease* Added language to provide guidance to employees and supervisors on how to address client-related illnesses and communicable diseases.
-

- *3.17 NWRC Cell Phones* Added reference to Driving for Work policy and updated language for clarity.
- *3.18 Personal Cell Phones* Updated language to reflect current practice and added language to address the use of personal cell phones for work related matters.
- *3.22 Emergency Situation Procedures* Updated language to address emergency procedures for the facility one works in and the position in which the employee works.
- *3.23 Electronic and Social Media* Incorporated language from Social Workers guidelines and updated to reflect the use of social media as a part of work-related matters.
- *3.25 Visitors at Work* Simplified to speak to all guests in the workplace.
- *3.27 Milestone Anniversary Gifts* Adding language to clarify that gift cards are subject to payroll taxes.

Section 4: Work Schedules and Compensation

- *4.01 Attendance* Updated language to reflect the hybrid work environment and to have staff contact their supervisor directly (current practice).
- *4.05 Payroll Records* Incorporating language that employees must adhere to the timesheet procedures outlined by the fiscal department and are encouraged to monitor their paystubs.
- *4.11 Emergency Closures* Updating language to include telecommuting as an option during adverse weather conditions.
- *4.12 Alternative Work Schedules* Including language to provide clarity for employees who work a 4/10 schedule when a paid holiday arises.
- *4.13 Telecommuting.* Added online etiquette language and clarified approval level for ad hoc arrangements.
- *4.14 Salary Classifications and Grades* Reworded for clarity and consistency in terminology.
- *4.15 Pay Adjustments* Reworded for clarity and added considerations that may be reviewed.
- *4.18 Pay Rate Increases* Added language regarding Cost-of-Living-Adjustments to provide details as to the process for a COLA to be proposed and approved, and the indicators reviewed to determine a COLA proposal.

Section 5: Employee Benefits

- *Throughout Section 5* Integrated updated employment definitions from Section 2.01 and added clarifying language as to the benefits that apply for various employment statuses.
- *5.10 Flexible Spending Arrangements* removed language that you can pay for insurance premiums, as that is inaccurate.
- *5.12 Benefit Summary* Replaced summary table with a cleaner version that includes all the benefits offered by the agency.

Section 6: Paid and Unpaid Leaves of Absence

- *6.01 Vacation Leave.* Adjusted language to provide clarification and removed proration for part time staff.
- *6.02 Sick Leave and Family Care* Integrated 2025 definition of family from the WAC.
- *6.04 Family and Medical Leave & 6.06 Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Leave* Replaced all policy language to reflect the WA State Paid Family Medical Leave that

was adopted in 2020. The policy now speaks to the FMLA and WA State PFML, and how the two leaves may interact together.

- *6.09 Compassionate Leave* Lowered the total annual maximum hours an employee may receive now that WA State Paid Family Medical Leave is now available.
- *6.10 Bereavement Leave* Expanded the definition of a family member to align with WA State Paid Sick Leave definition. Added the use of 3 sick days for the purpose of additional bereavement leave.

Section 8: Reimbursement of Expenses

- *8.01 Reimbursement of Expenses.* Added reference to the State's per diem rate to provide guidance for lodging expenses.



Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual

2024 Update

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.01 WELCOME

Welcome to the Northwest Regional Council team.

Human Services with YOU at the center – this is our motto and lodestar. What makes you, *YOU*, in every sense. NWRC not only strives to be better at what we already do well but to also grow - to never stop improving. We are on the road to higher level inclusivity, better action around equity and a more celebrated and supported future for all of us. If you see worth in all people, you will find a home at NWRC.

NWRC Anthem

Innovation in human services starts with believing that everyone matters.
At our core, we care. So, we listen.

We craft plans around each person's individuality and strength. We respect, we support, we collaborate. When we move at the speed of trust, people feel valued, and we get results. We scan the horizon for unmet needs, always ready to strengthen the social fabric that connects us all.

We push aside the barriers of "it's always-been-done-this-way" and the doubts of "can we really make a difference?" We lean into the brilliance of our people and our partners.

We connect and create new solutions to navigate the challenges of aging and disability. Proactive paths to behavioral health and recovery. And new partnerships between healthcare and social services. We build better support systems, to better serve people, because we exist for people.

We would like to share with you NWRC's core values that guide us in working together to provide excellent service, products, and outcomes:

- Mutual Respect
- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Collective Success

Later in this manual, you will learn about our Basic Principles that help us live out these core values as we work with each other, clients, and the community.

1.02 THE GOVERNING BOARD

The NWRC Governing Board has the ultimate responsibility for all personnel action. The NWRC Board vests the authority and responsibility in the Executive Director to act in its behalf regarding personnel policies. All policies, procedures,

and practices in this manual supersede any previous policies, manuals, letters, memoranda and understandings.

1.03 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This manual has been developed to cover all employees of the NWRC and is intended to provide a general overview of the organization's policies, practices, and benefits, as well as the behaviors and conduct expected of all employees.

Employment with the NWRC is at-will and may be terminated by the employee or the organization at any time, with or without cause and with or without notice.

This manual sets out general guidelines for personnel policies and practices, rather than statements of specific treatment in specific situations. The manual is not intended to be a promise of specific treatment or contract of employment, should not be interpreted with this degree of specificity, and is not a contract promising specific treatment in a specific circumstance. Although we try to make decisions that are consistent with the manual, there may be times when it is not appropriate to do so, and the agency retains the right to deviate from the manual as circumstances warrant.

Circumstances may require a change in NWRC policies, practices, and benefits. The NWRC reserves the right to interpret, change, or rescind this manual or any part of it, with or without notice, subject to state and federal laws.

Please direct questions regarding this manual to your supervisor or Human Resources.

1.04 EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

It is NWRC's policy to treat all applicants and employees equally and without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, gender identity and/or expression, sexual orientation, age, marital status, parental status, military or veteran status, physical, mental, or sensory disability, genetics/genetic markers, political affiliation, or any other basis protected by federal, state and local law.

This policy extends to all areas of employment including recruitment, selection and placement, compensation, promotion, transfer, discipline, demotion, lay-off, termination, training, daily working conditions, benefits, and all other terms and conditions of employment. Applicants or employees requiring reasonable accommodation within the selection process or employment should make such requests in writing to the Human Resources representative.

SECTION 2: EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

2.01 DEFINITIONS

These definitions are adopted by the NWRC.

Trial Service Employee: All new employees shall serve a trial service period, which shall be considered an integral part of the selection process. The benefits herein do not apply to trial service except as specifically stated herein. Just as a regular employee, an employee in their trial period may be terminated at any time, with or without cause.

Regular Employee: [An individual that has successfully passed their trial service period. An individual appointed to a salaried or hourly position on the basis of more than 79.75 hours per month.](#)

Full-time Employee: [An individual appointed to a salaried or hourly position on the basis of 130 hours per month or greater. Such employees are eligible for health benefits and paid time off as outlined in this manual.](#)

Part-time Employee: An individual appointed to a salaried or hourly position on the basis of ~~79.75~~[more than 70](#) hours per month ~~buter less~~[fewer than 130 hours per month when averaged over 12 months.](#) [Such employees are eligible for limited benefits and sick leave as outlined in this manual.](#)

Temporary Employee: An individual employed on a temporary basis. Unless otherwise indicated in the letter of appointment, the benefits herein do not apply to these employees. Temporary appointments are limited to a maximum of twelve (12) months of continuous employment, with the exception of interns and work study students.

On Call Employee: An individual appointed to an hourly position in which the hours of work fluctuate according to staffing needs. Generally, this position works less than 70 hours per month. Unless otherwise indicated in the letter of appointment, the benefits herein do not apply to these employees.

Exempt Employees: Employees in positions exempt from minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Non-exempt Employees: Employees subject to the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Northwest Regional Council (NWRC): A multi-county association composed of Island, San Juan, Skagit, and Whatcom counties. It shall be referred to as the NWRC.

Anniversary Date:

- a) Employees that begin on the first working day of the month will be assigned the beginning of that month as their anniversary date.
- b) Employees that begin after the first working day of the month will be assigned an anniversary date of the first day of the month following their date of hire.
- c) Any employee undergoing a change in position (promotion, transfer or demotion) will be assigned a new anniversary date to coincide with the first day of the month following the classification change. This adjusted anniversary date will be used for scheduling an employee's annual performance review and step increase.
- d) Any employee being reclassified as a result of a modification to their current job function will maintain their current anniversary date.

Contract Employee: An individual employed as extra help, for a specific project or purpose on a time-limited basis, or on a temporary basis to provide scheduling relief during leaves of absences or vacations, to assist with projects or peak service demands of limited duration, or for staff in unique programs and that are generally tied to a particular grant. The provisions of this manual and benefits herein do not apply to these employees, unless otherwise stated in the employment contract.

Student Intern/Work Study: Temporary work assignment which allows a student to gain work experience in the field. Benefits herein are not available for these employees, except those required by law.

Volunteer: Non-paid staff assigned to assist with specific NWRC programs/services. Volunteers are not eligible for benefits, except those required by law.

Contractor: An individual whose services are retained on a contracted basis, not as an employee, documented through the contract process containing an appropriate scope of work.

2.02 EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS & INFORMATION

~~In order to~~ To be considered a viable applicant, an individual must complete an application and appropriate supplemental materials for position openings. NWRC relies upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application, as well as accuracy of other data provided throughout the selection process and employment. Any misrepresentation, falsification, or material omission may result in exclusion of the individual from consideration for employment or, if hired, termination of employment.

Employees whose work requires a state or national license, registration,

certification, or permit, will be required to present proof of such prior to employment and at each renewal period. It is the employee's responsibility to provide the NWRC with proof of current required license, registration, certification or permit within 2 weeks of the issue date.

NWRC employees whose job responsibilities require them to drive to attend meetings, serve clients, or perform other NWRC business will be required to abide by the NWRC driving policy (Cross Reference *Section 2.04 Pre-Employment and Continuing Requirements, Driving for Work*).

2.03 EMPLOYEE SELECTION

The NWRC's overall approach to selection decisions is to hire qualified individuals for each position consistent with the EEO policy of the NWRC and based on a series of selection activities including, but not limited to, interviews, skills exercises, references, and background checks.

Executive Director Selection

The Executive Director will be selected by and serve at the discretion of the NWRC. The Executive Director has the authority to appoint or rehire employees, or may delegate the authority to other managers, directors, and supervisors.

NWRC Staff Selection

When a position becomes vacant or when a new position is requested, the supervisor and unit director will review the job description and the need for such position prior to any posting or recruitment process. Once the position has been authorized by the Executive Director to be filled, Human Resources will proceed with appropriate posting and advertisements.

The NWRC recognizes the value of promoting excellent performers within the agency and will internally post all position opportunities. Employees interested in posted positions must complete all application materials and submit them to Human Resources within the specified time frame. The NWRC may announce a position opening to the public simultaneous with the internal announcement. The agency reserves the right to select the candidate it believes is best qualified for the position based on NWRC's assessment.

To be eligible to apply for any position opening, employees must have no disciplinary action on file for the previous 12 months and their most recent performance evaluation must reflect an overall performance rating of "Meets Expectations" (or better) and have no critical performance issues identified. Critical performance issues are those issues that must be immediately improved by the employee, or they will lead to disciplinary action or prevent the employee from obtaining future step increases. NWRC reserves the right to consider employees in the above circumstances for position transfers or demotions if such

job changes would benefit the organization (e.g., put the employee in a position of lesser responsibility better suited for the employee, move the employee to a position with closer supervision, etc.).

2.04 PRE-EMPLOYMENT AND CONTINUING REQUIREMENTS

COVID-19 Vaccination

~~Employees hired after May 19, 2022, are required to be up to date on COVID-19 vaccination, which is defined as having received all recommended doses based on their age and health status. Regardless of hire date, NWRC encourages all employees to maintain all recommended COVID-19 vaccination doses for their age and health status. Employees may pursue medical or religious accommodation by contacting the human resources representative.~~

Medical Examinations

NWRC may determine that a specific position requires a job-related medical examination to determine the applicant's ability to perform the essential functions of the position. In such cases, the successful applicant will be given a conditional offer of employment, subject to passing the medical examination. This employment medical examination will be paid for by the NWRC.

Additionally, from time to time, the NWRC may have concerns about a current employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the position or to return to work after a leave. In such cases, the NWRC may require the employee to undergo a job-related medical examination by a NWRC-designated physician. Such medical examination will be paid for by the NWRC and kept in the employee's confidential medical file. Failure to comply with the NWRC's examination requirement may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

Background & Reference Checks

Washington State law requires the NWRC to check the background of applicants who may have unsupervised access to vulnerable adults. It is the policy of NWRC to conduct the appropriate background checks regarding licensure, criminal records, [driving records](#), and employer references on all applicants completing the final stages of the selection process. In the event findings are reported on a candidate's background check, a suitability review will be conducted by Human Resources on an individual basis, subject to approval by the supervisor and Executive Director. The suitability review may include, but is not limited to, ~~the~~ job responsibilities, NWRC agency insurance policies and guidelines, overall candidate recruitment materials and scoring, and the DSHS Secretary's List of Crimes and Negative Actions. Any offers of employment will be rescinded should the applicant fail to satisfactorily pass these checks.

[Per HCS Management Bulletin H23-067, NWRC will conduct a background](#)

[check, including applicable fingerprinting, for internal position movements including promotions, demotions and transfers.](#)

Follow-up background and license checks will occur throughout employment. Applicants or current NWRC employees must notify the NWRC of any investigations or convictions that would affect or preclude them [from](#) performing any of their job functions. Continued employment is subject to the passing of these background checks and authorization to perform job duties.

Driving for Work

NWRC seeks to safeguard its employees and others when driving a motor vehicle is required while conducting agency business. Employees whose job responsibilities require them to drive to attend meetings and/or trainings, serve clients or perform other NWRC-related business are required to adhere to NWRC's Driving Agreement, and the policies outlined herein.

Motor Vehicle Driving Record Check Prior to Employment

NWRC will check the motor vehicle driving records and driver licensing status of finalist candidates prior to an offer of employment being made. The motor vehicle driving record check may include a review of records in States other than Washington to obtain 60 months of motor vehicle driving record history. Candidates with less than three years driving experience may be subject to additional driving record monitoring by Human Resources until they reach three years of driving experience.

Candidates may not be eligible for employment due to an unsatisfactory motor vehicle driving record, such as a major moving violation within the last 60 months, multiple minor moving violations in the last 36 months, or at fault accident(s) in the last 36 months. (Reference *Moving Violations*). In the event violations are reported on a candidate's motor vehicle driving record, a suitability review will be conducted by Human Resources on an individual basis, subject to approval by the supervisor and Executive Director. The suitability review may include, but is not limited to, the job responsibilities, NWRC agency insurance policies and guidelines, overall candidate recruitment materials and scoring, and the DSHS Secretary's List of Crimes and Negative Actions.

In the event a candidate does not have a valid driver's license, their candidacy for the role will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to determine if the role may be performed using alternate modes of transportation such as bicycle or public transit.

Requirements for Current Employees

Employees are required to provide a copy of a current and valid driver's license and proof of auto insurance, including liability limits, to Human Resources within three business days of their first day of employment, and ongoing thereafter to maintain current records. Auto insurance liability limit

requirements are based upon the frequency of driving necessary in a role to meet job responsibilities and the potential for driving for NWRC--related business (e.g., meetings, conferences, training, client home visits, etc.). Proof of insurance documentation provided to NWRC must include the liability limits, name of the employee, the make and model of the covered vehicle, and the effective dates of coverage. The following table displays auto insurance liability limit requirements:

Average frequency of driving	Liability Limits	Example positions
Less than weekly	WA State Minimum Insurance	Administrative staff, NEMT, and ADR.
Weekly	\$100,000 bodily injury per person/\$300,000 per accident/ \$50,000 property damage OR \$300,000 Combined Single Limit	Case Managers, Care Coordinators, Behavioral Health Clinicians, Tribal & Dementia Program Specialists.

If unsure as to which auto insurance liability limits apply to their role, an employee is to discuss with their supervisor to determine which limit is appropriate. The supervisor will consult with the Executive Director or Human Resources for final determination.

NWRC will monitor motor vehicle driving records every 12 months for current employees (Reference *Probationary Status for Unsatisfactory Motor Vehicle Driving Record*). Any employee without a valid driver's license or the required liability limits is not allowed to drive for work related purposes. If driving is an essential job function and the employee cannot be reasonably accommodated, employment may be terminated.

Probationary Status for Unsatisfactory Motor Vehicle Driving Record

If an existing employee has a valid driver's license but the employee's driving record evidences infractions that are considered unsatisfactory, such as a major moving violation within the last 60 months, multiple minor moving violations in the last 36 months (Reference *Moving Violations*), or at fault accident(s) in the last 36 months, the employee will be placed on probationary status and will be subject to the requirements of that status until the end of the probation. Stipulations of the probationary status are determined on a case-by-case basis, as approved by the Executive Director, and may include additional periodic motor vehicle driving record checks throughout the duration of the probationary period. Any violations

during the probationary period may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Moving Violations

Moving violations are identified in WAC 308-104-160. Examples of minor moving violations include, but are not limited to, passing violations, school bus or zone violation, and speed equal to or less than 20MPH over the limit. Examples of major moving violations include, but are not limited to, reckless driving, driving without a valid license, driving while intoxicated or under the influence of drugs, and speed in excess of 20MPH over the limit.

Safety & Distracted driving

NWRC values the safety and wellbeing of all employees and our community, including while traveling for the purpose of agency business. Distracted driving is a serious safety risk to many, including the driver, additional occupants, other drivers, and pedestrians.

To reduce the risks associated with distracted driving, the following conduct is prohibited while driving a personal vehicle for the purpose of agency business:

- Cell phone use
- Operating laptops, tablets, portable media devices, GPS devices, and all other electronic devices and in-vehicle infotainment systems
- Reading maps or any type of document, printed or electronic

Employees who are traveling and need to engage in one of the above activities to meet their job responsibilities must pull over to a safe location before proceeding.

Violations of this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Reporting Requirements

Employees are required to report changes related to driver's licensing status, auto insurance coverage, and motor vehicle driving record status to Human Resources as soon as is reasonable, and no more than 30 days after the change has taken effect. Such changes may include, but are not limited to, a change of vehicle, driving infractions, auto insurance limit adjustments, new policy provider, etc.

Infractions or Motor Vehicle Incidents During Work

Infractions or motor vehicle incidents that occur when an employee is driving for work must be reported as soon as is reasonable to their supervisor and Human Resources. In the event of a motor vehicle incident in which injury occurs, the employee(s) involved will need to complete an incident report form and provide to Human Resources. Human Resources may make the determination to share information regarding the incident and/or injury to the NWRC Safety Committee to see if any recommendations arise to help prevent or lessen the impact of similar

incidents in the future. Personal identifiers will not be shared with the committee by Human Resources.

Off-duty infractions are to be reported to the employee's supervisor and Human Resources at the point in which the employee reasonably knows the infraction will be on their motor vehicle driving record.

2.05 ORIENTATION & TRAINING

Within a new employee's first weeks of employment, NWRC will conduct an orientation to help orient the new employee to the organization. This orientation will include information regarding the employee's pay and benefits as well as information about the NWRC and its mission. Employees may receive on-the-job training specific to their position within their department or on taking a new position.

Throughout employment, employees may be required to attend mandatory periodic informational and training programs. The program topics and frequency will vary based on position responsibilities and requirements.

2.06 TRIAL SERVICE PERIOD (NEW HIRES & REHIRES)

All newly hired employees and rehired employees, excluding contracted employees, will participate in a 6-month training and evaluation trial service period which allows the employee and employer to evaluate if the employment relationship is mutually acceptable. The trial service period allows the employee an opportunity to demonstrate their suitability for the position through actual work performance and it provides the employer an opportunity to evaluate the employee's ability to meet the demands of the position and become a contributing member of the NWRC. Employees will be evaluated by their supervisor prior to the completion of the trial service period.

If circumstances require the need for additional observation, NWRC may extend the trial service period for a specified length of time. The employment of a trial service employee may be terminated with or without cause or notice at any time during the trial service period or extended trial service period and the at-will status continues upon completion of the trial service period.

2.07 TRIAL SERVICE PERIOD (OTHER)

Employees who are promoted, ~~receive lateral job changes or demoted~~ will serve a 6-month trial service period. In the event of a lateral job change or demotion, the supervisor in collaboration with Human Resources and the Executive Director will determine if a trial service period will be required. This trial service period will be used to determine the employee's ability to perform the new job responsibilities. Benefits will not be affected by this trial service period. Employees will be evaluated prior to the completion of the trial service period.

If circumstances require the need for additional observation, NWRC may extend the trial service period for a specified length of time.

2.08 EMPLOYMENT OF RELATIVES (NEPOTISM)

To avoid the reality or appearance of improper influence, favor, or conflict of interest, and for reasons relating to supervision, safety, and security, the NWRC does not allow individuals with familial ties, including legal marriage, partnerships, biological, adoptive, and similar, to be employed where:

1. One of the parties would have authority (or practical power) to supervise, appoint, remove, or discipline the other.
2. Where one party would be responsible for auditing the work of the other.
3. Where there is potential for conflict between the parties or between the interest of one or both parties and the best interest of the NWRC.

If two employees engage in a familial relationship that may, in the NWRC's judgement, create or reasonably could create the potential problems listed above, only one employee will be permitted to remain in the NWRC's employment unless modification of job duties, positions, or responsibilities, as determined in the sole discretion of the Executive Director, can be made to eliminate the potential problem. If termination of one employee is necessary, the decision as to which employee will remain employed with [the](#) NWRC will be made by the two employees within thirty (30) calendar days of the date the NWRC becomes aware of the potential problem. If no decision is made during this time, the NWRC reserves the right to terminate either employee.

2.09 REHIRES [& SERVICE BRIDGES](#)

When former employees apply to be rehired, they will be evaluated on the same basis as all other applicants. Consideration will be given to past job performance and the circumstances surrounding separation of previous employment.

Employees rehired after July 2022 and within 6 consecutive months after separation will have their service bridged. This means that the employee may retain the original date of hire and may continue to accrue time off benefits at the previous rate. Insurance benefits will continue as stipulated in the plan documents. If the employee is rehired into the same role, the Trial Service Period will not apply. If the employee is rehired into a position other than the role they [recently vacated most recently performed](#), a Trial Service Period will apply but the employee's benefits will not be affected by this Trial Service Period. Employees rehired after a break of service of more than 6 consecutive months will receive a new date of hire regardless. They will be treated the same as new employees for all benefits.

2.10 EMPLOYMENT REFERENCES

Supervisors and managers may provide accurate written letters of recommendation when requested by an employee. Supervisors and managers providing employment references to other employers will obtain an information release waiver signed by the employee prior to releasing employment-related information on current or past employees. Human Resources staff can assist in verifying that a release form has been completed and placed in the employee's personnel file or in providing a form to the requesting employer should they not have one.

2.11 OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT

Employees must disclose, in writing, outside employment or ownership of a private business upon hire with NWRC or at the time the employee first becomes involved in outside employment or business ownership. Outside employment must not interfere with the employee's regular duties or create a conflict of interest, as determined ~~in~~ at the sole discretion of the Executive Director. Employees planning to engage in outside employment or private business ownership during their NWRC employment will submit, in writing, their intentions to their supervisor for review and approval by the Executive Director.

2.12 EMPLOYEE PRIVACY AND PERSONNEL FILES

NWRC maintains employment-related files for its employees. These files are property of the NWRC. The main personnel file primarily contains the following types of information:

- Address, telephone number, and emergency contacts;
- Application and/or resume, reference letters or other materials submitted or created during the employment process;
- Employment history information, including titles and dates of positions held, salaries, dates and amounts of raises, changes in status (e.g., full-time, part-time, temporary), resignation and hires;
- Copies of licensure and vehicle insurance;
- Performance evaluations;
- Records of corrective counseling or disciplinary action;
- Personnel action items such as insurance enrollment/change records and personal information changes;
- Other documents pertaining to employment such as letters of commendation, training records, etc.

All medically-related information will be maintained by Human Resources in a separate employee medical file. Information in the medical file may be disclosed only to the employee, to a supervisor on a need-to-know basis, individuals given

access by the employee's written consent, or as otherwise required or allowed by state and federal law.

An employee who wishes to review their personnel records should contact Human Resources to arrange a time. These records may be reviewed only in the presence of a designated NWRC official during normal business hours. Where an employee disputes information contained in their personnel file, the employee may submit a written request to the Executive Director that the information be changed. If this request is denied, the employee may request that a statement containing their correction or rebuttal be placed in the file.

While personnel files are kept confidential in accordance with applicable laws, information contained in personnel files may be audited by governing or funding agencies. Employees should notify Human Resources of any personal information changes.

2.13 INTERNSHIPS

To assist in the development of future workforces, the NWRC may choose to participate in school-related internship programs. These programs must be affiliated with an educational institution and provide practical application of what the student is learning in school. All internships will receive approval from the Executive Director prior to commencement. Work will be performed under the supervision of an assigned appropriate mentor. The assigned supervisor will be responsible for completing school-related progress reports.

While internships are generally unpaid positions, interns will be required to comply with many of the processes, policies and procedures required of regular employees and must sign the internship letter of understanding. Internship programs are considered stand-alone programs and in no way entitle the student to a position at the conclusion of the internship period.

2.14 WORK STUDY

Work study programs are affiliated with an educational institution and provide the student with paid work experience. Individuals considered for work study must be approved through the school to participate in the subsidized work study program. All work study assignments will receive approval from the Executive Director prior to commencement. Work will be performed under the supervision of an assigned appropriate supervisor.

Work study students will be required to comply with the processes, policies and procedures required of regular employees and must sign the work study letter of understanding. Work study programs are considered stand-alone programs and in no way entitle the student to a position at the conclusion of the work study period.

2.15 VOLUNTEERS

NWRC may, from time-to-time, utilize volunteers to assist within the organization. All volunteer assignments will receive approval from the Executive Director prior to commencement. Volunteers may receive reimbursement for specific portions of their volunteer service, such as mileage reimbursement. A current employee may not volunteer in any capacity related to their paid position. While volunteer positions are unpaid, volunteers will be required to comply with many of the processes, policies and procedures required of regular employees and must sign the volunteer letter of understanding.

SECTION 3: GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

3.01 BASIC PRINCIPLES

To assist us in working collaboratively together and providing the best service to our clients and the public, NWRC employees are expected to adhere to the following “Basic Principles:”

1. **Focus on the situation, issue, or behavior, not on the person.** Focusing on the situation, issue, or behavior helps us remain objective when faced with challenges. We can solve problems more effectively, make better decisions, and maintain constructive relationships when we concentrate on the big picture and consider others’ points of view with an open mind.
2. **Maintain the self-confidence and self-esteem of others.** Contributing fully is easier in an atmosphere of acceptance and approval. When people feel free to express their ideas without fear of ridicule or personal criticism, they are more willing to take risks and stretch their capabilities. By showing respect and helping others develop their abilities and reach their goals, we multiply our own efforts in the workplace.
3. **Maintain constructive relationships.** Whether working with a co-worker, client, or member of the public, our goal is to interact constructively and strive toward building stronger, more effective relationships for the future.
4. **Take the initiative to make things better.** We all have a role in making our workplace better. By finding opportunities for improvement, we build a more effective workplace which often results in better service to our clients.
5. **Lead by example.** Being a good leader means setting a good example – even in the face of disappointing circumstances. By performing your job duties to the best of your abilities, honoring your commitments, admitting your mistakes, and staying receptive to new ideas, you will model leadership qualities for others to follow.
6. **Think beyond the moment.** At work we must consider how our actions and decisions will impact others and the NWRC. We are also expected to behave ethically in performing all our duties at the NWRC.

3.02 GENERAL EMPLOYEE CONDUCT

Employees are expected to use good judgment in performing their job and in representing the agency. Unsatisfactory employee conduct will be handled through disciplinary procedures. The following are general guidelines for employee conduct:

- Ensure that our interactions and communications with each other, clients, and the general public present a professional and caring image.
- Demonstrate mutual respect toward co-workers, colleagues, clients, and the general public.
- Recognize that each work assignment is important and worthy of our best efforts.
- Accomplish work in a timely, accurate, and professional manner.
- Present a neat, professional appearance at all times.
- Report immediately to your supervisor problems with a client, colleague, or member of the general public.
- Abide by all confidentiality standards when handling client information.
- Exercise good judgment by confining personal telephone calls, conversations, and visiting to non-working hours.
- Adhere to policies, procedures, safety rules and safe working practices.
- Cooperate with management and follow directions from supervisors.
- Preserve and protect the NWRC's equipment, grounds, facilities, and resources.
- Follow NWRC's ethics policy and professional ethics standards.

3.03 ETHICS POLICY

General

As a public agency, we are entrusted with the public's confidence to provide service with the highest ethical standards and to appropriately utilize public funds. This policy is designed to guide employees on the standards of ethical behavior and to supplement, not supersede or conflict with the ethical standards set forth in the Revised Code of Washington ("RCWs") 42.52 Ethics in Public Service. Additionally, each employee must adhere to additional codes of ethics that may be associated with an employee's profession or NWRC program [to](#) which they are assigned.

NWRC employees are expected to uphold these ethical practices and avoid even the appearance of improper influence and refrain from ever receiving, soliciting, or accepting gifts, gratuities, favors or anything of value for themselves or their family members, which is intended or has the appearance or effect of influencing the performance of their duties. Please refer any questions regarding this policy to your supervisor or Human Resources.

Definitions

"Staff" - for the purposes of this ethics policy is intended to include all persons who act on behalf of the NWRC, whether paid or unpaid.

"Immediate Family" – as defined in RCW [42.17A.00542.52.010](#), which includes:

1. Spouse or domestic partner, dependent children, and other dependent relatives, if living in the household.
2. Child, stepchild, grandchild, parent, stepparent, grandparent, siblings or half-siblings of the employee and the spouse or the domestic partner of any such person.
3. [CA](#)-child, stepchild, grandchild, parent, stepparent, grandparent, siblings or half-siblings of the individual's spouse or domestic partner and the spouse or the domestic partner of any such person.
4. Any uncle, aunt, cousin, niece, or nephew.

"Client" - indicates an individual who receives services through NWRC or its contractors.

Policy

General Staff Member Conduct

- Staff should seek to find and employ efficient and economical ways to provide services and give to the performance of their duties their best attention, efforts and thoughts.
- Staff should be aware that they are seen as a representative of the NWRC when they are acting within the scope of their job responsibilities.
- Staff must never intentionally act outside the scope of their job responsibilities in representing the NWRC, nor portray themselves as acting on behalf of the NWRC when, in fact, they are not.
- Staff must treat every individual equitably with courtesy and respect.
- Staff must never dispense special favors or privileges to any person, whether for remuneration or not, and should never accept for themselves or others, favors or benefits under circumstances which might give the appearance to reasonable persons as influencing the performance of their NWRC duties.

- Staff must avoid the appearance of improper influence and refrain from ever receiving, soliciting, or accepting gifts, gratuities, favors or anything of value for themselves, or others, which is intended or has the appearance or effect of influencing the performance of their duties.
- Staff must never attempt to influence of others in the performance of their duties by any means which are not appropriate or proper.
- Staff must never use, approve, or aid in the use of NWRC property or funds for private purposes, for purposes other than those authorized or permitted, or for purposes which could mislead clients or damage the reputation and integrity of the NWRC.
- NWRC property, equipment, money, services, and staff time are for NWRC purposes only and shall not be appropriated for personal or private use.

Service Provision

- Staff are to provide client services within the scope of the program standards, policies and/or procedures.
- Clients who are in need of assistance beyond this scope of services are to be referred to an appropriate service provider.
- NWRC strives to provide fair and equitable service to all its clients. Staff members should use their best judgment to ensure their actions do not create any actual or apparent favoritism or conflict of interest.
- Staff must refer clients who need services of guardianship, power of attorney, protective payee, or other substitute decision making (such as health care or financial decisions) to available resources in the community.
- Falsification of client financial or eligibility status in order to obtain needed services is prohibited.

Client Respect and Well Being

- Staff are to preserve the privacy of the client by refraining from visiting or contacting the client except for purposes of fulfilling their professional responsibilities.
- Obscene, profane, disrespectful, or inappropriate language or behavior are prohibited while in the presence of the client, their representative, family member or others.

Client Well Being

If an employee, intern, or volunteer has reason to believe any client has been abused, neglected, abandoned, or exploited, regardless of the source of information, the employee is required to notify their supervisor immediately and follow through mandatory reporting procedures outlined below. 'Reason to believe' means that the employee (reporter), in making the report, acts with good faith intent based on the circumstances and information present at the time of the report.

- Staff should be alert for indications of situations that jeopardize or compromise a client's right to be free of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. Examples include, but are not limited to*:
 1. Outright physical harm to a person, regardless of ability to defend self.
 2. Verbal abuse which may lead to physical abuse or neglect.
 3. Client's loss of decision-making or choice with regard to lifestyle (e.g., refusal to allow visitors, refusal to allow client to come and go as they choose, etc.).
 4. Unauthorized use of client assets.
 5. Withholding of food, care, or medication by the caregiver.

Mandatory Reporting

- Staff are "Mandatory Reporters" under the law and must report and document any suspected abuse, neglect, abandonment, or exploitation to the appropriate authorities. To report suspected abuse of a vulnerable adult, in accordance with RCW 74.34, staff should contact Adult Protective Services (APS). Employees who fail to report suspected abuse, neglect, abandonment, or exploitation may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and/or criminal action. Failure to report for vulnerable adults is unlawful under Washington State Law RCW 74.34.053. -

Confidentiality

- Staff may not disclose any information obtained during the course of employment as it relates to clients or the provision of services to clients even after the employee has separated from service with the agency. This prohibition does not apply to information that is shared with partner agencies, such as DSHS or subcontractors, for purposes directly connected with the administration of NWRC programs or the provision of services to clients. Such purposes include, but are not limited to, determining eligibility, providing a service, and participating in an audit. With written approval from the NWRC Executive Director, staff may disclose information for research, statistical, monitoring, and evaluation purposes conducted by appropriate federal agencies and DSHS. Certain client information is considered protected health

information under state and federal law, including the federal Health Information Portability Accountability Act. Each employee is required to fully comply with state and federal laws regarding protected health and private information, including any laws which specifically apply to an employee's profession or NWRC program which they are assigned.

Client Gifts

NWRC recognizes that client gifts or demonstrations of appreciation may arise in the course of an employee's work with a client. Employees are encouraged to notify the client that gifts are not necessary, and the absence of gifts or demonstrations of appreciation will not impact their receipt of services. Employees may use their professional judgement to determine if a gift should be accepted based upon:

- Cultural considerations
- Monetary value (i.e., not of great monetary value, approximately \$10)
- Appropriateness of the gift
- Intent of the gift
- Client's cognitive status

If an employee does accept a client gift, when possible, the gift is to be discussed with the supervisor and used by the agency at large. In the event of a gift being given by a client with impaired cognition, the employee is to attempt to return the gift with minimal emotional impact to the client.

Under all circumstances, employees are expected to avoid bartering with or receiving gifts from the client and their care partners which may be construed as exploitation of a client and their resources, a conflict of interest, or otherwise unethical.

Should a client or their care partners express interest in making an official donation to the agency, the employee is to refer them to their supervisor to determine appropriate next steps.

Client Finances and Property

- Staff should notify clients whenever possible regarding financial obligations the client will incur as a result of referral and receipt of a service/benefit from a particular service provider.
- In the rare occurrence that an ~~employee~~ ~~staff member~~ may handle the money or property of a client, the employee is to notify their supervisor beforehand. A receipt documenting the amount of money or value of property handled and the nature of the transaction should be signed by both the client

and ~~staff person~~employee. Documentation should be retained within the client's record with a copy to the client and/or their representative.

Conflict of Interest

Staff may not take unfair advantage of any professional relationship or exploit others to further their personal, religious, political, financial, business, or similar interests. Staff are expected to use their professional judgement to determine when action needs to be taken to protect the best interests of the client, minimizing risk of exploitation or harm to the client.

- Staff are to accept and assist any client in a manner appropriate to the staff member's position. If a potential conflict of interest exists between staff and the client, the staff person shall present such conflict to their immediate supervisor for resolution.
- If a client is "Immediate Family" of a staff member, that staff member will notify their supervisor and disqualify themselves from direct service provision for that client.
- A staff member who has had a personal relationship with a person who is being assigned as a prospective client must inform their supervisor of the relationship so that the client may be assigned to an alternate staff member if there is a potential conflict of interest, as appropriate.
- Staff, or associates of staff, may not engage in or knowingly participate in financial transactions with known former or present clients of the agency that result in their private personal economic gain. Such activities include, but are not limited to real estate, insurance, or other investment activities.
- Staff may not ask a client to purchase any item or service belonging to or sold by staff or immediate family of the staff member.
- Staff may not receive remuneration in any manner from any source for a client referral.
- Staff are not to use any information obtained in the course of their employment for the purpose of private personal economic gain by that staff member or a staff member's immediate family.
- Staff will notify their supervisor, in writing, prior to serving on any Board that is affiliated with the NWRC.

Violations of Ethics Policy

Violations of this Ethics Policy are considered a violation of the terms and conditions of employment. Such violation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The actions and remedies of the Personnel Policies are not to be presumed exhaustive and do not replace or exclude civil or criminal sanctions.

3.04 POLICY AGAINST UNLAWFUL DISCRIMINATION

Policy against Discrimination

Every employee has the right to work in surroundings that are free from unlawful discrimination. NWRC therefore strictly prohibits unlawful discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, or any other legally protected classification. NWRC also prohibits the harassment of any individual based on these protected classifications. NWRC requires its employees to abide by this policy in practice and in spirit. NWRC encourages its employees to address any questions or concerns about this policy directly to their supervisor, Human Resources, or the Executive Director. Employees may do so without fear of reprisal.

Policy against Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination and NWRC will not tolerate it in the workplace. Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, non-verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment may also include unwelcome sexual attention, verbal abuse of a sexual nature, unwelcome touching, a display in the workplace of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, sexually explicit or offensive jokes, gestures, or objects, or engaging in any sexually oriented conduct which unreasonably interferes with another's work performance or creates a work environment that is intimidating, hostile, or offensive. NWRC specifically prohibits any employee from:

- (1.) making unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, a condition of an employee's continued employment, **or**
- (2.) making submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis for employment decisions affecting the employee, **or**
- (3.) creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment by such conduct.

Employee's Response to Misconduct

NWRC requires any employee who feels that they have been the subject of discrimination or harassment to report the conduct. Employees who feel that they or others may have been subject to discrimination or sexual harassment,

including but not limited to any of the conduct listed above, by any supervisor, management official, or other employee should bring the matter to the immediate attention of their supervisor, Human Resources, or any other member of the Management Team (including the Executive Director) who will initiate an investigation. Additionally, employees who have concerns regarding the behavior of clients, vendors, or the general public should also bring such concerns to their supervisor or manager. Allegations of harassment will be promptly investigated, and appropriate corrective action will be taken. To assist in the prompt resolution of the complaint, employees should provide any supporting documents and identify any person who may have knowledge regarding the allegations. The Executive Director will be immediately notified of any complaints.

NWRC'S Investigation

NWRC will take all reports seriously and conduct an appropriate investigation. NWRC will require employees to cooperate in any investigation, whether or not they are directly involved. NWRC will keep the fact and results of its investigation as confidential as possible.

Non-Retaliation

NWRC prohibits retaliation (taking adverse action against an employee) because of an employee's good faith report of discrimination or harassment, or participation in an investigation of such a claim. Any individual who is found to have engaged in retaliatory conduct will be subject to appropriate corrective action, up to and including termination. Employees who believe that they have experienced such retaliation should notify their supervisor, [human resources](#), or the Executive Director.

3.05 AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The NWRC's policy is to ensure equal employment opportunity for all qualified persons with a disability. For purposes of this section, "disability" includes a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits an employee's major life activities, or a record, or appearance of having such an impairment.

The NWRC recognizes that employees with physical, sensory, or mental disabilities may need reasonable accommodations to enable them to perform their essential job functions. Any employee who believes they need reasonable accommodation should notify their supervisor and Human Resources. Although the need for accommodation is determined on a case-by-case basis, generally the NWRC and the employee engage in an interactive process with the employee and the employee's healthcare provider(s) to confirm the existence of the condition, its limitations in the workplace and possible reasonable accommodations. The employee has an obligation to cooperate with the agency in this process, which may include authorizing the NWRC to communicate with

the employee's healthcare providers concerning the employee's condition, its limitations, and possible reasonable accommodations.

3.06 DRUG FREE WORKPLACE

General

NWRC is concerned about the effects that drugs and alcohol may have on safe and productive job performance. We also recognize that employees who are affected in their ability to perform their jobs safely and productively jeopardize the integrity of the workplace and the achievement of our mission. Therefore, abiding by the provisions of this policy is a condition of employment with NWRC.

Prohibitions

This policy strictly prohibits the following:

- Performing work with a presence of drugs or alcohol in an employee's system (other than those that do not impact job performance, are medically prescribed, and approved by a physician and used as prescribed or purchased over the counter and used as directed).
- The unlawful use, possession, manufacture, distribution, dispensing, transfer or trafficking of alcohol, drugs that are illegal under state, federal or local law (including marijuana), or controlled substances in any amount or in any manner on NWRC property, whether or not engaged in NWRC business, or while driving for work in NWRC vehicles at any time, whether or not engaged in NWRC business.
- The use, in any way, of NWRC property, equipment or the employee's position to make or traffic alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances.
- Any other use, possession or trafficking of alcohol, drugs or controlled substances in a manner which is detrimental to the interest of the organization, creates a safety concern, or unduly interferes with job performance.
- Refusing to submit to a drug or alcohol test requested by NWRC.
- Tampering with a test sample or obstruction of the test process.

Employees may use or consume prescription drugs while on the job when taken pursuant to a valid physician's order, or over-the-counter drugs when taken as appropriate, only when there is no possibility that such use may impair the employee's ability to safely perform their job or may adversely affect their safety, resident/public safety or the safety of other employees. It is the employee's responsibility to be aware of the effects of any medication that they may be taking and to be alert for any evidence of impairment. Employees taking

medication which may affect their performance or abilities must advise their supervisor ~~of this fact~~.

Violations of these prohibitions will lead to discipline, up to and including termination.

Testing

1. Reasonable Suspicion Testing

NWRC is authorized to require drug and/or alcohol testing when it has a reasonable suspicion of violation of this policy. Reasonable suspicion arises when an employer has strong reason or cause to suspect drug and/or alcohol use. ~~is suspicion based on specific personal observations of the employee's appearance, behavior, speech or odor.~~ Such testing determinations will be made by a supervisor, unit director or Executive Director, and Human Resources - based on the best available information at the time of the test decision and utilizing the reasonable suspicion checklist. When a testing determination is being made, management is encouraged to consider any known medical information, number of instances, and possible biases that could influence the decision-making process. Refusal to consent to testing will constitute a violation of this policy and employees will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

2. Requests for Retesting

An employee who tests positive will not be paid for the time lost from work during the period of testing and receiving the test results. Should a positive test be disputed by the employee, the employee may request a re-test of the same sample. The request must be made within forty-eight (48) hours of receipt of the initial results. The expense for re-testing must be pre-paid by the employee. NWRC may, at the discretion of the Executive Director, reimburse the employee for the re-test dependent upon the results of the re-test and circumstances surrounding the screening. Employees who test negative will be paid for time lost from work.

3. Type of Tests

The NWRC-designated laboratory has the discretion to determine its testing methods and the standards for determining whether a test is "positive" or "negative." NWRC and the laboratory will provide quality control procedures and will assure the maximum confidentiality and chain of custody.

Confidentiality/Privacy

The fact that a drug and/or alcohol test has been requested or administered, the results of that test, and communications with the employee regarding substance use ~~and abuse~~, are considered private and confidential.

Disciplinary Action

Employees are subject to appropriate discipline and/or termination for violating this policy as described earlier. Policy violations also include:

- a. Refusal to Allow Test. NWRC may request an employee to consent to testing, to permit the test results to be analyzed, and to release such results to authorized company representatives, subject to any applicable state or local laws and regulations. An employee's failure to consent and submit to requested testing will subject the employee to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- b. Positive Test Results. An employee who tests positive for the presence of alcohol or drugs in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- c. Off-The-Job Conduct. An employee's off-the-job use of illegal drugs or unlawful or unauthorized substances which adversely affects the employee's job performance or jeopardizes the safety of other employees, or the security of the company's premises, also violates this policy. An employee who is convicted of or pleads guilty or no contest to off-the-job manufacture, sale, purchase, transfer, use or possession of illegal drugs or unauthorized substances will be subject to disciplinary action, including termination if, in the view of management, the circumstances warrant. Any employee convicted of a violation of a criminal drug statute that is workplace-related must notify the Executive Director within five working days of the conviction.

Employee Assistance and Rehabilitation

Employees may access the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provided by NWRC for situations related to substance use. The EAP provides professional, confidential counseling to employees. NWRC offers an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to its employees as an additional benefit. The EAP provides professional, confidential counseling to employees experiencing personal issues. NWRC will not discipline or terminate an employee who voluntarily seeks EAP assistance before there is a performance problem or positive drug or alcohol test result. However, all employees (including those seeking EAP assistance) must be free of drugs and alcohol at work and comply with NWRC's other work rules and performance standards. NWRC notes that any employee who fails to do so is subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment.

3.07 WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

NWRC prohibits violence in the workplace and is committed to maintaining an environment free of all forms of violence, including verbal or physical threats, intimidation, and abusive statements, or any conduct that causes others to feel intimidated or unsafe.

Employees are prohibited from bringing weapons to work or on NWRC premises, including NWRC's parking lot. NWRC reserves the right to inspect ~~with or without notice~~, all persons' packages, automobiles and other items that come on to NWRC property when there's an immediate threat to human health, life or safety (reference RCW 49.44-230). NWRC further reserves the right to inspect all NWRC property with or without notice. NWRC encourages its employees to raise workplace concerns with their immediate supervisor. If the supervisor is unavailable, or if the complaints remain unresolved after talking with the supervisor, or if the nature of the complaint is such that the employee does not feel they can discuss the complaint with their supervisor, the employee may make a complaint to a human resources representative or any member of the Management Team.

NWRC prohibits the following by way of example:

- Any act or threat of violence made by an employee against another person's life, health, well-being, family or property.
- Any act or threat of violence, including, but not limited to, intimidation, harassment, or coercion.
- Any act or threat of violence that endangers the safety of employees, clients, vendors, contractors, or the general public.
- Any act or threat of violence made directly or indirectly by words, gestures, or symbols.
- Use or possession of a weapon on the organization's premises.
- Threatening, harassing, or abusing a domestic partner at the workplace or utilizing workplace resources for such behaviors.

Upon receiving a complaint, NWRC will promptly investigate the matter to determine relevant facts and circumstances. Information about any complaint will be treated as confidentially as possible, consistent with proper investigation and responsive action. Based on its investigation, NWRC will take immediate and appropriate corrective action. Individuals who lodge good faith complaints or who participate in a NWRC investigation will not be retaliated against or otherwise treated adversely for having done so.

Orders of Protection/Restraining Orders

An employee who has obtained an order of protection or restraining order against another individual must notify their supervisor and provide a copy of the official restraining order document. The NWRC may also request a picture from the employee of the individual listed on the restraining order. The NWRC may take whatever steps it deems appropriate to ensure the safety of the workplace. The mandates of the restraining order will be followed until it has expired, or an alternative document has been provided which changes the status of the order.

Public Contact

NWRC strives to maintain a safe and secure workplace and does not tolerate violent, threatening, or abusive treatment of employees by clients or members of the public. Due to the nature of NWRC's work, employees in client facing positions may encounter clients who experience significant physical and behavioral health concerns that may manifest in aggressive behaviors and complex family dynamics. Employees who feel they are being treated inappropriately or in a threatening manner by another individual should politely remove themselves from the situation and immediately inform their supervisor or, in the absence of their supervisor, another available supervisor.

NWRC Response

When NWRC becomes aware of a potentially threatening situation (both domestic and from the public), management will undertake an assessment of the risk and implement a safety response plan specific to the circumstances of the threat. A response plan may include any of the following:

- If circumstances warrant, NWRC may pursue an order of protection/restraining order against the threatening individual.
- Post a picture or other identifying information at the front desk area to alert individuals monitoring incoming traffic.
- Alert necessary personnel to the situation (which will include, at a minimum, all NWRC Management Team members and executive management of other service contractors located in the building).
- Review existing security systems and procedures.
- Identify exit/escape plans for potentially targeted individuals.
- Remind staff of the universal office evacuation system.
- Consult with local authorities for further advice, as needed.

3.08 FEDERAL & STATE FALSE CLAIMS ACT / WHISTLEBLOWER AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS

It is the policy of NWRC to actively engage in efforts to prevent, detect, and mitigate losses related to fraud and abuse. NWRC is committed to following all applicable laws and regulations, particularly those that address fraud, waste, and abuse and the proper billing of all government-funded programs. This includes the Federal False Claims Act, the Washington State Medicaid False Claims Act, and Local Government Whistleblower protection. It is expected that when a NWRC employee becomes aware of active or suspected fraud and abuse, they will immediately report it to the appropriate entity.

This policy applies to all employees, including management and contractors. It addresses reporting of fraud and abuse committed by or against NWRC providers, enrollees, beneficiaries, members, employees, contractors, and vendors.

Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

- Fraud - intentional deception or misrepresentation made by a person with the knowledge that the deception could result in some unauthorized benefit to themselves ~~yes~~ or to some other person.
- Abuse - practices that are inconsistent with accepted sound fiscal, business, or medical practices, and result in an unnecessary cost or in reimbursement for services that are neither necessary nor authorized under a client's plan of care, or that fail to meet prescribed standards.
- Improper governmental action – ~~means~~ any action by a NWRC officer or employee that:
 1. ~~That~~ is undertaken in the performance of the officer's or employee's official duties, whether or not the action is within the scope of the employee's employment; and
 2. ~~That~~ is in violation of any federal, state, or local law or rule, is an abuse of authority, is of substantial and specific danger to the public health or safety or is a gross waste of public funds.

Improper government action does not include personnel actions, which include, but are not limited to, employee grievances, complaints, appointments, promotions, transfers, assignments, reassignments, reinstatements, restorations, reemployments, performance evaluations, reductions in pay, dismissal, suspensions, demotions, violations of collective bargaining or civil service laws, alleged violations of labor agreements, or reprimands.

- Good faith - ~~means~~ the individual providing the information or report of improper governmental activity has a reasonable basis in fact for reporting or providing the information. An individual who knowingly provides or reports, or who reasonably ought to know they are providing or reporting, malicious, false, or frivolous information, or information that is provided with reckless disregard for the truth, or who knowingly omits relevant information, is not acting in good faith.
- Emergency – ~~means~~ a circumstance, that, if not immediately changed, may cause damage to persons or property.
- Retaliatory action – ~~means~~:
 1. Any adverse change in an NWRC's employee's employment status, or the terms and conditions of employment including denial of adequate staff to perform duties, frequent staff changes, frequent and undesirable office changes, refusal to assign meaningful work, unwarranted and unsubstantiated letters of reprimand or unsatisfactory

performance evaluations, demotions, transfer, reassignment, reduction in pay, denial of promotion, suspension, dismissal, or any other disciplinary action; or

2. Hostile actions by another employee towards an NWRC employee that were encouraged by a supervisor, senior manager, or official.

Set forth below is information about the federal and state False Claims Acts, remedies available under these acts and how individuals can use them, and whistleblower protections available to anyone who claims a violation of the federal or state false claims acts or improper local government action.

Federal False Claims Act (31 U.S.C. § 3729)

Federal statute which allows for civil and/or criminal action to be brought against a health care provider who:

1. Knowingly presents, or causes to be presented, a false or fraudulent claim for payment or approval to any federal program;
2. Knowingly makes, uses, or causes to be made or used a false record or statement to get a false or fraudulent claim paid; or
3. Conspires to defraud the government by getting a false or fraudulent claim allowed or paid.

An example of a false claim is billing for procedures not performed.

A statute of limitations says how much time may pass before an action may no longer be brought for violation of the law. Under the False Claims Act, the statute of limitations is six years after the date of violation or three years after the date when material facts are known or should have been known by the government, but no later than 10 years after the date on which the violation was committed. The submission of false claims may also give rise to criminal liability.

Federal Laws and Guidance

- Section 6032 of the Deficit Reduction Act
- Section 1902(a)(68) of the Social Security Act (42 USC §1396a(a)(68))
- Federal False Claims Act 31 USC Sections 3729-3733
 - Sec. 3729 - False claims
 - Sec. 3730 - Civil actions for false claims
 - Sec. 3731 - False claims procedure
 - Sec. 3732 - False claims jurisdiction
 - Sec. 3733 - Civil investigative demands
- Administrative Remedies for False Claims and Statements 31 USC Sections 3801 et seq
- FAQ by CMS regarding DRA Requirements and False Claims Act compliance
- CMS Guidance to States regarding False Claims Act (2006)

Federal Whistleblower Protections

Federal law prohibits an employer from discriminating against an employee in the terms or conditions of their employment because the employee initiated, or otherwise assisted in a false claims action. The employee is entitled to all relief necessary to make the employee whole.

Washington State False Health Claims Act Whistleblower Protections

The Washington State False Claims Act has whistleblower protections which prohibit retaliation against the reporter. You may report directly to the United States Department of Justice or to the Washington State Attorney General.

You are not required to report a possible false claims act violation to NWRC first. NWRC will not retaliate against you if you inform anyone of a possible false claims act violation.

Responsibility

What you should do if you think that your organization may have made a false claim:

All NWRC employees, contractors and vendors are required to report concerns about actual, potential, or perceived fraud and abuse or other misconduct to the Office of the Attorney General Medicaid Fraud Control Unit. You may reach the Department using one of the methods listed immediately below.

File MFCU (Medicaid Fraud Control Unit) Complaint

Phone: (360) 586-8888

Fax: (360) 586-8877

Email: MFCUreferralsatg.wa.gov

Mail: Office of the Attorney General Medicaid Fraud Control Unit

PO Box 40114

Olympia, WA 98504

NWRC requires timely disclosure of such concerns and expressly prohibits any adverse actions directed against any person for making a good faith report of such concerns. No one may retaliate against you if you inform the state or the federal government of a possible false claims act violation. All providers, contractors, subcontractors, and vendors have a right to oppose or refuse to engage in acts that they believe, in good faith, are unethical, improper, or unlawful, provided that the manner of opposition is reasonable, and the questionable act is immediately reported to the Office of the Attorney General Medicaid Fraud Control Unit using one of the contact methods listed in the previous paragraph.

State Laws

- Washington Medicaid Fraud False Claims Act RCW 74.66

Local Government Whistleblower Protection

As a public organization, NWRC must be a good and prudent steward of public funds and provide service with the highest ethical standards. Pursuant to [RCW 42.41](#) it is the policy of the NWRC to: 1) encourage reporting by its employees of improper governmental action taken by NWRC officers or employees and 2) to protect NWRC employees who have, in good faith and in accordance with NWRC policies and procedures, reported improper governmental action taken by NWRC officers or employees.

Procedures for Reporting

NWRC employees who become aware of improper governmental action are to notify the Executive Director or their designee, [or human resources](#), stating in written detail the basis for the employee's belief that an improper governmental action has occurred. In case of an emergency, as [defined above previously defined](#), an employee may provide information of an improper governmental action to a person or entity outside the NWRC.

For detailed instructions on the required reporting procedure, including a list of appropriate persons or entities outside the NWRC to whom to report, refer to NWRC's "Right to Report Improper Governmental Action Procedure." This document is permanently posted in each NWRC office location and is available to any employee upon request.

Protection Against Retaliatory Actions

It is unlawful for any local government official or employee to take retaliatory action against a local government (NWRC) employee because the employee provided information in good faith that an improper governmental action occurred. NWRC officials and employees who report improper governmental actions are protected from retaliation pursuant to RCW 42.41.040.

Procedures for Reporting

In order to seek relief, the employee will provide a written notice of the charge of retaliatory action to the NWRC governing board that specifies the alleged retaliatory action and the relief requested.

For detailed instructions on the required reporting procedure, including how to obtain contact information for the NWRC governing board, refer to NWRC's "Right to Report Improper Governmental Action Procedure." This document is permanently posted in each NWRC office location and is available to any employee upon request.

The NWRC Executive Director will be responsible for ensuring that this policy and the reporting procedure 1) are permanently posted where all employees will have reasonable access to them, and 2) are made available to any employee upon request.

3.09 [SMOKE & VAPE FREE WORKPLACE NON-SMOKING](#)

Smoking, [including vaping](#), is prohibited in all NWRC facilities. [Smoking is defined as the act of lighting, smoking or carrying a lighted or smoldering cigar, cigarette or pipe of any kind. Vaping refers to the use of electronic nicotine delivery systems or electronic smoking devices such as e-cigarettes, e-pipes, e-hookahs and e-cigars.](#) To comply with Washington State law, employees wishing to smoke [or vape](#) during their breaks or lunch periods must do so at least 25 feet from any public entrances, exits, windows, and ventilation intakes. Please properly dispose of [smoking/vaping products](#). ~~cigarette butts~~.

3.10 SELLING AND SOLICITATION

To provide freedom from pressure, embarrassment, and work interruptions for employees and customers, the NWRC does not permit solicitation or distribution of literature by persons not employed by the NWRC in work areas or by NWRC employees during work hours. This prohibition includes charity solicitors, insurance salespersons, initiative or ballot petitions, union organizers, survey or questionnaire activity, or any other form of solicitation or distribution. Specifically, prohibited activities include, but are not limited to:

- The solicitation of any funds or money for whatever purpose and in any form unless the solicitation is agency sponsored and has the approval of the Executive Director, such as NWRC benefit plans.
- The passing of literature or other written material that does not have to do with NWRC business operations.
- The sale of articles, display of articles for sale, or taking of orders [s](#) for merchandise.

Employee solicitation for charitable and/or community-supportive events is permitted during non-working time, in non-working areas used only by agency employees. Employees should utilize non-obtrusive methods of solicitation, such as notices on employee bulletin boards and placing items in the kitchen area/~~snack bar~~[break room](#). Employees may not solicit for any purpose during their own or another employee's work time. Work time is defined as the time an employee spends performing their duties and does not include break periods or meal periods. The NWRC reserves the right to disallow specific employee solicitations it believes to be inappropriate.

3.11 LIFE THREATENING [ILLNESSES](#)/COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Life threatening illnesses or communicable diseases are treated like other diseases. Employees who have such conditions may continue working as long as they are able to maintain an acceptable level of performance and their condition does not pose a threat to themselves or those they come in contact with while performing their job. NWRC reserves the right to obtain necessary medical information and to take other appropriate actions to assess, as necessary, any risk of harm to the affected employees, agency clients, or the

public, and to reassign employees or take other job actions, including termination, when a substantial and unusual safety risk exists.

At times, employees may serve clients with documented cases of life-threatening illnesses/communicable diseases. In the event an employee encounters this situation with a client, they are to notify their supervisor as soon as reasonable so appropriate precautions can be developed and implemented. The supervisor, in collaboration with human resources and the unit director, will review guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local public health entities to develop a protocol which aligns with the risks associated with the specific illness or communicable disease.

3.12 POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

NWRC recognizes the rights of its employees, as private citizens, to express their political views, to pursue legitimate involvement in the political system, and to vote as they please, provided that all this occurs during the employee's non-working time. No NWRC employee shall expend public funds, or supplies, or work towards the campaign of any candidate or issue while on NWRC time unless the activity is permitted by law and approved by the Executive Director.

In order to be respectful of all political views, and to keep NWRC offices free from any appearance of partisanship, employees are expected to refrain from political discussions in shared offices and open shared workspaces.

3.13 THEFT

NWRC property may not be removed from agency premises except in the ordinary course of performing duties. Taking NWRC property without permission is considered theft. Any employee who is aware of another employee stealing is expected to immediately report such behavior to a supervisor. Violation of this policy is a serious offense and will result in the appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

In addition, when an employee leaves employment with the NWRC, the employee must return all NWRC-related information and property that the employee has in their possession. Violation of this policy may result in appropriate legal action.

3.14 PERSONAL APPEARANCE

At ~~the~~ NWRC, we pride ourselves on hiring unique, creative and motivated employees who work to earn the trust of our clients and make a difference in serving our community. We expect employees to make decisions that will foster a professional business atmosphere sensitive to the needs and perspectives of our clients. ~~These~~ The following are guidelines to assist employees in making personal appearance decisions.

- Consider the perceptions of our customers and the general public. We serve a broad range of cultures and generations whose view, through their eyes, will be shaped by how you represent NWRC.
- Dress according to the assignment and customers for the day. For example, (i.e., business casual for client visits, general public interaction, meetings, presentations, board meetings, etc.) and ~~moreless~~ casual is appropriate for labor intensive duties or visiting clients' homes that may be environmentally challenging (pets, hoarding, etc.). Jail Health staff will wear scrubs and closed toe shoes.
- Employees must present a clean, well-groomed professional appearance at all times.
- All clothing should be well-fitting and must be clean, free of holes, tears, or other signs of wear. ~~Clothing should be well-fitting.~~
- Clothing should not contain logos (other than normal brand markings), phrases, advertisement, offensive or inappropriate designs or stamps.
- Employees are expected to display sensitivity to the reaction of others regarding displaying tattoos and piercings when working with the public and clients.
- Refrain from the use of scented products.

These policies must not limit clothing or grooming styles based on religion or ethnicity. If there are questions as to what constitutes professional attire, employees should consult their supervisor or the Executive Director. Employees who are inappropriately dressed may receive corrective counseling regarding their attire and may be sent home to change their ~~-appearance~~attire. Employees who are directed to leave work to adjust their attire will not be paid for such time away from work. Further violations of the policy will be addressed with progressive discipline.

3.15 CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION

All NWRC employees are required to keep client information in the strictest confidence and to not disclose that information except in the course of providing services to the client or in administering NWRC programs. Employees shall comply with all applicable confidentiality requirements of state and federal funders.

Client information includes information such as name, address, health or medical information, social security or other identifying numbers. Client information should not be shared with another employee of NWRC unless that employee has a need to know that information in the course of providing services to the client or in administering NWRC programs. ~~_, which means e~~Employees must be respectful of client information and take reasonable measures to ensure that client information is not inadvertently shared, whether by loud conversation or

leaving material unattended where it can be viewed by others, [including when working remotely \(Reference Policy 4.13 Telecommuting\)](#).

Employees violating confidentiality may receive discipline, up to and including termination.

3.16 USE OF NWRC COMPUTERS, ELECTRONIC MESSAGING SYSTEMS, AND THE INTERNET

NWRC computers, software and content created are property of the NWRC. NWRC reserves the right to read, use and disclose information created and stored on computers. Additionally, such information may be subject to public disclosure. For these reasons, employees have no expectation of privacy in anything created, stored, sent, or received on NWRC's computer system.

Securing Information

NWRC Employees are required to lock their computer anytime they step away. This can be done by holding down the window key (next to ALT on the left) and 'L' at the same time ~~the L~~. The computer can be unlocked by holding Control, Alt, Delete simultaneously and then entering a password. ~~Cable locks will be used to secure all NWRC laptops. NWRC laptops must be secured in a locked location, using a cable lock, or with the assigned user at all times.~~

All NWRC employees who have access to client data must ensure that data entrusted in their care is protected according to DSHS, and HCA policies. All DSHS ~~c~~Client ~~d~~Data will be kept separate from non-DSHS client data. NWRC employees are required to store data they create or receive on a secure server, not their desktop. All Health Homes data is kept on a separate secure server.

System Use

NWRC provides employees with Electronic Messaging Systems (E-mail) and access to the Internet as part of an agreement with the Washington State Department Social and Health Services (DSHS) and Consolidated Technology Services (CTS), Washington State's technology provider for state agencies, and tribal and local governments.

Use of these services acknowledges understanding and compliance with the applicable policies and references in the NWRC's IT Policy, "Use of Electronic Messaging Systems and the Internet".

1. —Permitted Business Use

Employees may use provided electronic messaging systems and Internet access to conduct business that is related to official duties. Employees represent NWRC when using electronic messaging systems and accessing the Internet to conduct business. Employees must use these tools in accordance with **Section 3 (General Policies and Procedures)** of NWRC's IT Policy document.

2.—Permitted Personal Use

Personal use of department electronic messaging systems and the Internet must conform to [WAC 292-110-010](#), (Use of State Resources), which states that employees may make occasional and limited personal use of state resources, such as electronic messaging systems and the Internet, if the use conforms to ALL of the following ethical standards:

- a. There is little or no cost to the state.
- b. The use does not interfere with the performance of the employee's official duties.
- c. The use is brief in duration and frequency. Employees are expected to exercise good judgment in both duration and frequency.
- d. The use does not disrupt other state employees and does not obligate them to make personal use of state resources.
- e. -The use does not compromise the security or integrity of state information, computer equipment or software.

3.—Prohibited Use

Employees are prohibited from using state-provided electronic messaging systems and the Internet in any of the following ways:

- a. -Personal use of state-provided electronic messaging systems or Internet access that does not meet the conditions found in above is prohibited.
- b. Employees may not use state resources for personal benefit or gain, or for the benefit or gain of other individuals or outside organizations.
- c. Employees must not use state-provided email, voice mail, copying, imaging, or Internet access to conduct activities that support outside employment.
- d. Employees must not use state-provided electronic messaging systems, faxing, scanning, or Internet access to create, access, post, send, or print any material in violation of these employment policies, including by way of example pornographic material, unless the material is necessary for the performance of the employee's job-related duties (e.g., when necessary for conducting an investigation). If such use is necessary for the performance of job-related duties, employees must receive written permission from their supervisor authorizing such use.
- e. -Employees must not use state-provided Internet sites, faxing, scanning, or copying to create, transmit, or store electronic messages that contain or promote:
 - 1) Discrimination on the basis of age, race, color, gender, [gender identity](#), creed, marital status, national origin, use of a trained guide dog, or service animal by a person with a disability, religion, sexual orientation, disabled veteran [status](#), Vietnam Era Veteran status, recently separated veteran [status](#), or other protected status;
 - 2) Harassment or threats;
 - 3) Copyright infringement or violations of software licensing agreements;
 - 4) Personal religious beliefs;
 - 5) Political campaigns, initiatives, or personal political beliefs;

- 6) Personal business interests, including commercial uses such as advertising or selling;
 - 7) Any activity that is prohibited by federal, state or local law, or NWRC policy.
- f. In addition, employees may not use state-provided Internet access, to:
- 1) Order or sell items on the Internet, except as specifically approved by NWRC for business purposes.
 - 2) Participate in any online game, contest, promotion, sweepstakes.
 - 3) Participate or post in non-work-related [i](#)Instant [m](#)Messaging, [s](#)Social [m](#)Media, ListServ, [f](#)Forums, or newsgroups.
 - 4) Gamble.
 - 5) Solicit money for religious or political causes, or for non-NWRC events.
 - 6) Create, post, transmit, connect to, or voluntarily receive offensive, libelous, threatening, or harassing material (except as related to official NWRC authorized activities).
 - 7) Spread malware, make another network unusable by intentionally disrupting connections to prevent access to a service or “flooding” a network to prevent legitimate network traffic.
 - 8) Gain unauthorized access to another computer.
 - 9) Transmit unencrypted sensitive or confidential information over the Internet except as directed for official use.
 - 10) Upload or email files or programs that can cause harm to the network.
- g. Employees must not use state provided electronic messaging systems to make requests for disclosure of public records for personal use or benefit.
- h. Employees must not establish an Internet connection to or from a computer connected to the network that bypasses the Washington State Department of Information System (DIS) firewall unless it is required and approved for work-related purposes.
- i. Checking personal and/or outside non-NWRC email accounts using department computers, and/or the State Government Network is prohibited. Employees must not use email products on department computers other than those provided by NWRC.
- j. Using instant messaging provided by external vendors is prohibited unless it is required and approved for work-related purposes.
- k. Employees should not attempt to access networks through hacking or visiting hacker websites.
- l. Employees must not use streaming video/audio, Internet radio, net meeting or other audio/video training or live legislative broadcasts unless it is required and approved for work-related purposes.

If an employee inadvertently accesses an inappropriate site while using the Internet, the employee should immediately close the page and notify their supervisor.

3.17 NWRC CELLULAR PHONES

NWRC may provide an employee an agency owned cell phone for the purpose of conducting agency business. Agency cell phones are the property of NWRC and are subject to monitoring by the agency and public disclosure. Employees should refrain from using the agency cell phone for personal reasons unless in the event of an emergency. Employees have no expectation of privacy on the agency's cell phone, including but not limited to anything created, stored, searched, logged, sent or received. An employee's misuse of an agency cell phone is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Reasonable measures should be taken to prevent equipment theft or damage. Upon separation from the agency, employees are expected to return their agency cell phone to NWRC, including any accessories and cables. Employees are expected to comply with the *Driving For Work* policy with regards to operating a cell phone when driving (Reference Policy 2.04 Pre-Employment & Continuing Requirements).

~~The Northwest Regional Council may acquire and provide appropriate individuals cellular telephones for use in conducting Northwest Regional Council (NWRC) business.~~

~~The NWRC owned cellular telephones and services shall be used for NWRC business and in the event of emergencies. The NWRC has the right to monitor the use of all NWRC owned cellular telephones. Reasonable precautions should be made to prevent equipment theft and vandalism. Additionally, employees will comply with all laws regarding the use of cell phones while operating a motor vehicle, including not sending, reading or writing a text message or making calls unless it is a hands free device.~~

~~Employees misusing NWRC property, including cellular telephones, will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.~~

3.18 PERSONAL CELL PHONES

Employees are expected to exercise discretion with regard to personal cell phone use during work hours. Excessive use can interfere with productivity and be a disruption in the workplace. Employees are encouraged to utilize break and lunch periods and to be mindful of their location if others are working in the vicinity.

Employees are encouraged to communicate with their supervisor in situations when they may need to receive personal communications during working hours.

The use of personal cell phones for agency business is discouraged. If an employee wishes to use their personal cell phone for agency business, prior approval is needed from their supervisor and the Executive Director. If a personal cell phone is used for agency business, it will be subject to public disclosure.

~~To show respect to co-workers, employees are asked to turn cell phones off or place them on silent or vibrate during work hours. Employees should utilize their breaks or lunch periods to check personal cell phone messages and return calls. In addition, please choose a private location for cell phone conversations to prevent disrupting co-workers. Employees needing to receive calls on their cell phone during work hours should notify their supervisor and seek approval.~~

~~Employees utilizing their personal cell phones for business purposes should be aware that this may make an employee's personal phone information subject to public disclosure. Additionally, employees should use care to comply with all HIPAA requirements when discussing client information on cell phones.~~

3.19 USE OF OTHER NWRC PROPERTY

Use of the NWRC telephone system for personal calls should be kept to a minimum and generally conducted during non-work time. Any other personal use of the telephone system, such as making long distance calls, using the toll-free line, is prohibited. Additionally, utilizing the NWRC telephone system to accept incoming long-distance personal calls (such as the toll-free line, accepting collect calls, or some other method) is also prohibited unless in emergency situations. All NWRC equipment, property, and systems should be used by employees for NWRC business only. The NWRC reserves the right to monitor the use of all NWRC systems and equipment.

Employees who improperly utilize NWRC equipment, property, or systems may be liable for expenses incurred and will be subject to disciplinary procedures, up to and including termination.

3.20 BULLETIN BOARDS & OTHER COMMUNICATION

NWRC primarily utilizes the email system to communicate important work-related information to employees. It is each employee's responsibility to read this information and to stay current on the necessary information necessary to be effective in their position.

Information of special interest to all employees may be posted on designated employee bulletin boards. Employees should provide their initials and date to any item posted. Postings of a political, controversial, or distasteful nature will not be posted. NWRC supervisory personnel will generally monitor the bulletin boards and will remove any inappropriate material. Items that are not initialed and dated may be removed.

3.21 CONTACT WITH NEWS MEDIA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

The Executive Director shall be responsible for all official contacts with news media regarding NWRC business matters. The Executive Director may designate specific employees (such as NWRC's Public Disclosure Officer) to give

out procedural, factual, or historical information on particular subjects. Any employee receiving calls or requests from the media must refer such calls to the Executive Director or the designated media representative.

Employees who are contacted by local, state or federal agencies and asked to provide information on behalf of NWRC should consult with their supervisor prior to releasing such information. Additionally, employees contacted by attorneys, paralegals or other similar individuals/organizations should note the information being requested and inform the caller that they or another NWRC representative will get back to them. Such inquiries should be documented and reviewed with supervisory personnel prior to releasing NWRC information.

3.22 EMERGENCY SITUATION PROCEDURES

Facility

NWRC has developed emergency procedures for both Whatcom and Skagit county offices. These procedures are posted in locations throughout the offices and identify evacuation routes depending on your location in the office at the time of the evacuation. Employees who perform work in facilities other than the NWRC offices should familiarize themselves with the emergency procedures for those locations (e.g. hospital, jail, partner agencies).

Position

Depending on an employee's position within the agency, there may be emergency procedures specific to their job duties. Employees are to consult with their supervisor to determine specific considerations they should be aware of.

~~The NWRC has developed emergency situation procedures designed to assist staff in the assessment, containment, and management of a dangerous emergency situation. These procedures, posted in locations throughout the office, identify a system by which staff are alerted to a potentially dangerous emergency situation and building evacuation plans. All employees should familiarize themselves with the procedures and be prepared to implement the evacuation procedures if needed.~~

3.23 ELECTRONIC AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media continues to be an integral part of our lives and a valuable tool to connect with others, often being used to create a sense of belonging and expressing oneself. NWRC acknowledges the impact of social media on our professional lives and urges employees to understand and employ proper etiquette to ensure effective and professional communication. NWRC understands that personal social media can be a fun and rewarding way for employees to share their lives and opinions with co-workers, family, and friends

~~around the world. However, use of social media also presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities.~~ To assist employees in making responsible decisions about the use of social media, NWRC has established these guidelines for appropriate use of electronic and social media.

Guidelines

In the rapidly expanding world of electronic communication, social media can mean many things. Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, including to your own or someone else's web log or blog, journal or diary, personal website, social networking or affinity ~~w~~Web site, ~~w~~Web bulletin board or a chat room, whether or not associated or affiliated with NWRC, as well as any other forms of electronic communication. The same principles and guidelines found in these policies ~~and three basic~~ beliefs apply to employees' activities online. Ultimately, each employee is solely responsible for material posted online. Before creating online content, employees should consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. Keep in mind that any conduct that adversely affects job performance, the performance of fellow employees, or otherwise adversely affects employees or clients, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Confidentiality and Professional Boundaries

Maintaining client confidentiality is paramount and employees must avoid any actions that could compromise a client's confidentiality. Client names and information are confidential and will not be disclosed.

Establishing and maintaining professional boundaries when interacting via social media is essential. NWRC prohibits the use of social media as a way to interact with clients, unless specifically approved by the Executive Director for an agency related matter. Employees must adhere to section 3.03 Ethics Policy, and any additional codes of ethics that may be associated with an employee's profession or NWRC program to which they are assigned.

Connecting or interacting with other NWRC employees and professional peers are at the discretion of the individual. NWRC encourages employees to be mindful of who you connect with and how that could impact you. It's recommended that employees reevaluate their connections periodically to accommodate changes or evolutions in the workplace (e.g. a peer is promoted into a management position).

Be Respectful

Always be fair and courteous. Keep in mind that employees are more likely to resolve work—related complaints by speaking directly with each other than by posting complaints to a social media outlet. Nevertheless, if an employee decides to post complaints or criticism, they should avoid using statements, photographs,

video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening, ~~or~~ intimidating, ~~that or~~ [disparaging to](#) employees or clients, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone's reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis of race, gender, disability, religion, ~~or~~ any other status protected by law or NWRC policy.

Be Honest and Accurate

Employees should be honest and accurate when posting information or news, and any mistakes should be corrected quickly. Be open about any previous posts that have [been](#) altered. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted postings can be searched. Never post any information or rumors that are known to be false about NWRC, its employees or clients.

Post Only Appropriate and Respectful Content

~~Maintain client confidential information. Client names and information are confidential and will not be disclosed.~~ Employees should express only their personal opinions. Employees must never represent themselves as a spokesperson for NWRC. If NWRC is a subject of the content, the employee must be clear and open about the fact that they are an employee and make it clear that their views do not represent those of NWRC, fellow employees or clients and that the employee is not representing NWRC. It is best to include a disclaimer such as, "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of NWRC."

Using Social Media at Work

Refrain from using social media while on work time or on equipment NWRC provides, [unless prior approval has been received by a supervisor to utilize social media for an agency related matter.](#)

Violation

Employees should report any violation of this policy and will not be retaliated against for doing so. [Employees violating this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.](#)

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the use of electronic media, please consult your supervisor.

3.24 BREASTFEEDING/LACTATION

As part of our family-friendly policies and benefits, NWRC supports breastfeeding ~~mothers~~ [parents](#) by [providing breaks during the workday and a](#)

~~private location to accommodating the mother who wishes to~~ express breast milk ~~during her workday when separated from her newborn child~~. The provisions of this policy meet the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act as it relates to breaks for nursing ~~mothers parents~~.

For up to one year after the child's birth, ~~or as otherwise communicated to and approved by human resources~~, any employee who is breastfeeding ~~her their~~ child will be provided reasonable break times to express breast milk for ~~her their~~ child. ~~Employees shall use designated leaves for this purpose, which may be extended to 20 minutes total and any time in excess of this will be unpaid. The employee must make up this time during the workday or indicate the time on her time record.~~ NWRC has designated a private ~~room space~~ located at each facility for this purpose. For the designated location at your work location, please contact the Human Resources representative.

Breast milk may be stored in the lunchroom refrigerator and must be labeled with the name of the employee and date. ~~Any non-conforming products stored in the refrigerator may be disposed of.~~ Employees storing milk in the refrigerator assume all responsibility for the safety of the milk and the risk of harm for any reason, including improper storage, refrigeration, and tampering.

3.25 VISITORS AT WORK

NWRC values creating workspaces that are safe, maintain client/patient confidentiality, and promote effective work. Below are some parameters for ~~visitors guests~~ at various business locations. ~~Guests may include personal visitors, children, clients, IPs, business partners, and others.~~

General Offices

~~NWRC discourages personal visitors during work time. Visiting among employees or by appropriate guests should be done during meal and break periods in the public lobby, designated lunch/break areas, or in private employee office spaces.~~

Employees are welcome to have guests visit their worksite, provided that the visits are infrequent, brief and planned in a manner that limits disruption to the workplace. While guests are in the workplace, they must be directly accompanied by the employee at all times. Employees are encouraged to utilize break and lunch periods and to be mindful of their location if others are working in the vicinity or confidential client information may arise. If the frequency, length or nature of visits becomes problematic, the employee will be advised of the situation and will be expected to take corrective action. If guests display symptoms of illness, they may not visit the worksite.

Employees are encouraged to communicate with their supervisor in situations when they may have a guest during working hours.

Clients, IPs and Business Partners

- ~~1. These individuals must check in with the receptionist and wait in the general lobby area until a NWRC employee comes and gets them.~~
- ~~2. All guests should be escorted to and from their destination within the office area.~~
- ~~3. Employees should not leave individuals unattended within NWRC offices and should take measures to ensure appropriate confidentiality of materials is maintained.~~

Personal Visitors

- ~~1. Personal visits should be limited in scope and duration to non-work time (before/after work and break or lunch periods).~~
- ~~2. Personal guests must check in with the receptionist and wait in the general lobby area until an employee comes and gets them.~~
- ~~3. All guests should be escorted to and from their destination within the office area.~~
- ~~4. Sensitivity should be shown to other employees working (especially in shared office spaces) to prevent disrupting coworkers.~~

Jail Health Location

The Jail Site is located within a locked, secure facility which requires prior clearance to enter beyond the lobby. Clearance may be obtained by ~~the Shift Sergeant, or the Lieutenant~~correctional and nursing staff onsite after alerting the Nursing Supervisor of the visit. There are times of the day when visitors cannot enter, such as during inmate counts or if there is a security issue occurring. This will limit any movement in or out of the jail. ~~No cans, bottles, or weapons may be brought into the jail.~~

3.26 PETS AT WORK

NWRC recognizes the important role of pets in the lives of some employees, and the benefit pets can bring to the workplace. Employees may bring their pet to a NWRC office ~~if, as long as~~ the following is adhered to:

1. Employees/Pet Owners must discuss with their supervisor ~~for~~and get approval to bring the pet to work.
2. Pets must be on a leash or behind a closed office door with the employee/pet owner at all times.
3. Pets are not permitted to enter lunchroom spaces, or other areas where employees may be preparing or consuming food (e.g., conference room during a potluck).
4. Pets must be adequately trained, up to date on vaccinations and flea/tick treatment as recommended for their breed and age, and otherwise in good health.

5. The employee/pet owner is responsible for their pet at all times and must supervise them. Specifically, the employee/pet owner should make sure their animal doesn't:
 - i. Damage agency or employee property
 - ii. Endanger themselves or others
 - iii. Create distraction (e.g., consistent barking, jumping up on doors or people).
6. The employee/pet owner is responsible for cleaning up after their pet, both within the office space and outdoors.

It is within the sole discretion of the Executive Director to determine if a pet is no longer allowed to come to the workplace, or if an employee/pet owner may not bring their pet to work. [Employee pets are not allowed into client homes, unless the pet is a service animal or certified therapy animal, and prior approval is received from the employee's supervisor and the client. Documentation evidencing such certification must be on file with human resources prior.](#)

In the event an employee (not the pet owner) has concerns about a pet that is coming to the workplace, the employee is to discuss with their supervisor, or may reach out to Human Resources.

3.27 MILESTONE ANNIVERSARY GIFTS

NWRC wishes to acknowledge individuals that have dedicated many years of service to the agency by presenting them with a gift from the agency upon reaching a milestone year of service as identified below.

Years of Service	Monetary Limit for Gift
10	\$100
15	\$100
20	\$150
25	\$150
30	\$160
Years above 30 in 5-year increments (35, 40, etc.)	\$160

Milestone anniversary dates are based upon an employee's initial date of hire. Human resources will notify supervisors of upcoming milestone anniversaries, and the supervisor will coordinate and select an appropriate gift within the monetary limit outlined above. The gift can be single or multiple items, as long as the monetary limit is adhered to, and the receipt(s) are made available to the fiscal department as appropriate for the way in which the item(s) are paid for. [In the event a gift card is being given as a gift, the value of the gift card will be subject to payroll taxes.](#) Supervisors are encouraged to coordinate a card signing, acknowledgement ceremony, or similar act to celebrate the milestone.

Should the supervisor not be available to coordinate for any reason, the unit director will be responsible for coordination of the gift.

In addition to the agency gift, each year at the All-Staff Meeting, the employees who reached milestone anniversaries will be recognized.

SECTION 4: WORK SCHEDULES AND COMPENSATION

4.01 ATTENDANCE

Regular, dependable and punctual attendance is an essential element of employment at the NWRC. Employees are expected ~~, as a condition of employment,~~ to be at work during their scheduled workdays and times. Absenteeism places a burden on other employees and can adversely affect our ability to serve our clients.

~~All Employees needing to deviate from their schedule workdays and times using sick leave, or being absent for other reasons,~~ will notify their supervisor as soon as possible, but no later than the start of their workday ~~that they are unable to report for duty and the reasons therefore,~~ except in cases of **extreme** emergency. ~~Employees may notify their supervisor directly via an agreed upon format of communication. In the event of multi-day absences, the employee is to communicate with their supervisor daily, or as mutually agreed. If unable to reach a supervisor, the employee may reach out to the unit director or human resources. If an employee is calling in prior to regular office hours, they may leave a message in the receptionist voicemail. The message should include the employee's name, general reason for the absence, and the names of appropriate individuals to be notified of the absence. When an employee calls in, it will be assumed the employee is at home, otherwise the employee should leave a phone number where they can be reached if necessary. Employees who will be absent longer than one day are required to call back later in the day to talk directly with their supervisor. If, at any time, the employee is incapacitated to the point they are unable to call in personally, they are responsible to have someone call in for them. If an employee has not indicated the duration of their absence, a daily call in is required.~~

Any planned absences ~~such as paid or unpaid days off, medical appointments, etc.~~ should be arranged in advance with the employee's supervisor.

An employee may be required to ~~furnish provide a medical provider note written medical proof of sickness or disability~~ for absences in excess of three days.

Additionally, the NWRC may require an employee to ~~provide~~ **furnish** a **doctor's medical provider's** release to return to work following ~~an a medical event,~~ injury or absences for an extended length of time.

An employee who is absent without prior notification or fails to provide ~~documentation proper from a medical provider documentation of illness~~ when required ~~will~~ **may** be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination

of employment. Any employee who is absent three consecutive days, without ~~giving proper~~ notification, will be considered to have voluntarily terminated employment.

Employees are expected to observe their established workday's schedule as outlined in ~~the policy~~ [an Alternative Work Schedule](#) and/or set by their supervisor. NWRC provides employees ~~with sufficient~~ paid time off in the form of vacation, sick leave, [wellness](#), holidays, and compensatory time. It is the employee's responsibility to monitor and manage their own paid time off to ensure there is sufficient paid time to cover each pay period. Employees who are regularly absent and use all their paid time off, requiring Leave ~~W~~without Pay, may be considered to be excessively absent and subject to ~~progressive~~ disciplinary [action](#), up to and including termination (with the exception of employees who are out on approved leaves of absences such as FMLA or employees who are in their trial service period and may not have access to accrued leave). Repeated tardiness ~~patterned~~ or unauthorized absences may be cause for disciplinary action or ~~dismissal~~ [termination](#).

4.02 HOURS OF WORK

[NWRC strives to offer employees flexible working arrangements within the constraints of their role within the agency. A standard workday is considered](#) ~~NWRC Offices normal daily work schedule is~~ from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, with ~~a~~ one [hour](#) unpaid ~~hour for~~ lunch. ~~–~~Alternate work schedules may be established by the [employee with](#) supervisor [approval](#) according to the 4.12 Alternative Work Schedules policy. Part-time, [on-call](#), and temporary employees will work hours specified by their supervisor.

Employees ~~are~~ [may be](#) expected to engage in NWRC matters outside of the regular 8-hour day as part of their professional responsibility. In other words, employees may be required to attend an evening meeting, weekend conference, work overtime, etc. as needed.

For the purposes of calculating overtime and/or compensatory time, the NWRC work week shall be considered as 12:00 a.m. Sunday through ~~m~~Midnight Saturday.

[Employees may request one-off flexible scheduling that accommodates a personal need if it does not incur overtime and is approved by the supervisor.](#)

4.03 BREAKS AND MEAL PERIODS

One rest period of fifteen (15) minutes is allowed for each four-hour work shift, to be scheduled with the approval of the supervisor, in compliance with ~~S~~state law. Employees working shifts greater than five hours will receive an unpaid lunch break, ~~of~~ at least 30 minutes, but usually one ~~-~~ hour in length. The lunch hour schedule shall be determined by the Supervisor, in compliance with state law.

4.04 PAYDAY

Payday is on the 10th and 25th of each month, or the weekday before if payday falls on a weekend or bank holiday.

4.05 PAYROLL RECORDS

Employees are expected to adhere to all timesheet procedures as outlined by the fiscal department. Employees will ~~complete~~ fill out their a timesheet Daily Service Record at the conclusion of each day, which must be completed and submitted to their supervisor no later than the day following the end of their pay period, unless otherwise specified. ~~Employees are encouraged to submit their time records to their supervisor the day following the end of the pay period.~~ On this record, employees will certify the hours worked in the program areas of the NWRC, as well as all hours of paid or unpaid leave used during the pay period.

Each employee is responsible for accurate reporting of time worked and leave taken. Inaccurate reporting of such information is considered falsification of payroll records and will may lead to discipline, up to and including termination.

Employees are highly encouraged to monitor their paystubs every pay period, especially when a change is expected such as a benefit or wage change. If you believe an error has been made ~~in your paycheck, report your findings to your supervisor and the payroll representative you are required to report the error to your supervisor~~ as soon as possible.

4.06 PAYROLL DEDUCTIONS

The NWRC will withhold from the employee's paycheck required deductions and any voluntary deductions authorized by the employee.

4.07 OVERTIME

The basic work week for employees shall be forty (40) hours. For non-exempt employees, time worked in excess of forty (40) hours per week will be compensated as outlined below.

Overtime service over forty (40) hours per week will not be expected ~~as a matter of course~~ but may be required when it is impractical to maintain an additional temporary force adequate to handle peak loads during regular hours.

Overtime work shall be authorized, in advance, by the supervisor or Executive Director. Overtime will not be granted in units smaller than fifteen (15) minutes.

4.08 COMPENSATORY TIME (NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES)

Accrual of overtime or compensatory time off must be approved in advance by the employee's supervisor or Executive Director. With supervisory approval the non-exempt employee may elect compensatory time off in lieu of overtime pay. Compensatory time is calculated in the same manner as overtime pay, at one and one-half times the hours worked. Employees may take time off from work, using accrued compensatory time, by prior arrangement with their supervisor. When taking time off, employees will utilize compensatory time prior to accessing vacation. All non-exempt compensatory time will be cashed out at the end of the calendar year. If an employee wishes to cash out compensatory time throughout the year, they must email or otherwise submit written notice to the payroll representative. Requests for compensatory time cash-out will be processed as soon as reasonably practical ~~practicable~~ depending on the time the request was received by payroll and the upcoming pay cycle.

4.09 OVERTIME (NON-EXEMPT EMPLOYEES)

Employees in positions defined as non-exempt under the federal Fair Labor Standards Act are entitled to overtime payment for hours they are required to work in excess of 40 hours in one week. Overtime is one and one-half times an employee's regular hourly rate of pay. For purposes of computing overtime, holidays, vacation, and sick leave shall not be considered time worked. Employees working different responsibilities (and subsequent different rates of pay) in a week which overtime is earned, will be paid overtime at the higher rate of pay.

No overtime may be worked without prior authorization from an employee's supervisor. ~~Most non-exempt duties and responsibilities are performed in the office rather than at home. Before performing work duties at home, a non-exempt employee must receive approval from their supervisor.~~

Each employee is responsible for the accurate reporting of time worked and leave taken. Inaccurate reporting of worked time will be considered falsification of timekeeping records and may lead to discipline, up to and including termination. ([Reference Section 4.07 Payroll Records](#)).

4.10 EXEMPT EMPLOYEES

Exempt employees are exempt from the overtime pay provisions of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act. Such employees will be paid on a salary basis and will not have their pay reduced for variations in the quantity or quality of work performed. Employees who feel their pay has been improperly reduced should report this immediately following the procedures specified below.

The Executive Director or designee may authorize compensatory time to exempt employees for extra time worked, on a case-by-case basis, but under no circumstances shall pay be adjusted based on additional hours worked. Compensatory hours are banked on an hour-for-hour basis for hours worked

beyond 40 hours in a workweek and may be taken with supervisory approval. The maximum number of compensatory hours will not exceed 160 hours. Such compensatory hours have no cash value and will not be paid out when employment ends.

Exempt employees who receive prior approval to work on a designated holiday will receive hour_ for _hour compensatory hours. Additionally, with supervisor approval, an exempt employee will receive compensatory hours for those hours worked over 32 hours in a holiday workweek. For example, if the holiday falls on a Monday and the exempt employee works 9 hours each of the remaining four days in the workweek, they would receive 4 compensatory hours.

Each employee is responsible for the accurate reporting of their worked time. Inaccurate reporting of worked time will be considered falsification of timekeeping records and may lead to discipline, up to and including termination [\(Reference Section 4.07 Payroll Records\)](#).

4.11 EMERGENCY CLOSURES

Occasionally, adverse weather or other emergencies might interfere with normal arrival and departure times from the office. Every reasonable effort will be made to open the NWRC office. If the office is closed early or opened late, employees will receive regular pay for that day(s) unless they were otherwise absent that day.

From time to time, various situations may necessitate the closure of one or more of the NWRC offices. NWRC may choose to continue providing limited service with a designated “skeletal” crew to provide essential services. In such cases, the designated crew will be identified in advance by NWRC management and any non-exempt personnel so designated will receive time and one half for hours worked. All other employees will receive regular pay for the day, whether they remain at home or voluntarily choose to come to (or remain at) work.

If the office is open during adverse conditions any employee not reporting to work must notify their supervisor and may elect to take vacation leave or available compensatory time. If neither vacation leave nor compensatory time is available, the employee may apply any leave that accrues within the next ninety (90) days against the leave taken. Employees shall not be paid for time missed if the vacation leave/compensatory time provisions are not utilized. [Employees may request to work from home due to adverse conditions, subject to supervisor approval, and in alignment with Section 4.13 Telecommuting.](#) ~~In some circumstances, the employee may be allowed to work from home with prior approval from their supervisor if the employee is unable to get to work due to adverse conditions.~~ Employees shall consult with their supervisor regarding specific applications of this policy.

4.12 ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES

The ~~Northwest Regional Council~~[NWRC](#) recognizes the desire for some employees to work alternative schedules. This policy outlines the parameters in which employees may request alternative work schedules. In considering alternative work schedule requests, the first priority will be to ensure quality service to our clients and the appropriate level of staffing coverage. In some cases, an alternative work schedule may not be possible because the employee's responsibilities require regular presence in the office or jail health clinic during standard operating hours. In other cases, an alternative work schedule may work more effectively for the employee, NWRC, or both. Supervisors may initiate alternative work schedules based on NWRC workload needs. Generally, employees complete their trial service period prior to engaging in an alternative work schedule. Any alternative work schedules requested prior to the completion of an employee's trial service period are subject to approval of the supervisor, unit director and Executive Director. Other than supervisory-initiated situations, or requests for lunch period adjustments, employees must complete their trial service period before requesting an alternative work schedule.

Schedule Options

Flexible Hours

An employee's start and end time are adjusted, upon approval, to extend beyond the standard office or clinic shift. Typically, this adjusted schedule would require the employee's shift to span over the "core" work hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Compressed Workweek

An employee, upon approval, works longer hours in each day and reduces the number of days worked in the week (i.e., ten-hour days, four days a week). The supervisor may consider some variation other than the 10-hour/4-day workweek schedule based on employee and organizational needs. In the event a compressed workweek is adopted, employees will adjust their schedules or use their leave accruals during weeks which include paid holidays to form a 40-hour week.

Reduced Workweek

On a case-by-case basis, it may be desirable for the employee and organization to reduce the hours worked in a workweek on a temporary basis. An employee on a reduced workweek schedule will receive reduced benefits based upon the number of hours worked (see benefits section).

Submitting Requests

All requests for alternative work schedules, ~~full-time or part-time~~, must be submitted on an "Alternative Work Schedule Request" form. Such requests will be considered by the department supervisor and Executive Director. While the

NWRC may not be able to accommodate all requests for alternative work schedules, each request will be carefully considered based upon the following:

- NWRC operational needs and goals
- The affected department's ability to accommodate the requested schedule
- The employee's [past](#) performance, productivity, and seniority
- The order of the request (first request gets first consideration)

Schedule Adjustments

Employees who are approved to work an alternative work schedule are expected to remain flexible and adjust their schedule as needed to attend mandatory meetings or scheduled training sessions. Such schedule adjustments may also be necessary to cover for vacation or extended absences.

Review and Modification or Revoking

The NWRC reserves the right to periodically review alternative work schedule changes. This review will examine whether the schedule change allows the employee to meet all job requirements and whether the NWRC is best served by the adjusted schedule. Additionally, the NWRC reserves the right to suspend, modify or revoke any previously approved schedule adjustment as necessary or advisable for NWRC operational needs. In such cases, the employee will return to the standard clinic/office work hours.

4.13 TELECOMMUTING

Objective

Telecommuting arrangements allow employees to work at a remote office, or in a satellite location for part of their workweek. NWRC considers telecommuting to be a viable, flexible work option when both the employee and the position are suited to such an arrangement. Generally, telecommuting arrangements at NWRC allow up to three days a week to be worked remotely, subject to eligibility outlined below, which includes one day of in-person overlap between the supervisor and employee work schedule. Telecommuting may be appropriate for some employees and positions but not for others, and telecommuting schedules may not be the same for all, as further outlined in the eligibility section below. Telecommuting is not an entitlement, it is not a companywide benefit, and it in no way changes the terms and conditions of employment with NWRC.

Procedures

Telecommuting can be informal, such as working from home for a short-term project or on the road during business travel, or a formal, set schedule of working away from the office as described below. Either an employee or a supervisor can suggest telecommuting as a possible work arrangement.

Employees that partake in telecommuting arrangements are required to maintain their working hours as evidenced by their Alternative Work Schedule on file with ~~H~~uman ~~R~~esources, including maintaining appropriate paid breaks and lunch breaks. Employees that waive their lunch breaks, regardless of working location, are required to have an Alternative Work Schedule on file with ~~H~~uman ~~R~~esources prior to engaging in such.

Any telecommuting arrangement ~~made will be on a trial basis for the first three months and~~ may be discontinued at will and at any time at the request of either the telecommuter or the organization. Every effort will be made to provide 14 days' notice of such change to accommodate any issues that may arise from the termination of a telecommuting arrangement (i.e., commuting, childcare, etc.). There may be instances, however, when no notice is possible.

Eligibility

~~Individuals requesting formal telecommuting arrangements must be~~ Generally, employee~~s~~ ~~with NWRC for a minimum of 6 continuous months and requesting a telecommuting agreement have~~ passed their Trial Service Period performance evaluation. ~~The Executive Director may authorize an employee to telework prior to these conditions being met.~~

Before entering into any telecommuting agreement, the employee and supervisor, with the assistance of the ~~H~~uman ~~R~~esources department, will evaluate the suitability of such an arrangement, reviewing the following areas:

- **Employee suitability:** The employee and supervisor will assess the needs and work habits of the employee, including their level of training for their job responsibilities.
- **Job responsibilities:** The employee and supervisor will discuss the job responsibilities and duties to determine if the job is appropriate for a telecommuting arrangement. Telecommuting may be appropriate for some ~~employees and~~ positions but not for others.
- **Workstation requirements:** The employee and supervisor will review the physical and technological workspace needs and the appropriate location for the ~~telework~~telecommute. The employee is responsible to furnish a remote workstation suitable to their job responsibilities, including the management of confidential and private information. NWRC will provide technology to perform job responsibilities.
- **Out-of-State:** NWRC does not offer out-of-state ~~teleworking telecommuting~~ arrangements, unless for the sole purpose of a business-related matter (e.g., conference, seminar, training, etc.) or as otherwise approved by the Supervisor and Executive Director. Considerations may include, but are not limited to, workload demand, team coverage, job responsibilities, and any circumstances of the individual instance which are relevant.
- **Flexibility:** This policy is meant to ensure higher, appropriate levels of flexibility in a telecommuting environment. However, telecommuting is not designed to be a replacement for appropriate childcare, elder care, or similar

personal responsibilities. Although an individual employee's schedule may be modified to accommodate childcare, elder care, or similar personal responsibilities, the focus of the telecommuting arrangement must remain on job performance and meeting business and client needs.

Equipment

On a case-by-case basis, NWRC will determine, with information supplied by the employee and the supervisor, the appropriate equipment needs for each telecommuting arrangement. The employee will establish an appropriate work environment for work purposes. NWRC will not be responsible for costs associated with the setup of the employee's [telework-telecommute](#) office, such as remodeling, furniture or lighting, nor for repairs or modifications to the [telework telecommuting](#) office space.

Technology equipment supplied by the organization will be maintained by the organization. If employee elects to supply their personally owned technology equipment, employee understands they are to maintain at their own expense. Employee may request [Supervisor](#) approval for NWRC to provide supplies for employee-owned equipment (e.g., NWRC may supply and/or reimburse paper and ink for an employee-owned printer being used for NWRC business). NWRC accepts no responsibility for damage or repairs to employee-owned equipment. NWRC reserves the right to make determinations as to appropriate equipment, subject to change at any time. Equipment supplied by the organization is to be used for business purposes only. Upon termination of employment or revocation of the [telework telecommuting](#) agreement, all NWRC property will be returned to NWRC. NWRC will supply the employee with appropriate office supplies (pens, paper, etc.) as deemed necessary.

Security

Consistent with the organization's expectations of information security for employees working at the office, telecommuting employees will be expected to ensure the protection of proprietary company and client information accessible from their home office. Steps include the use of locked file cabinets and desks, regular password maintenance, privacy when discussing client care and when talking to clients, and any other measures appropriate for the job and the environment. Employees are expected to comply with HIPAA regulations per 45 CFR Parts 160, 162, and 164 and per RCW 70.02 and follow public records practices per RCW 42.56 Public Records Act regardless of the working location.

Online Etiquette

When engaging online, please do so in a private, quiet location to ensure minimum disruptive background noise. To ensure full attention and a professional environment, employees and client facing roles performing work at home must do so in a quiet environment free from background noise. If internet bandwidth allows it, it is the preferred practice to have the employee camera on and be visible during online meetings unless otherwise arranged with a supervisor. Avoid distractions such as e-mail or phone alerts, texts, and similar. Please be aware of visible office setting when conducting online agency business and remove items

[in the background that may be seen as unprofessional or distracting. Any questions related to online etiquette can be directed to the supervisor.](#)

Safety

Employees are required to maintain their remote workspace in a safe manner, free from safety hazards. Injuries sustained by the employee in a [telework telecommute](#) office location and in conjunction with their regular work duties are responsible for notifying the employer of such injuries as soon as practicable. NWRC is not liable for any injuries sustained by the employee arising out of something [being](#) done entirely for themselves, nor for visitors to their remote workspace.

Ad Hoc Arrangements

Temporary telecommuting arrangements may be approved for circumstances such as inclement weather, special projects, or business travel. These arrangements are approved [by the employee's supervisor and](#) on an as-needed basis only, with no expectation of ongoing continuance.

Other informal, short-term arrangements may be made for employees on family or medical leave, [or similar circumstances](#), to the extent practical for the employee and NWRC and with the consent of the employee's health care provider, if appropriate. [These](#) informal telecommuting arrangements are made on a case-by-case basis and require Executive Director approval, [with no expectation of ongoing continuance](#).

4.14 SALARY CLASSIFICATIONS AND GRADES

With some exceptions, each position within the NWRC is classified into one of the NWRC's classifications for salary purposes, based on various criteria such as required knowledge/skills; scope and effect of decisions; strategic relationships/authority; scope of responsibility and supervision exercised; and working conditions/hazards. Each classification is ~~designated~~ [assigned](#) a particular salary range based on a rating system commensurate ~~to~~ [with](#) these criteria.

Each position is ~~normally~~ assigned a salary range [consisting of ten steps](#) with the stated minimum and maximum salary. Salary ranges ~~and pay rates~~ are set forth in the annual budget, which is subject to approval of the NWRC. Any changes in salary ranges ~~or rates of pay~~ during a budget year ~~other than annual steps approved by the Executive Director~~ must be approved by the NWRC. ~~Each salary range shall consist of ten steps.~~

The salary range ~~or rate of pay~~ of a position shall be based on pay for comparable positions with private and public agencies in the North Puget Sound area. Salary ~~rates~~ [ranges](#) will be reviewed on a periodic basis to assure appropriateness and comparability.

Salary Classifications for Behavioral Health Clinicians

Behavioral Health Clinicians, whose position requires professional licensing as required by WA State Department of Health per WAC 246-809-990 and the NWRC Job Description, are placed in the salary classification which aligns with their level of licensure (Independent, Master's Level Substance Use Disorder Professional, Associate or Affiliate).

Behavioral Health Clinicians are required to provide proof of licensure status from WA State Department of Health. Proof of licensure documentation provided to NWRC must be from WA State Department of Health and include the employee's name, effective dates of licensure, and evidence of the licensure in good standing. Newly hired Behavioral Health Clinicians will be required to provide proof of licensure on or before their first day of employment. Human Resources may periodically request proof of licensure from an employee to maintain current records.

In the event a Behavioral Health Clinician obtains a level of licensure that would qualify them for a change in salary classification, the employee must submit, in writing, to Human Resources requesting an evaluation of their salary classification, including proof of licensure as outlined above. Once documentation is verified by Human Resources, the employee will be notified, and a pay adjustment will be made to the appropriate salary classification, effective the first of the month following verification. Clinicians remain on the same step placement when their wage is adjusted to the new salary classification.

Behavioral Health Clinician's whose licensure changes to a level which no longer qualifies the employee for the salary classification which they are currently assigned, or if the licensure becomes invalid, they must report the change to Human Resources within 5 business days. A Human Resources representative will review the status change and make a recommendation to the Executive Director for salary adjustment as appropriate for the change. Clinicians remain on the same step placement when their wage is adjusted to the downward salary classification.

Employees who hold licensures outlined in WAC 246-809-990, and/or are Master's level Substance Use Disorder Professionals but are not appointed to the position of Behavioral Health Clinician, are placed into the salary classification for which their position is assigned.

4.15 PAY ADJUSTMENTS

Pay adjustments for individual employees will be considered on a case-by-case basis and may include a review of job duties, agency need, market conditions, legal considerations, and other pertinent factors. Any pay adjustments require the approval of the Executive Director. Salary Pay adjustments for individual

employees that relate to significant changes in responsibility and authority are typically handled through a reclassification process and must be authorized and approved in advance by the Executive Director and the NWRC. Any salary increase that exceeds established ranges and rates must be approved by the NWRC. ~~Such changes would typically be handled through a reclassification process.~~

4.16 RECLASSIFICATIONS

The goal of NWRC is to assure that employees are working within the scope of their assigned job descriptions. Changes to an employee's job responsibilities, and subsequent changes to the job description, are the assigned supervisor's responsibility. Before significant changes to the scope of an employee's job are made, supervisors are to consult with the unit director, human resources and receive approval from the Executive Director.

An employee who feels that their tasks and responsibilities do not match the assigned job description, should talk with their supervisor. In such circumstances, the NWRC may choose to update the employee's job description or reassign tasks.

Reclassifications may be considered when a significant change occurs in the responsibility and authority of the position involved. Changes to an employee's position that have a significant impact on the scope of the job may be cause for the position to be reevaluated and reclassified.

Reclassifications include upward reclassification, downward reclassification, lateral position change within job classification, and interim assignments.

~~Reclassifications may be considered when a significant change occurs in the responsibility and authority of the position involved. Pay adjustments, if applicable, will be made on the effective date and anniversary dates will remain unchanged.~~

Upward Reclassification

Upward reclassifications, often prompted by market conditions or job modifications, are considered on an individual basis by the Executive Director in consultation with the supervisor and human resources to determine the appropriate change in pay. Upward reclassifications for reasons of job modifications or job expansion may result in the assignment of a new anniversary date and trial service period, if in the sole discretion of the Executive Director, the job modifications were significant enough to warrant such.

Lateral Position Change

When an employee's job title changes but the primary position scope remains unchanged, this will not be considered a reclassification. Lateral position

changes (position and job title change, but no change in job grade; change in location, but no change in job title or job grade) will not warrant pay changes.

Downward Reclassification

Downward reclassifications are considered on an individual basis by [human resources and](#) the Executive Director in consultation with the supervisor to determine the appropriate change in pay.

Interim Assignment

From time to time, employees may be asked to cover all or part of the duties of a higher-level position, during periods of extended absence, vacancy, or for special assignments. In these cases, interim assignment pay may be awarded. Interim assignment pay will be determined by the Executive Director and reported at the next regular meeting of the NWRC.

Pay Differential

NWRC provides additional hourly pay for the following supervisory-assigned responsibilities:

Charge Duty RN: \$1.00 per hour for supervisory assignment of “Charge Duty RN”. Such assignment must be documented on an employee’s timesheet.

On Call [Jail Health Nursing Supervisor](#): \$2.00 per hour for supervisory assignment of “On Call Supervisor”. Such assignment must be documented on an employee’s timesheet.

Overtime worked in the week that the above assignments occur will be paid at the higher rate of pay.

4.17 STARTING PAY RATES

New employees will usually start their employment at the first step for their salary classification. However, a new employee may be employed at a higher step when the employee’s experience, training, or proven capability warrant, or when prevailing market conditions require a starting rate greater than [the](#) minimum. When determining the placement of new employees into the salary classification, NWRC will consider internal equity.

4.18 PAY RATE INCREASES

Promotions

A promotion occurs when a NWRC employee is hired into a new position that is classified at a higher grade.

When determining the step placement of the new range for promotion, consideration should be given to the incumbent's current salary and eligibility for upcoming step adjustments and/or cost of living adjustments, as applicable. An employee who is promoted will receive no less than a 3% increase.

Any employee who is promoted will be assigned a new anniversary date to coincide with the first day of the month following the effective date of the promotion classification. While the employee will utilize their date of hire for the accrual of paid time off and longevity pay, future performance reviews and step increases will be based on the employee's new adjusted anniversary date.

Merit Step Increases

A merit step within the salary range schedule is considered at the anniversary date of employment for all employees based on performance following an evaluation of successful performance and recommendation by the supervisor with approval by the Executive Director. Step increases, if approved by the Executive Director, will commence on the employee's official anniversary date. If an employee's overall performance is below the rating category of "Meets Expectations," the supervisor, in consultation with the Executive Director, may withhold the step increase or may defer the step increase until the employee's job performance is at a level of "Meets Expectations" or above.

Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLA)

The Executive Director may propose, and the NWRC Governing Board may grant, a pay adjustment (cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), increase) increasing the salary ranges (and individual salaries) by a specified amount. NWRC views COLAs as a mechanism to maintain competitive wages, thus an investment in employee retention and overall employment satisfaction. A COLA is not an entitlement, but rather a proposal initiated by the Executive Director that balances the financial health of the agency with increases in cost-of-living that employees experience. A COLA proposal is considered annually, and several indicators are used to develop the proposal, such as the Consumer Price Index (CPI), Social Security Administration recommendation, labor market conditions, COLA proposals for other public employers in the service region, and any other relevant information. - Cost-of-living adjustments may be provided for all employees consistent with the U.S. Department of Labor's Cost of Living Index for Seattle area; U.S. cities average, all urban consumers; and the average C.O.L. adjustments provided to employees of all member counties in the Northwest Regional Council.

Longevity Pay

In order to encourage employees to continue in long-term employment with the NWRC, longevity compensation will be added after ten years of continuous employment as a regular [full-time](#) employee, and thereafter, as follows:

Years of Services	Percentage Increase
Over 10 years	1.2% of base salary
Over 15 years	3.6% of base salary
Over 20 years	4.8.% of base salary
Over 25 years	6.0 % of base salary

Base salary for a pay period for non-exempt employees is the hourly rate for the step you are at on the NWRC salary schedule, multiplied by your FTE, multiplied by 2080 (hours per work-year) divided by 24 (pay periods per year). Base salary for exempt employees is the annual salary divided by 24 (pay periods per year).

Longevity pay does not change the salary range nor step schedules, and it is not used in any way as a base for calculating COLA's or other changes to the salary range.

4.19 COMPENSATION FOR TRAVEL TIME

These guidelines are intended to assist employees in determining what portion of their travel time is compensable. For further information or for guidance on specific situations, please contact ~~the~~ Human Resources ~~representative~~.

1. The following types of travel time are considered work time for which an employee will be compensated:
 - a. Travel time between NWRC sites, when occurring as part of the workday.
 - b. All travel time during work assignments (such as home visits, site visits, etc.,) [whether or not such time is outside the employee's normal workday](#)~~whether within or outside the normal workday~~.
 - c. Time spent by employees to attend training programs, meetings, or conferences [approved or](#) required by NWRC, whether or not such time is outside the employee's normal workday.
 - d. Mealtimes during travel are excluded, unless mealtimes are a business meeting or work is conducted during the meal.
2. The ordinary travel/commute between home and work is **not** considered work time for which an employee will be compensated ([Reference Section 8.01 Reimbursement of Expenses, Mileage](#)).

4.20 COMPENSATION FOR REQUIRED TRAININGS, MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES

Employees attending training programs, meetings, or conferences required by NWRC during their regular work hours will receive their normal pay for attendance at such programs.

Employees are eligible to receive compensation for attendance at trainings, meetings, or conferences under the following circumstances:

- The employee was required to attend a training, meeting, or conference,
- The employee was required to perform ~~productive~~ work,
- The training takes place during regular working hours; or
- The training, meeting, or conference was directly related to the employee's current position.

Mealtimes during trainings, meetings, and conferences are excluded, **unless** mealtimes are a business meeting **or** work is conducted during the meal.

SECTION 5: EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

5.01 BENEFITS DISCLAIMER

The NWRC strives to provide competitive and cost-effective benefits for employees as part of the employee's total compensation package. The total cost to provide the benefits programs described herein is a significant supplement to each employee's pay and should therefore be viewed as additional compensation paid in various benefit forms (including paid time off) on behalf of each employee.

This portion of the manual contains a very general description of the benefits which you may receive as an employee of the NWRC. —As a summary, this general explanation does not provide all the details of these benefits. Specific and detailed information is contained in the pertinent plan documents, which can be obtained from Human Resources upon request.

Benefit plans change from time to time, and changes are reflected in the terms of the plans themselves. In addition, the NWRC reserves the right and discretion to amend, modify, or terminate, in whole or in part, any or all of the provisions of the benefits described in this manual. Further, the agency reserves the exclusive right, power, and authority to administer, apply, and interpret the plans described herein.

5.02 BENEFITS ELIGIBILITY & TERMS

~~**Regular Employee:** A regular employee is a person appointed to a salaried or hourly position on the basis of more than 79.75 hours per month based on scheduling needs. The benefits in Section 5 and 6, unless otherwise described herein, apply only to regular employees.~~

Full-time Employee: An individual appointed to a salaried or hourly position on the basis of 130 hours per month or greater. The benefits in Section 5 and 6, unless otherwise described herein, apply to full-time employees. If an employee works fewer than 40 hours per week, but equal to or greater than 30 hours per week (130 hours per month), leave accruals and paid holidays will be prorated. Retirement will automatically pro-rate based upon hours worked.

Part-time Employee: An individual appointed to a salaried or hourly position on the basis of more than 70 hours per month but fewer than 130 hours per month when averaged over 12 months. ~~A part-time employee is a person appointed to a salaried or hourly position on the basis of 79.75 hours per month or less based on scheduling needs.~~ The benefits in Section 5 and 6 do not apply except the following: social security, unemployment compensation, worker's compensation, employee assistance program, sick leave, and retirement for those eligible.

A part-time employee who is given a short-term assignment (anticipated to last

60 days or more) that increases their hours beyond those described above, will accrue ~~sick leave and~~ vacation on a pro-rated basis. The vacation accrual rate will be determined per policy 6.01 Vacation Leave based on years of service. Sick leave and retirement will automatically pro-rate based upon hours worked. Due to the limited duration of the assignment, such employee will not receive health insurance benefits.

On-Call Employee: An on-call employee is a person appointed to an hourly position in which the hours of work fluctuate according to staffing needs. Generally, this position works less than 70 hours per month. The benefits in Section 5 and 6 do not apply except the following: social security, unemployment compensation, worker's compensation, employee assistance program, and sick leave.

Temporary Employee: A temporary employee is one who is employed on a temporary basis. Unless otherwise indicated in the letter of appointment, the benefits herein do not apply, except the employee assistance program, worker's compensation and unemployment compensation.

~~**NWRC Domestic Partner:** Those individuals who meet all the criteria of the NWRC's "Domestic Partner" affidavit and who have formally filed the affidavit with Human Resources. Under this definition, NWRC employees may use sick leave to care for their domestic partner and may access bereavement leave as outlined in the policy.~~

State-Registered Domestic Partner: Those individuals who meet the criteria of the State-Registered Domestic Partner program and who have formally registered on ~~the~~ Washington's Secretary of State's website (www.sos.wa.gov). Under this definition and process, employees will be granted various leaves and benefits to care for their domestic partner in compliance with Washington state law as outlined in the manual.

5.03 MEDICAL AND DENTAL BENEFITS

~~Full-time~~Regular employees, as previously defined above, and their eligible dependents, generally may participate in the NWRC's medical and dental plans generally on the first of the month if their hire date is the first working day of the month. If the employee begins work after the first working day of the month, participation begins the first day of the following month. ~~—~~Employees maintain ongoing eligibility by receiving 8 hours or more of compensation each month. The NWRC contributes toward the cost of premiums in the amounts authorized by the NWRC Governing Board. The remainder of the premium, if any, shall be paid by the employee through a payroll deduction. Regular Full-time employees may encounter situations in which are they working less-fewer than an average of 130 hours per month (excluding the first and last month of employment). In such situations, the employee will pay a greater benefit premium based upon their hours worked.

5.04 VISION BENEFITS

Full-time employees, as previously defined, and their eligible dependents, generally may participate in the NWRC's vision plans generally on the first of the month if their hire date is the first working day of the month. If the employee begins work after the first working day of the month, participation begins the first day of the following month. Employees maintain ongoing eligibility by receiving 8 hours or more of compensation each month. The NWRC contributes toward the cost of premiums in the amounts authorized by the NWRC Governing Board. The remainder of the premium, if any, shall be paid by the employee through a payroll deduction. Full-time employees may encounter situations in which are they working fewer than 130 hours per month (excluding the first and last month of employment). In such situations, the employee will pay a greater benefit premium based upon their hours worked.

~~Regular employees, as defined above, and their eligible dependents may participate in the NWRC's medical and dental plans generally on the first of the month if their hire date is the first working day of the month. If the employee begins work after the first working day of the month, participation begins the first day of the following month. Employees maintain ongoing eligibility by receiving 8 hours or more of compensation each month. The NWRC contributes toward the cost of premiums in the amounts authorized by the NWRC Governing Board. The remainder of the premium, if any, shall be paid by the employee through a payroll deduction. Regular employees working less than an average of 130 hours per month will pay a greater benefit premium based upon their hours worked.~~

5.05 LIFE INSURANCE

Regular-Full-time employees, as previously defined ~~above~~, are eligible to receive life insurance coverage paid for by the NWRC. Participation in the life insurance plan begins generally on the first of the month if the employee's hire date is the first working day of the month. If the employee begins work after the first working day of the month, participation begins the first day of the following month. -The NWRC provides a set amount of employee coverage. Employees may purchase additional life and accident insurance for themselves and their dependents directly through the life insurance provider. Regular employees working less than 30 hours per week will pay a greater benefit premium based upon their hours worked. Full-time employees may encounter situations in which are they working fewer than 130 hours per month (excluding the first and last month of employment). In such situations, the employee will pay a greater benefit premium based upon their hours worked.

5.06 LONG TERM DISABILITY PLAN

Regular-Full-time employees, as previously defined ~~above~~, are eligible to receive long-term disability coverage paid for by the NWRC. Participation in the long-

term disability insurance plan generally begins on the first of the month if the employee's hire date is the first working day of the month. If the employee begins work after the first working day of the month, participation begins the first day of the following month. The NWRC provides a set amount of employee coverage. Employees may purchase long-term disability coverage for themselves through a payroll deduction. Regular employees working less than 30 hours per week will pay a greater benefit premium based upon their hours worked. Full-time employees may encounter situations in which they are working fewer than 130 hours per month (excluding the first and last month of employment). In such situations, the employee will pay a greater benefit premium based upon their hours worked.

5.07 EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

All employees are eligible to utilize the NWRC's Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Participation begins on the employee's date of hire. The purpose of the EAP is to establish a voluntary program of confidential counseling and assistance to an employee who is seeking support ~~se job performance is affected by personal problems~~. The NWRC recognizes that a wide range of problems ~~life situations~~, such as emotional or mental stress, family or financial difficulties, or drug or alcohol dependency, can affect an employee's performance ~~wellbeing~~. The EAP is an independent agency which provides professional and confidential diagnostic, counseling and referral service to eligible employees and their families at no cost to the employee.

The NWRC may also utilize the EAP services to assist in correcting an employee's behavior or work performance problem ~~addressing job performance issues~~. Such referrals may be made on a voluntary or mandatory basis. If mandated, the content of the counseling sessions remains confidential.

5.08 RETIREMENT BENEFITS

The NWRC makes contributions on behalf of all eligible employees to the Social Security System in addition to those contributions made by the employee through FICA payroll deductions.

All regular, full-time and eligible part-time employees are covered under the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). Benefit levels and contribution rates are set by the State of Washington Department of Retirement Systems (DRS). Employees intending to retire should notify their supervisor of their intent at least three months prior to the date of retirement, when feasible, to begin processing the appropriate retirement paperwork.

NWRC's Retirement Health Savings (RHS) Plan is a medical expense reimbursement program that allows employees to accumulate assets to pay for medical expenses in retirement on a tax-free basis. For eligibility requirements and enrollment, please refer to NWRC's Human Resources representative.

(Cross Reference Section 6.02 SICK LEAVE AND FAMILY CARE and Section 11. EMPLOYMENT SEPARATION.)

5.09 DEFERRED COMPENSATION

NWRC employees are eligible to supplement their retirement benefits through various deferred compensation programs. These programs allow employees to invest pre-tax or post-tax dollars for future use at retirement. For more information, please see plan brochures.

5.10 FLEXIBLE SPENDING ARRANGEMENTS PLAN

NWRC provides employees with [options for a Flexible Spending Arrangements, which Plan that](#) allows employees to pay [or be reimbursed for eligible insurance premiums and to establish reimbursement accounts for](#) out-of-pocket health care [expenses](#) and child/elder care expenses, utilizing pre-tax funds. For eligibility requirements and enrollment, please see enrollment information.

5.11 WORKER'S COMPENSATION

All employees and volunteers are covered by the State of Washington's Worker's Compensation Program. This insurance covers employees in the case of an on-the-job injury or job-related illness and is funded by an employee and employer-paid premium. For qualifying cases, the State Industrial Insurance will pay the employee for medical costs and lost compensation when certain criteria are met.

Employees must report all job-related accidents to their supervisors and complete an Employee Injury/Accident Report. Employees seeking professional medical attention for job-related injuries or illnesses, should inform their health care professional as to the nature of their injury/illness (e.g., that it is job-related) so the appropriate paperwork can be filled out to open a claim.

5.12 BENEFIT SUMMARY

Benefit	Number of Hours Worked to be Eligible:	Participation Begins:
Medical/Vision Dental Life Insurance LTD	A regular employee hired into a position of 130 or more hours per month. After an employee becomes eligible, they must be compensated at least 8 hours per month to maintain eligibility	If an employee begins on the first working day of the month, participation begins on date of hire. If employee begins after the first working day of the month, participation begins the first of the following month.
Employee		Hire Date

Assistance Program		
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Benefit	Eligibility Criteria
WA Public Employees Retirement System (PERS)	Employee holds an eligible position. An eligible position is one that normally requires at least 5 months each year in which regular compensation is earned for 70 or more hours per month. For further information, contact the Human Resources representative.
Retirement Health Savings Account	Retirement Health Savings (RHS) Plan is a medical expense reimbursement program that allows employees to accumulate assets to pay for medical expenses in retirement on a tax-free basis. For eligibility requirements and enrollment, contact the Human Resources representative.

Contact Human Resources to request information related to any of the benefits in Section 5 of this manual. Benefit eligibility criteria and participation *vary based on employment terms and* are subject to change based on benefit contracts.

Benefit	Eligibility Criteria Number of Hours Worked to be Eligible:	Participation Begins:
Medical & Dental/Vision Vision/Dental Life Insurance <u>Long term disability (LTD)</u>	A regular <u>Employee hired into a full-time position of 130 or more hours per month.</u> After and employee becomes eligible, they must be compensated at least 8 hours per month to maintain eligibility.	If an employee begins on the first working day of the month, participation begins on date of hire. If employee begins after the first working day of the month, participation begins the first of the following month.
Employee Assistance Program <u>(EAP)</u>	<u>All employees are eligible.</u>	Hire Date
<u>WA Public Employees Retirement System (PERS)</u>	<u>Employee holds an eligible position. An eligible position is one that normally requires at least 5 months each year in which regular compensation is earned for 70 or more hours per month.</u>	<u>The date in which the employee becomes eligible. Most often the date of appointment into an eligible position.</u>
<u>Retirement Health Savings Account (RHS)</u>	<u>Eligibility requirements and participation dates vary, contact Human Resources. Cross reference Sections 6.02 Sick Leave and Family Care and 11.04 Benefits & Compensation at Separation.</u>	
<u>Deferred Compensation</u>	<u>Full-time employees, and eligible part time employees.</u>	<u>When employee enrolls and enrollment is</u>

Plan (DCP)		processed through Human Resources, payroll and the vendor.
Flexible Spending Arrangements (FSA)	Full-time employees, and eligible part time employees.	When employee enrolls and enrollment is processed through Human Resources, payroll and the vendor.
Workers' Compensation	All employees are eligible.	Hire Date

Benefit	Eligibility Criteria
WA Public Employees Retirement System (PERS)	Employee holds an eligible position. An eligible position is one that normally requires at least 5 months each year in which regular compensation is earned for 70 or more hours per month. For further information, contact the Human Resources representative.
Retirement Health Savings Account	Retirement Health Savings (RHS) Plan is a medical expense reimbursement program that allows employees to accumulate assets to pay for medical expenses in retirement on a tax-free basis. For eligibility requirements and enrollment, contact the Human Resources representative.

5.13 INSURANCE COVERAGE DURING LEAVES

Family and Medical Leaves of Absence [\(FMLA\)](#)

Eligible employees on an approved Family and Medical Leave of Absence will continue their medical, dental and vision benefits listed above for the duration of their ~~12-week~~ leave. Paid leave accruals will be handled as outlined below. Employees will be required to continue paying their portion of the monthly insurance premiums. NWRC encourages employees to pay their portion of ~~anticipated~~ premiums [during their leave by coordinating with the payroll representative in advance through a payroll deduction.](#)

Please refer to 6.04 Family and Medical Leave for further leave details.

Leave without Pay

During an approved Leave of Absence without Pay (that is not FMLA [or WA State PFML](#) related) employee benefits will be handled as follows:

Benefit	Employee Receives Compensation for 30 or more hrs/week (130 hrs/mo)	Employee Receives Compensation for less than 30 hrs/week (130 hrs/mo)
Medical, Dental & Vision	No change to	Employee premium

	employee premium	pro-rated
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Benefit	Employee Receives Compensation between 40-20 hrs/week	Employee Receives Compensation for less than 20 hrs/week
Vacation	Pro-rated accrual for pay period based on compensated hours	No accrual for pay period
Sick Leave	Pro-rated accrual for pay period based on compensated hours	Pro-rated accrual for pay period based on compensated hours
Holiday	No holiday pay while on Leave without Pay Pro-rated accrual for pay period based on compensated hours. There is no holiday pay for on-call employees.	

5.14 COBRA BENEFITS

The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA) allows for continued health care insurance coverage, on a self-pay basis, for employees and/or their dependents who would otherwise lose their health care insurance due to termination of employment, divorce or separation, or other events specified in the law. This continuation right only applies to insurance coverage the employee, or their dependents had at the time of the qualifying event. The duration of the self-pay premium coverage is as follows, based on the qualifying event, as of the date of publication of this manual:

<u>Qualifying Event</u>	<u>Duration of coverage</u>
Termination of employment	18 months
Reduction of hours	18 months
Death of a covered employee	36 months
Dependent child ceasing to be dependent	36 months
Divorce or legal separation	36 months
Medicare entitlement	36 months

Eligible employees who separate from employment from the NWRC with benefit coverage will receive COBRA information at their separation. At any other time, employees who are interested in finding out more information about COBRA insurance costs and enrollment should contact the Human Resources representative.

5.15 UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

Employees may qualify for Washington State Unemployment Compensation after separation from NWRC employment depending on the reason for separation and

| if certain qualifications are met. For more information on these benefits, contact your local Employment Security office and/or website.

SECTION 6: PAID AND UNPAID LEAVES OF ABSENCE

6.01 VACATION LEAVE

~~All Employees~~ are strongly encouraged to utilize vacation leave in accordance with this policy and take regular vacations and are expected to do so annually for ~~their own wellbeing good of the organization as well as the employee. The purpose of granting a vacation leave is to provide employees with time away from work to relax, recreate, and otherwise attend to personal matters.~~

Consistent with NWRC needs and workload, employees may select their vacation time with the approval of their supervisor. In approving the request, the supervisor will take into consideration timing of the request, seniority, performance, vacation history, workload, etc. Agency paid Holidays observed during an employee's vacation time will not be considered as vacation time.

For full-time regular and part-time employees ~~(but not for on-call employees)~~, all vacation leave shall be accumulated on a monthly basis from the date of employment as prescribed herein. Employees shall have the right to utilize accrued vacation after successful completion of the trial service period. ~~If for any reason a trial service employee's employment is terminated prior to the~~ end successful completion of the trial service period, the employee shall not be eligible for any accrued vacation leave or cash payment in lieu of vacation.

Vacation leave (for regular full-time employees) shall be accrued each pay period and according to the following schedule:

Year 1 and 2 (0-24 months)	12 days/yr.
Year 3 and 4 (25-48 months)	13 days/yr.
Year 5 through 10 (49-120 months)	15 days/yr.
Year 11 and beyond (121 months +)	18 days/yr.

~~Annual leave shall accrue on a pro-rated basis for regular and part time employees working less than full time (but greater than 20 hours per week).~~

Employees may accrue a maximum of 288 hours of vacation. No further vacation shall accrue until such time as the accrual balance falls below the maximum.

An employee may elect to cash-out 25% of their accrued vacation time once per calendar year. A minimum of six (6) months is required between requests. A minimum balance of 160 hours must ~~be maintained~~ remain on the books after cash-out. Requests for cash-out of vacation hours must be submitted in writing and submitted directly to the Fiscal Manager for formal review of accrued vacation hours. Final approval will be at the discretion of the Executive Director. Any circumstances that deviate from this normal policy and procedure will require NWRC approval.

Upon terminationseparation, discharge, or layoff, regular and part time

employees shall be compensated for all accumulated vacation leave. An exception will be an employee who voluntarily resigns and fails to give a minimum of two (2) weeks written notice to the Executive Director, unless there are extenuating circumstances and other arrangements have been made. In such cases, the employee will forfeit all or part of their vacation benefits. Additionally, in the event of termination of employment for ~~gross~~ misconduct, compensation for all accumulated vacation leave will not be paid out, unless otherwise approved by the Executive Director.

~~Upon retirement under the Washington State Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), Plan 1 only, employees shall be limited to a maximum compensation of 240 hours of accumulated vacation leave.~~

6.02 SICK LEAVE AND FAMILY CARE

Accrual & Carry Over

Paid sick leave is available for employees to care for their health and the health of their family members. Employees will accrue and carry over the following sick leave:

Hours Worked	Monthly Sick Leave Accrual	Year End Carryover
40 hrs/wk	8 hours	Up to 600 hours
39-20 hrs/wk	Pro-rated	Up to 600 hours
Less than 20 hrs/wk	Pro-rated	Up to 40 hours

Sick leave may be taken in increments of 15 minutes or more and is not considered worked time for the calculation of overtime.

Any employee accruing more than 600 ~~(six hundred)~~ hours of sick leave on January 1 of each year shall exchange ~~four (4)~~ hours of sick leave for ~~one (1)~~ additional hour of vacation leave up to a maximum of an additional ~~twenty-four (24)~~ hours vacation leave per year.

Upon achieving 20 years or more longevity, any employee accruing more than ~~six hundred (600)~~ hours of sick leave on January 1 of each year shall exchange 2.1 sick leave hours for 1 compensated hour deposited in their Retirement Health Savings Plan Account, up to a maximum of 45.714 compensated hours per year.

Usage

In compliance with Washington's Paid Sick Leave law [RCW 49.46.210](#), employees may utilize sick leave to care for their health and the health of their family members. Employees are required to give reasonable notice regarding the

need for such leave and, in all circumstances, must personally notify their supervisor no later than their scheduled reporting time.

Family member is defined as a child, grandchild, grandparent, parent, sibling, or spouse of an employee, and includes any individual who regularly resides in the employee's home or where the relationship creates an expectation that the employee care for the person, and that individual depends on the employee for care. Family member also includes any individual who regularly resides in the employee's home, except that it does not include an individual who simply resides in the same home with no expectation that the employee care for the individual. Further definitions are as follows:

- Child means a biological, adopted, or foster child, a stepchild, a child's spouse, or a child to whom the employee stands in loco parentis, is a legal guardian, or is a de facto parent, regardless of age or dependency status.
- Grandchild means a child of the employee's child.
- Grandparent means a parent of the employee's parent.
- Parent means the biological, adoptive, de facto, or foster parent, stepparent, or legal guardian of an employee or the employee's spouse, or an individual who stood in loco parentis to an employee when the employee was a child.
- Spouse means a husband or wife, as the case may be, or state registered domestic partner.

~~“Family members” is defined as a child or parent (including biological, adopted, foster, step or legal guardian), a spouse, state-registered domestic partner, NWRC domestic partner (with affidavit on file), spouse's parent, grandparent, grandchild or sibling. Sick leave may be used for the following circumstances:~~

- ~~• An employee's mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; to accommodate the employee's need for medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; or an employee's need for preventive medical care;~~An employee's mental or physical illness, injury or health condition;
- ~~• Preventive care such as a medical, dental or optical appointments and/or treatment;~~
- ~~• To provide care for a family member with a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; care of a family member who needs medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury, or health condition; or care for a family member who needs preventive medical care; Care of a family member with an illness, injury, health condition and/or preventative care;~~
- Closure of the employee's place of business or child's school/place of care by order of a public official for any health-related reasons;

- If the employee or the employee's family member is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking (see 6.06 Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Leave).

Employees on approved Family and Medical Leaves of absence for their own serious health condition or that of an eligible family member, will may be required to use all paid sick leave (and other forms of paid leave) concurrently with Family and Medical Leave.

When an employee is absent for more than three consecutive days, NWRC may require medical verification that the employee is taking leave for an authorized purpose and is or is not able to return to work.

Separation & Reinstatement

Upon retiring under PERS, the monetary equivalent of fifty-two (52) percent of an employee's accrued sick leave will be contributed to the employee's Retirement Health Savings Plan Account.

~~Upon retiring under PERS, an employee with 80 hours or more of sick leave will receive the monetary equivalent of fifty-two (52) percent of an employee's accrued sick leave contributed to the employee's Retirement Health Savings Account.~~

Upon separation (termination, discharge, or layoff,) but not retiring, from NWRC after 20 years or more longevity, an employee with 80 hours or more of sick leave will receive the monetary equivalent of fifty-two (52) percent of an employee's accrued sick leave contributed to the employee's Retirement Health Savings Plan Account. An employee who chooses not to enroll in a RHSA will forfeit accrued eligible sick leave. In the event of termination of employment for gross-misconduct, the employee will not be eligible for a Retirement Health Savings Plan Account, unless approved by the Executive Director. (Cross Reference Section 11.04 BENEFITS AND COMPENSATION AT SEPARATION.)

In all other cases, sick leave is forfeited at the time of separation. When an employee leaves NWRC and is rehired within twelve months of separation, previously accrued and unused sick leave at the time of separation that has not been cashed out (as referenced above) will be reinstated and the previous period of employment will be counted for purposes of determining the employee's eligibility to use sick leave.

Notice

NWRC will provide employees with regular notice about the amount of sick leave the employee has earned and used. Any questions and concerns about the sick leave policy may be directed to an employee's supervisor or Human Resources.

Sick Leave Depletion

An employee who has depleted all sick leave has two options:

- a) Sick days may be charged against the employee's accrued vacation leave. The employee shall be paid accordingly.
- b) Leave without pay may be granted until the employee is capable of returning (see Leave without Pay policy).

In the event of an extraordinary physical or mental condition which causes the employee to take leave without pay or likely terminate employment, the Executive Director may allow other employees to voluntarily donate accrued vacation hours to that employee (see Compassionate Leave policy).

6.03 HOLIDAY PAY

[Northwest Regional Council](#) **NWRC** offices that are open to the public Monday through Friday are closed on the following holidays:

New Year's Day	January 1
Martin Luther King's Birthday	Third Monday in January
President's Day	Third Monday in February
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Juneteenth	June 19
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	First Monday in September
Veterans Day	November 11
Thanksgiving Day	Fourth Thursday in November
Native American Heritage Day	Friday after Thanksgiving
Christmas	December 25

When a holiday falls on Saturday, the preceding Friday will be observed as the holiday; when the holiday falls on Sunday, the following Monday will be observed as the holiday.

For time worked on observed holidays, nonexempt employees will receive overtime or compensatory time at the rate of time and one-half, when authorized in advance by the Executive Director or [their](#) designee.

The Whatcom County Jail Health Program, which is open seven (7) days a week, will observe holidays on the day the holiday occurs.

For time worked on holidays, as scheduled by management, nonexempt employees will receive holiday pay plus time and one-half.

There is no holiday pay while on Leave without Pay (Cross Reference Section 5.13 and 6.08).

~~Full-time employees will receive 8 hours pay for all holidays referenced above, including “Personal Holiday” and “Wellness Days” further defined below. Eligible part-time employees will receive prorated holiday pay and Wellness days.~~

Personal Holiday

In addition, one “Personal Holiday” per year is granted on request of the employee, with the approval of the supervisor. ~~Regular Full-time and part-time employees (not on-call employees)~~ are entitled to take one personal holiday per calendar year on any day of work which is agreeable to both the employee and the supervisor. Personal holidays cannot be carried forward past the end of any calendar year and have no cash value on termination of employment.

Wellness Days

Wellness Days provide flexibility for employees to prioritize what wellness looks like to them as individuals. These days may be used for cultural reasons, wellness activities, additional vacation time, or similar.

Three “Wellness days,” ~~for a total of 24 hours,~~ per year are granted on request of the employee, with the approval of the supervisor. ~~Regular Full-time and part-time employees (not on-call employees)~~ are entitled to take three wellness days per calendar year on any day of work which is agreeable to both the employee and the supervisor. Wellness days cannot be carried forward past the end of any calendar year and have no cash value on termination of employment.

Wellness Days will be granted to new employees within their first year of employment as follows:

First Day of Employment	# of Wellness Days granted
January 1 – April 30	3 days (24 hours)
May 1 – August 31	2 days (16 hours)
September 1 – December 31	1 day (8 hours)

~~Full-time employees will receive 8 hours pay for all holidays referenced above, including “Personal Holiday” and “Wellness Days”. Eligible part-time employees will receive prorated holiday pay and Wellness days.~~

Unpaid Holiday for Reasons of Faith or Conscience

An employee may take two (2) unpaid holidays per calendar year for a reason of faith or conscience, or an organized activity conducted through a religious denomination, church, or religious organization. The employee must submit a request for these days with their supervisor. The employee will be allowed to take the unpaid holiday on the days selected unless the absence would unduly disrupt operations or impose an undue hardship. The employee may access vacation during the unpaid holidays. If the employee chooses to use leave without pay it will not affect proration of benefits. The two unpaid holidays must be taken during the calendar year and do not carry over from one year to the next.

6.04 FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

General Provisions

NWRC employees may be able to access a range of federal and state leaves depending on the circumstances and their eligibility.

- Employees may be eligible for Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave depending on the circumstances described below. FMLA leave is unpaid and employees are required to use any available sick leave, vacation, compensatory time, and eligible floating holidays while on FMLA as described below.
- Employees may also be able to access Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) if eligible. Employees generally choose when to apply for this benefit which covers a portion of the employee's compensation as explained. Employees will not receive any supplemental compensation from NWRC while on PFML. FMLA and state paid leave may run concurrently depending on the situation.
- The NWRC will comply with all federal and state laws applicable to a particular employee or group of employees.

Leaves that may be available to eligible employees:

<u>FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)</u>	<u>WASHINGTON PAID FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE (PFML)</u>
<u>Unpaid</u>	<u>Partially paid by Employment Security Dept. (ESD)</u>
<u>Typically must use paid leave while on FMLA</u>	<u>Employees receive no compensation from NWRC while on leave</u>
<u>Employer designates or approved of employee's leave</u>	<u>Employee elects to use leave and ESD approves</u>
<u>Employee worked 1250 hours over previous 12 months</u>	<u>Employee worked 820 hours at any Washington employer over qualifying period</u>
<u>Leave taken for spouse, children or parents</u>	<u>Leave taken for FMLA family members plus grandkids, grandparents and siblings</u>
<u>Job protection if eligible employee takes leave</u>	<u>Job protection if employee works 1250 hours over previous 12 months</u>
<u>Medical Insurance continues during FMLA; employer & employee continues premium payments</u>	<u>Medical Insurance continues if FMLA qualifying event and FMLA and PFML overlap for at least one day.</u>
<u>Intermittent leave for child bonding based on employer approval</u>	<u>Intermittent leave can be taken for child bonding</u>
<u>No waiting period</u>	<u>7 day waiting period</u>

The NWRC recognizes that understanding the laws can be confusing and therefore encourages employees to go to Human Resources with their leave questions.

1. Federal Leave: Family And Medical Leave

The NWRC recognizes the need for employees to balance their work and family life by taking reasonable leave to care for themselves or their family members. In accordance with the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the NWRC provides up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to eligible employees for incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth; to care for the employees' child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care; to care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job. In addition, the NWRC will reinstate eligible employees returning from FMLA leave to the same or an equivalent job to the extent these laws require. NWRC employees must use all paid sick leave, vacation, compensatory time, and eligible floating holidays while on FMLA as described below.

1.1 Eligibility & Reasons for Leave

An employee is eligible for FMLA leave when they have worked for the NWRC for at least one year, provided that the employee has worked at least 1,250 hours over the previous twelve (12) months. The twelve months need not be consecutive. Time that is paid but not worked, for example sick leave, vacation or holidays, is not counted toward this 1,250 hour requirement. An employee who meets these eligibility requirements is entitled to take up to twelve (12) weeks of unpaid leave for the following reasons:

- for incapacity due to pregnancy, prenatal medical care or child birth;
- to care for the employees' child after birth, or placement for adoption or foster care;
- to care for the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or
- for a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform the employee's job.

The NWRC adopts a "rolling year" for determining an employee's eligibility, measuring backwards twelve (12) months from the first day that the employee requests leave.

1.2 Servicemember FMLA Provisions

The NWRC will grant up to 12 workweeks of unpaid family and medical leave to an eligible employee during any 12-month period when leave is due to a “qualifying exigency” arising out of a covered family member’s active duty or call to active duty in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency plan.

The NWRC will grant up to 26 workweeks of unpaid family and medical leave to an eligible employee during a single 12-month period to care for an injured or ill family member servicemember. When combined with other FMLA-qualifying leave, this may not exceed 26 weeks in a single 12-month period.

Servicemember FMLA runs concurrent with other leave entitlements provided under federal, state, and local law.

1.3 Notice Requirements/Employee Responsibilities

Employees must provide thirty (30) days advanced notice of the need to take FMLA leave when the need is foreseeable. The NWRC reserves its right to deny or delay the leave when the employee does not give sufficient notice. When thirty (30) days’ notice is not possible, employees must provide notice to Human Resources as soon as practicable and must comply with company call-in-procedures. The NWRC will require the employee to provide medical certifications as the law permits. Typically, the NWRC will require a medical certification to initiate the leave and may also request subsequent re-certifications periodically thereafter supporting the need for continued leave.

The NWRC will also typically require that the employee obtain a fitness for duty certification as a prerequisite to returning to their job functions. The employee is responsible for obtaining these certifications and must provide sufficient information to determine if the leave may qualify for FMLA protection and the anticipated timing and duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions, the family member is unable to perform daily activities, the need for hospitalization or continuing treatment by a health care provider, or circumstances supporting the need for military family leave. Employees also must inform Human Resources if the requested leave is for a reason for which FMLA leave was previously taken or certified. Under some circumstances, the NWRC can request second and third opinions regarding health conditions. In the event second and third opinions are sought, the NWRC will pay for them in accordance with the law.

1.4 Serious Health Condition

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee’s job or prevents the qualified family member from participating in

school or other daily activities. Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than three (3) consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

1.5 Intermittent Leave

FMLA leave can be taken intermittently or on a reduced leave schedule when medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt business operations. The NWRC may temporarily transfer an employee to an available alternate position with equivalent pay and benefits if the alternate position would better accommodate the employee's intermittent or reduced schedule. The NWRC typically requires an employee to verify the need for the intermittent leave through the medical certification form. For the birth, adoption or foster care of a child, the employee may only be allowed to take FMLA leave intermittently or work reduced hour schedule with the NWRC's approval.

1.6 Benefits and Protections

While an employee is on FMLA leave, the NWRC will maintain the employee's group health plan on the same terms as if the employee had continued to work. Employees will be required to continue paying their portion of the medical benefits. If an employee chooses not to return to work following their leave for reasons other than a continued serious health condition, the NWRC may require reimbursement for the amount paid for the health insurance premium during the leave period. Use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that accrued prior to the start of an employee's leave. However, employees on FMLA leave do not accrue additional paid time off benefits during their leave, and are not entitled to paid holidays.

1.7 Substitution of Paid Leave

Employees taking leave under this policy must use all eligible paid sick leave, vacation, compensatory time, and eligible floating holidays before taking the remainder as unpaid leave. Such paid leave will be considered FMLA leave and counted toward the 12 eligible weeks.

1.8 Return from Leave

The NWRC will restore an employee who takes FMLA leave under this policy to return to the original or equivalent position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms. The NWRC reserves the right to deny

reinstatement to certain highly compensated employees that it designates as key employees in accordance with applicable law. The NWRC will notify an employee of this designation, of applicable, at the time the employee requests the leave. The NWRC reserves the right to treat an employee who does not return as scheduled from FMLA leave as having voluntarily resigned from employment.

1.9 Employer Responsibilities

The NWRC will inform employees requesting leave whether they are eligible under FMLA. If they are, the notice will specify any additional information required as well as the employees' rights and responsibilities. If they are not eligible, the NWRC will inform the employee and provide a reason for the ineligibility. Employees will be informed if the leave will be designated as FMLA-protected and the amount of leave counted against the employee's leave entitlement.

Under the FMLA it is unlawful for the NWRC to interfere with, restrain, or deny the exercise of any right provided under the FMLA, or to discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by the FMLA or for involvement in any proceeding under or relating to FMLA. An employee may file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Labor or may bring a private lawsuit against an employer. FMLA does not affect any Federal or State law prohibiting discrimination, or supersede any State or local law or collective bargaining agreement which provides greater family or medical leave rights.

2. State Leave: Washington's Paid Family And Medical Leave

Washington Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) is a statewide insurance program that provides eligible Washington employees with paid time off to give or receive care. The Program is administered by the Washington Employment Security Department (ESD) and is funded through an employer and employee tax. Employees should go directly to ESD's website for a full description of the program and to apply for benefits (www.paidleave.wa.gov). The NWRC will not discriminate or retaliate against any employee for requesting or taking leave under this law.

2.1 Eligibility

Employees who have worked 820 hours in the preceding 12 months (equal to 16 hours a week for a year) will be able to apply to take paid medical or family leave. The 820 hours are cumulative, regardless of the number of employers or jobs someone has during a year if all prior employers are in the State of Washington. All paid work over the course of the year counts toward the 820 hours, including part-time, seasonal and temporary work.

2.2 Reasons for Leave

Eligible employees may take up to 12 weeks, if you:

- Welcome a child into your family (through birth, adoption or foster placement);
- Experience a serious illness or injury;
- Need to care for a seriously ill or injured family member; or
- Need time to prepare for a family member's pre- and post-deployment activities, as well as time for childcare issues related to a family member's military deployment.

Family members include:

- Spouses and domestic partners
- Children (biological, adopted, foster, stepchild, legal guardian, de facto or loco parentis)
- Spouse of an employee's child
- Parents and legal guardians (or spouse's parents)
- Siblings
- Grandchildren
- Grandparents (or spouse's grandparents)
- Someone who has an expectation to rely on you for care – whether you live together or not

Employees have up to one year from the birth, adoption or fostering of a child to access the leave benefit. If you face multiple events in a year, you might be eligible to receive up to 16 weeks, and up to 18 weeks if you experience a serious health condition during pregnancy that results in incapacity.

2.3 Serious Health Condition

A serious health condition is an illness, injury, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves either an overnight stay in a medical care facility, or continuing treatment by a health care provider for a condition that either prevents the employee from performing the functions of the employee's job, or prevents the qualified family member from participating in school or other daily activities. Subject to certain conditions, the continuing treatment requirement may be met by a period of incapacity of more than three (3) consecutive calendar days combined with at least two visits to a health care provider or one visit and a regimen of continuing treatment, or incapacity due to pregnancy, or incapacity due to a chronic condition. Other conditions may meet the definition of continuing treatment.

2.4 Partial Wage Replacement from ESD

Employment Security Department (ESD) handles an employee's partial wage replacement during Washington Paid Family & Medical Leave. The benefit generally ranges from 75-90 percent of your weekly wage, with a minimum of \$100 per week and a maximum of \$1,000 per week. Employees are required to communicate weekly with ESD to verify continued eligibility for leave and report any compensation received from their employer. Employees will receive the partial wage replacement based on their earnings directly from Employment Security. Employees may also access partial wage benefits for intermittent leave. There is a minimum claim requirement of eight (8) consecutive hours of leave in a week for which benefits can be sought.

Except for leave taken in connection with the birth or placement of a child, PFML benefits are subject to a seven-day waiting period. The waiting period begins on the Sunday of the week in which PFML is first taken. Employees may access their sick leave, vacation or other eligible available paid leave to receive compensation for the unpaid work days during the waiting period. Once an employee is eligible to receive partial wage replacement, the employee will receive no additional or supplemental compensation from NWRC.

2.5 Benefits During PFML

During PFML, employees will not receive holiday pay or accrue additional paid leave (vacation or sick leave). An employee will continue to receive medical insurance at the same status as when working if the leave occurs due to a qualifying FMLA event and FMLA and PFML overlap for at least one day. Additionally, retirement system members will not receive service credit for the partial wage replacement received by ESD while on leave under PFML. An employee may contact the Department of Retirement Systems to discuss the option of purchasing back service credit.

2.6 Notice Requirements

Employees must provide written notification of their intention to take leave. If an event is foreseeable, the employee must provide 30 days' notice. If the event is unforeseeable, the employee must provide notice as soon as practicable. For example, if the employee has a medical procedure appointment that will be the start of their leave, they must give their employer 30 days' notice of their intention to take leave. The employee's application to the Employment Security Department is not considered notice to the NWRC.

The employee's notification of their intention to take leave must include the employee's anticipated timing and duration of leave. The NWRC may require the employee to periodically check in regarding status and return date depending on the circumstances of the leave.

The NWRC also requires that employees provide written notice in the following circumstances:

- When the employee files an initial application for leave with ESD.
- When an employee takes leave on an intermittent basis and the intermittent schedule changes in any way.
- When an employee on leave files a weekly benefit claim with ESD.

In general, the NWRC requires employees to make a reasonable effort to schedule foreseeable or planned personal or family members' medical treatment so as not to disrupt unduly NWRC operations, subject to the employee's health care provider's approval, or the employee's family member's health care provider's approval.

2.7 Job and Benefits Protection

Leave taken under this policy is job protected only to the extent that the employees has worked at least 1,250 hours over the previous twelve (12) months preceding the date leave will commence. The NWRC will generally restore an employee who returns from leave to the same or a comparable position. While on PFML leave, employees will continue to receive existing health insurance coverage, provided that their PFML and FMLA leave overlap for at least one day for a reason covered under both laws and they continue to pay their share of health insurance premiums.

The NWRC reserves the right to treat an employee who does not return as scheduled from medical or family leave as having voluntarily resigned from employment.

Coordination of Leaves

An employee may meet the eligibility criteria for both federal and state family and medical leave. In such cases, the NWRC will designate these leaves to run concurrently where permitted. For circumstances of leave related to a serious health condition, the health care certification process conducted under the state leave will suffice to designate the leave as FMLA. Additionally, the employee will not be required to use paid time off during leave but may voluntarily supplement leave as outlined above.

~~The NWRC recognizes the need for employees to balance their work and family life by taking reasonable leave for serious health conditions, for birth or adoption of a child, and for the care of a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious health condition. The agency also encourages supervisors to work with employees to~~

~~creatively solve personal and scheduling conflicts in designing leaves and alternate work schedules.~~

~~The NWRC will grant up to 12 weeks of unpaid family and medical leave during any 12-month period. In order to qualify to take family and medical leave under this policy, the employee must meet all of the following conditions:~~

- ~~1. The employee must have worked for the employer at least 12 months, or 52 weeks. The twelve months, or 52 weeks, need not have been consecutive. For eligibility purposes, an employee will be considered to have been employed for an entire week if the employee was on the payroll for all or part of the week or if the employee was on leave during part of the week.~~
- ~~2. The employee must have worked at least 1,250 hours during the twelve-month period immediately before the date when the leave would begin.~~

~~If an employee and their need for leave meets the FMLA qualifications, NWRC will begin the FMLA approval process and, once approved, designate appropriate leave as FMLA.~~

Servicemember FMLA Provisions

~~The NWRC will grant up to 12 workweeks of unpaid family and medical leave to an eligible employee during any 12-month period when leave is due to a “qualifying exigency” arising out of a covered family member’s active duty or call to active duty in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency plan.~~

~~The NWRC will grant up to 26 workweeks of unpaid family and medical leave to an eligible employee during a single 12-month period to care for an injured or ill family member servicemember. When combined with other FMLA-qualifying leave, this may not exceed 26 weeks in a single 12-month period.~~

~~Servicemember FMLA runs concurrent with other leave entitlements provided under federal, state, and local law.~~

Definition of Terms

~~**Child**—includes a legal ward, under the age of 18, in the employee's care, a biological or adopted child under the age of 18, or 18 years old and older if incapable of self-care because of mental or physical disability.~~

~~**Eligible Family Member**—child, parent, or spouse (as defined in this policy).~~

~~**Foster care**—such care that requires state action, rather than an informal arrangement or agreement.~~

~~**Parent**—is defined as direct parent to employee (not parent-in-law).~~

~~**Spouse**—is defined in accordance with applicable State law.~~

~~**Serious health condition**—a condition which requires inpatient care at a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, or a condition which requires continuing care by a licensed health care provider.~~

~~**Twelve-month period**—the time period within which the 12 weeks of leave may be taken and will be defined as a “rolling” 12-month period measured backward from the date an employee uses any FMLA leave. (For example, if an employee began FMLA on June 15th, the employer would review all FMLA usage from the previous 12 months to determine if 12 weeks were available.)~~

General FMLA Leave Parameters

~~In order to qualify as Family and Medical Leave under this policy, the employee must be taking the leave for one of the reasons listed below:~~

- ~~1. The birth of a child and to care for that child;~~
- ~~2. The placement of a child for adoption or foster care with an employee;~~
- ~~3. To care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition; or~~
- ~~4. The serious health condition of the employee.~~

Servicemember FMLA Leave Parameters

~~Servicemember FMLA provides eligible employees unpaid leave for anyone, or for a combination, of the following reasons:~~

- ~~1. A “qualifying exigency” arising out of a covered family member’s active duty or call to active duty in the Armed Forces in support of a contingency plan; and/or~~
- ~~2. To care for a covered family member who has incurred an injury or illness in the line of duty while on active duty in the Armed Forces provided that such injury or illness may render the family member medically unfit to perform duties of the member’s office, grade, rank or rating.~~

Serious Health Condition

~~An illness, impairment, or physical or mental condition that involves:~~

- ~~1. **Hospital care:** Inpatient care (i.e., an overnight stay) in a hospital, hospice, or residential medical care facility, including any period of incapacity (defined as an inability to work, attend school or perform other regular daily activities), or any subsequent treatment in connection with such inpatient care; or~~

2. ~~**Absence and treatment:**~~ A period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days, and any subsequent treatment or period of incapacity relating to the same condition, that also involves:
 - ~~Treatment two or more times by a health care provider, or by a nurse or physician's assistant under direct supervision of a health care provider, or by a provider of health care services (e.g., physical therapist) on referral by a health care provider; or~~
 - ~~Treatment by a health care provider on at least one occasion which results in a regimen of continuing treatment.~~
3. ~~**Pregnancy:**~~ Any period of incapacity due to pregnancy or for prenatal care. Since pregnancy is the only FMLA condition that does not require medical certification, absences under this category will automatically be classified under FMLA. Employees gone for continuous periods of time will need to provide proper documentation under the Maternity Disability policy.
4. ~~**Chronic conditions requiring treatments:**~~ A chronic condition which requires:
 - ~~Periodic visits for treatment by a health care provider, or by a nurse or physician's assistant under direct supervision of a health care provider; and~~
 - ~~Continues over an extended period of time (including recurring episodes of a single underlying condition); and~~
 - ~~May cause episodic rather than continuing period of **incapacity** (e.g., asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, etc.).~~
5. ~~**Permanent long-term conditions requiring supervision:**~~ A period of incapacity which is permanent or long-term due to a condition for which treatment may not be effective. The employee or family member must be under the continuing supervision of, but need not be receiving treatment by, a health care provider. Examples include Alzheimer's, a severe stroke, or the terminal stages of a disease.
6. ~~**Multiple treatments (non-chronic condition):**~~ Any period of absence to receive multiple treatments (including any related period of recovery) by a health care provider or by a provider of health care services under orders of, or on referral by, a health care provider, either for restorative surgery after an accident or other injury, or for a condition that would likely result in a period of incapacity of more than three consecutive calendar days in the absence of medical intervention or treatment, such as cancer (chemotherapy, radiation, etc.) severe arthritis (physical therapy), or kidney disease (dialysis).

Medical Certification

~~The agency will require an employee requesting leave to provide a certification from a health care provider of the serious health condition. Medical certification will be provided on the form listed in the forms section. Such certification will be due 15 days from the request, or the employee will provide a reasonable explanation for the delay. Failure to provide certification may result in a delay in the approval of an employee's FMLA leave.~~

~~The agency may request a second opinion for a medical leave. If a second opinion is requested, the agency will pay for the employee to get a certification from a second doctor, which the agency will select. If necessary to resolve a conflict between the original certification and the second opinion, the agency will request the opinion of a third doctor. The NWRC and the employee will jointly select the third doctor, and the agency will pay for the opinion. This third opinion will be considered final.~~

~~The agency may require an employee to obtain subsequent re-certifications to support continued leave. Re-certifications will not be required more often than every 30 days unless the employee requests an extension of leave, if circumstances have changed since the original certification, or the agency has information raising a question regarding the validity of the original certification.~~

Intermittent Leave

~~Employees are eligible to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for a serious health condition on an intermittent basis (days periodically over the year when needed), if medically necessary. Under certain circumstances, serious health conditions may require the use of family and medical leave to reduce the workweek or workday, resulting in a reduced schedule. Such leave should be scheduled so that it does not unduly disrupt business operations. The agency may temporarily transfer an employee to an available alternative position with equivalent pay and benefits if the alternative position would better accommodate the intermittent or reduced schedule. Under an intermittent or reduced leave schedule, only the amount of leave actually taken may be counted against the 12-week entitlement.~~

~~If the employee is taking unpaid leave for a serious health condition or because of the serious health condition of a family member, the employee should try to reach a suitable reduced work schedule agreement with the agency prior to taking intermittent leave or working a reduced hour schedule. In any case, the employee must verify the need for intermittent leave is medically necessary through the medical certification form.~~

~~For the birth, adoption, or foster care of a child, the employee may be allowed to take leave intermittently or work a reduced hour schedule only with the agency's approval. Leave for birth, adoption, or foster care of a child must be taken within one year of the birth or placement of the child.~~

Status, Pay, and Benefits

~~Status:~~ ~~An employee who takes leave under this policy will be able to return to the same job or a job with equivalent status, pay, benefits, and other employment terms. The position will be the same or one which entails substantially equivalent skill, effort, responsibility and authority.~~

~~Pay:~~ ~~Employees taking leave under this policy must use all eligible paid time off benefits before taking the remainder as unpaid leave. Such paid leave will be considered FMLA leave and counted against the twelve (12) eligible weeks.~~

~~Benefits:~~ ~~While an employee is on leave, the NWRC will continue the employee's medical, dental, and vision benefits during the leave period at the same level and under the same conditions as if the employee had continued to work. If an employee chooses not to return to work for reasons other than a continued serious health condition, the NWRC will require reimbursement for the amount paid for the health insurance premium during the leave period.~~

Requesting Leave

~~Employees requesting leave under this policy must submit a FMLA Request form to their supervisor. Unless the leave is unforeseeable, employees must give 30 days' notice. If it is not possible to give 30 days' notice, the employee must give as much notice as is practical. In such cases, the employee must notify the supervisor in person or by phone of the need for FMLA. If an employee fails to provide 30 days' notice for foreseeable leave with no reasonable justification for the delay, the leave request may be denied until at least 30 days from the date notice is received.~~

Returning to Work

~~Upon return from a leave related to an employee's serious health condition, the employee shall present a doctor's release allowing the employee to return to work. Failure of an employee to return to work on the established date (beyond 12 weeks entitled in this policy) may result in termination.~~

6.05 CARE FOR STATE-REGISTERED DOMESTIC PARTNER

An employee who has worked for the NWRRC at least twelve months, including at least 1250 hours in the last twelve months and worked at a location where there are more than 50 employees in a 75-mile radius, may be entitled to 12 workweeks of unpaid leave in a twelve-month calendar period to care for a state-registered domestic partner who has a serious health condition.

A "serious health condition" is an illness, impairment or condition that involves inpatient care in a hospital, hospice or residential medical care facility or continuing treatment by a health care provider, any period of incapacity of three or more consecutive days and continuing care by a medical provider, as well as any period of incapacity due to pregnancy including prenatal care.

If the need for the leave is foreseeable, employees must give at least 30 days' written notice in advance of the anticipated date the leave is to begin stating the reason for the leave and the dates during which the leave is to be taken. If the need for the leave is not foreseeable, the employee must give notice as soon as possible after the need for the leave is known. Health care provider certifications/re-certifications, as well as second/third opinions and fitness for duty reports/releases, may be required in accordance with the Washington Family Leave Act.

Upon returning from the leave, an employee is entitled to return to the same position held when the leave began or to an equivalent position with equivalent benefits and pay, unless the position would have been eliminated had the employee not been on leave. Additionally, an employee on leave is not immune from discipline, up to and including termination, if information is uncovered during the leave which would have normally resulted in discipline had the employee been actively working.

The employee must use all eligible paid time off benefits prior to taking leave without pay. By taking the leave, the employee will not lose any benefits that accrued before the start of the leave. Once an employee has exhausted all paid leave, benefits will be handled according to 6.08 Leave Without Pay.

This policy will be administered according to the Washington Family Leave Act. Employees should contact the Human Resources with questions about this and other leaves.

6.056 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/SEXUAL ASSAULT LEAVE

Under the Washington State Domestic Violence Victims Leave law, if you are a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking, you may take reasonable or intermittent leave from work to take care of legal or law enforcement needs or get medical treatment, social services assistance or mental-health counseling. Employees who are family or household members of someone experiencing domestic violence may also take reasonable leave to help the victim obtain treatment or seek help. A “family or household member” for domestic violence leave is defined very broadly and is more inclusive than the definition of a family member for medical or other leave purposes. It includes biological and legal children, current and former spouses and domestic partners, persons who have a child in common, adult persons related by blood or marriage, adult persons currently or formerly residing together, and persons with a biological or legal parent-child relationship, including stepparents, stepchildren, grandparents, and grandchildren.

Employees may access their accrued leaves or use unpaid leave. NWRC must be given advance notice, when possible, and reserves the right to request that an employee provide verification of the need for domestic violence leave. One or more of the following may be provided as proof:

- A police report indicating the employee or employee’s family member was a victim.
- A court order providing protection to the victim.
- Documentation from a healthcare provider, advocate, clergy or attorney.
- An employee’s written statement that the employee or employee’s family member is a victim and needs assistance.

If an employee is on unpaid Domestic Violence Leave, they will continue to receive health insurance at the same level as working, subject to the standard deductions. Paid time off benefits will be handled according to 6.08 Leave without Pay.

~~An employee is eligible to take reasonable leave from work on an intermittent or reduced leave schedule under the following conditions:~~

- ~~1. To seek legal or law enforcement assistance or remedies to ensure the health and safety of the employee or employee’s family members including, but not limited to, preparing for, or participating in, any civil or criminal legal proceeding related to or derived from domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking;~~
- ~~2. To seek treatment by a health care provider for physical or mental injuries caused by domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, or to attend to health care treatment for a victim who is the employee’s family member;~~

- ~~3. To obtain, or assist a family member in obtaining, services from a domestic violence shelter, rape crisis center, or other social services program for relief from domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking;~~
- ~~4. To obtain, or assist a family member in obtaining, mental health counseling related to an incident of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, in which the employee or the employee's family member was a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking; or~~
- ~~5. To participate in safety planning, temporarily or permanently relocate, or take other actions to increase the safety of the employee or employee's family members from future domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.~~

~~"Family Member" is defined as any individual whose relationship to the employee can be classified as a child, spouse, state-registered domestic partner, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, or person with whom the employee has a dating relationship. See Personnel Policy 6.02 Sick Leave and Family Care for further family member definitions.~~

~~An employee may access their vacation bank or other eligible paid time off for such leave. Employees are required to provide advance notice in writing of the employee's need for leave. Such requests will be provided in writing accompanied with verification to support the need for leave (i.e., police report, court document, or a written statement from the employee). When advance notice cannot be given because of an emergency or unforeseen circumstance due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, the employee or their designee will notify the NWRC of the need for leave no later than the end of the first day that leave is taken.~~

6.07 MATERNITY DISABILITY

~~An employee is eligible to take a leave of absence for the period of time that they are disabled from working due to pregnancy or childbirth. This leave is available in addition to the 12 weeks of unpaid leave available under the FMLA. FMLA leave will run concurrently with the maternity disability period. An employee who is on any of the above leaves may access their paid time off.~~

~~Requests for maternity disability leave must be submitted in writing to the employee's supervisor and must include a report or letter from the employee's physician confirming that the employee is actually disabled from working. Employees taking maternity disability leave will be required to use all eligible paid time off benefits (such as sick leave and vacation) during this period. When an~~

~~employee has exhausted their paid time off, they will begin a leave of absence without pay for the duration of the maternity disability leave. During the FMLA portion of the leave benefits will be handled according to the FMLA policy. At the conclusion of the 12-week FMLA period, if an employee has exhausted all paid leave, benefits will be handled according to the leave of absence without pay policy.~~

6.068 LEAVE WITHOUT PAY

Leave without pay may be granted to employees at the discretion of the Executive Director, when necessary, absences due to illness, family medical, or personal reasons extend beyond available personal holiday, [wellness days](#), compensatory time, vacation or sick leave (if applicable) and the employee has exhausted relevant paid leaves. This policy specifically refers to leave without pay situations in which the employee is not actively on FMLA and the ~~Washington State Paid Family and Medical Leave (Washington StateA PFML)~~ programs. Employees who are solely approved and using WA PFML (not concurrently with FMLA) may be required to pay a pro-rated portion of their benefits.

Requests for Leave without Pay (LWOP) must be submitted in writing in advance of the planned leave, completing NWRC's "Leave without Pay Request" form. The request will be submitted to the employee's supervisor and Unit Director for review and then forwarded to the Executive Director for approval or denial. The request for Leave without Pay must be submitted as far in advance of the anticipated leave as possible in order for the review and approval/denial process to take place before the leave is taken. Except in special circumstances, requests for Leave without Pay submitted after the fact may be cause for disciplinary action or dismissal. (Cross Reference Section 4.01 ATTENDANCE.)

An employee who is on Leave without Pay will accrue pro-rated vacation and sick leave. An employee who is on Leave without Pay when a holiday occurs will not receive holiday pay. Except as noted in Section 6.03 Unpaid Holidays for Reasons of Faith or Conscience, and Section 6.12 Military Spousal Leave, employees will be required to pay a pro-rated portion of their benefits for unpaid leaves of absences. Employees should refer to Policy 5.12 and 5.13 for benefit eligibility work hour requirements. If an employee's hours drop below the eligibility requirements during a leave of absence, the employee will be offered self-pay COBRA benefits. Any accumulated unpaid benefits shall be reinstated upon the employee's return to duty at the end of the agreed upon leave period. The anniversary date for any employee returning from a leave of absence without pay shall be advanced by an amount equal to the length of leave of absence exceeded thirty (30) calendar days thus having an impact on future vacation accruals and longevity.

An employee who fails to report promptly for work at the expiration of a leave of absence, or who accepts other employment during the leave, or who applies for

unemployment insurance while on leave, will be considered to have voluntarily resigned.

6.09 COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

The Compassionate Leave Donation Program is a voluntary program that allows eligible regular employees to donate a portion of their accrued vacation to a qualified eligible regular employee who is unable to work because of extended serious injury or extraordinary physical or mental condition, and who is not eligible for workers' compensation. Employees participating in the Washington State Paid Family & Medical Leave are not eligible to participate in the Compassionate Leave Donation Program.

Qualified Recipients

Employees who are qualified recipients for donated leave are those who meet all of the following conditions:

- A. Have successfully completed their initial trial service period, are regular employees, and have worked for the ~~Northwest Regional Council~~[NWRC](#) for at least six months.
- B. Are unable to work because of extended serious illness or injury which requires hospitalization or extensive medical care, or
 - To care for a spouse, child, or parent with a serious health condition;
 - The birth of a child and to care for that child;
 - The placement of a child for adoption or foster care with the employee.
- C. Are unable to work due to care for state-registered domestic partner ~~or NWRC domestic partner (with affidavit on file)~~ with a serious health condition.
- D. Have exhausted all accrued vacation, compensatory time, sick leave and personal holiday leave.
- E. Are not eligible for workers' compensation benefits.
- F. Are not participating in the WA State Paid Family & Medical Leave Program.
- G. Have no documented abuse of sick leave in the last five years.
- H. Have completed and submitted a Request for Compassionate Leave Donation form to their supervisor.

Qualified Donors

A leave donor is a regular employee who donates leave to a qualified recipient provided that donated vacation time may not exceed 50% of the donor's current annual accrual rate in any given year and may not exceed the amount already earned and accrued.

Parameters

1. Total Compassionate Leave is available for an annual maximum of ~~twelve~~ four (~~124~~) weeks (~~160480~~) hours) for full-time employees (or prorated for regular part-time employees).
2. Leave donations to a qualified recipient will be on an hour for hour basis. No partial hours may be donated or received.
3. Once vacation leave has been donated and forwarded to Payroll by the Donor for use by the recipient, it cannot be returned to the donor. The donor's vacation hours are credited as sick leave to the Compassionate Leave Pool. If the leave is not needed by that employee, the hours remain in a donation pool.
4. While an employee is using Compassionate Leave, they will continue to receive the same treatment, in respect to salary and benefits, as the employee would otherwise receive if using sick leave.
5. Periods of Compassionate Leave shall count as Family and Medical Leave.
6. The Compassionate Leave Donation Program does not supplant any established Personnel policies and procedures.
7. Use of donation leave to a qualified recipient may be terminated under any of the following conditions:
 - a) After use of ~~480-160~~ (or pro rata) hours of donated leave.
 - b) Upon the physician's release to work.
 - c) Upon eligibility for disability insurance benefits or retirement.
9. Donated leave is excluded from any sick leave cash out provisions.
10. Per WAC 415-108-468, donated leave does not qualify as reportable compensation to the Department of Retirement Services (DRS/PERS). Such payments are not for services rendered, nor are they specifically included within the statutory definition of earnable compensation.
11. Participation as either a donor or recipient is completely voluntary. Posting of the Compassionate Leave Request is allowed; solicitation is not.
12. Any dispute arising over the Compassionate Leave Donation Program will be reviewed by the Executive Director.

Procedures

1. The employee submits requests for contributions of leave to ~~the Human Resources representative and the Executive Director~~.
2. The Human Resources representative:
 - a) Verifies eligibility including evidence from a qualified medical authority.
3. The Executive Director or designee:
 - a) Approves or denies request based on the criteria established.
 - b) Notifies employee of decision.
4. The Executive Director or designee:
 - a) Posts notice of request, by electronic mail, or verbally announces to staff.
 - b) Receives donations using the Compassionate Leave Donation Form.
 - c) Assures that donors are qualified and that donations meet the guidelines stated above.
5. The Executive Director coordinates administration with the Human Resources representative.
6. The Human Resources representative:
 - a) Receives and matches requests and donations reducing donor's vacation accruals and increasing recipient's sick leave account as authorized.
 - b) Transfers donated time monthly until the maximum hours have been received.
 - c) Provides a summary of the total donations to the Executive Director.
 - d) Accounts for Unused donation leave.
7. The Employee notifies the Executive Director or supervisor immediately if condition improves sufficiently to return to work, whether regular or light duty.

6.10 BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

~~Absence from work because of death in the immediate family of the employee or their spouse or state-registered domestic partner may be excused without loss of pay to a maximum of three (3) days (up to 8 hours each based on schedule).~~

~~The immediate family includes:~~

Employees will be granted 3 days (24 hours) of paid bereavement leave due to the death of a family member of the employee, their spouse, or state-registered domestic partner, and may use an additional 3 days (24 hours) of their accrued sick leave at their option. Family member includes:

- Child: a biological, adopted, or foster child, an unborn child, a stepchild, a child's spouse, or a child to whom the employee stands in loco parentis, is a legal guardian, or is a de facto parent, regardless of age or dependency status.
- Grandchild: a child of the employee's child.

- Grandparent: a parent of the employee's parent.
- Parent: the biological, adoptive, de facto, or foster parent, stepparent, or legal guardian of an employee or the employee's spouse, or an individual who stood in loco parentis to an employee when the employee was a child.
- Spouse: a husband or wife or state registered domestic partner
- Any relative living in the employee's household.
- Any person legally dependent upon the employee.

~~husband, wife, child, parent, grandparent, grandchild, brother, sister, NWRC domestic partner (with domestic partner affidavit on file), state-registered domestic partner or any relative living in the employee's household, or any person legally dependent upon the employee.~~

Additionally, employees may use up to 3 days (24 hours) of their accrued sick leave for the purpose of bereavement leave for any individual of significance not included in the above definition, and for the death of a pet.

6.11 MILITARY LEAVE

The NWRC provides a military leave of absence for employees while performing military service in accordance with federal and state law. Military service includes active military duty and Reserve or National Guard training. In accordance with RCW 38.40.060, employees will receive paid military leave for up to 21 days of military service for each year calculated October 1st through September 30th. Employees are required to provide their supervisor with copies of their military orders as soon as possible after they are received. Reinstatement upon return from military service will also be determined in accordance with applicable federal and state law.

6.12 MILITARY SPOUSAL LEAVE

Any employee who works more than 20 hours per week and whose spouse or state-registered domestic partner is deployed or about to be deployed or is on leave from deployment in a military conflict declared by Congress or the President is entitled to up to fifteen (15) days of leave of absence per deployment. The leave is unpaid except that the employee can use their eligible paid time off benefits at the same time. An employee wishing to take this leave must notify their supervisor within five business days of receiving official notice that the spouse is being deployed or will be on leave from deployment. Upon conclusion of the leave, the employee will return to their position or an equivalent one unless the employee would otherwise have been terminated had they not taken the leave. Health insurance benefits will continue for the duration of this leave even if the employee utilizes leave without pay.

6.13 JURY AND WITNESS LEAVE

Jury

An employee shall be allowed up to four (4) weeks leave with pay for jury and other legal duty when subpoenaed for such services. Employees will waive any jury duty stipend and keep payments for mileage reimbursement.

An employee is required to provide a copy of the summons to their supervisor promptly when they are summoned for jury duty service and subsequently upon their selection as a juror. Employees will be paid their regular salary/wages for any period of required service as a juror, which occurs during the employee's scheduled workday. Employees may be required to produce evidence of daily attendance in court.

When an employee is excused or released from jury duty, the employee is required to report back to work or immediately notify their supervisor that they are able to return to work for the balance of their scheduled workday.

Witness Duty

All employees summoned to testify in court are allowed time off for the period they serve as a witness. In general, witness duty leave is not paid work time, unless the employee is a witness in a case involving the NWRC. Employees may access eligible paid time off (such as vacation) for work hours spent during witness duty.

6.14 ADMINISTRATIVE LEAVE

On a case-by-case basis, the NWRC may place an employee on an administrative leave with or without pay for a period of time, as determined by the Executive Director. This leave may be used to provide the NWRC with time and opportunity to investigate matters, make decisions, or execute other administrative proceedings as needed.

SECTION 7: TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

7.01 GENERAL TRAINING

The NWRC encourages employees to seek training and education consistent with their program area responsibilities. This policy establishes guidelines for requests to attend training and classes paid for by the NWRC.

The NWRC may select training seminars, workshops or classes for an employee to attend and will pay for such training. An employee may request to attend training under the following guidelines:

- The training must contribute to the employee's effectiveness in their current position or professional development.
-

- The employee will be asked to explain how such training would enhance the employee's performance and thus benefit the NWRC.
- The employee must receive both supervisory approval and budgetary approval to ensure that funds are available for such training.

(Cross Reference Section 4.19 COMPENSATION FOR TRAVEL TIME, and Section 4.20 COMPENSATION FOR REQUIRED TRAININGS, MEETINGS, & CONFERENCES)

SECTION 8: REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

8.01 REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES

NWRC employees required to travel in carrying out their assigned duties shall receive reimbursement for actual, allowable expenses incurred on presentation of a completed expense claim, as follows:

Travel Expense

Expenses for authorized travel to conferences, trainings or other business-related events will be reimbursed. Expenses incurred during extended stays at a conference site for an employee's personal reasons shall be at the employee's expense.

Transportation

- Authorized use of personal automobile will be reimbursed at the initial rate allowed by U.S. Internal Revenue at the point of announcement and forward for mileage reimbursement. Carpooling is encouraged. Reimbursement is only paid to one traveler when one or more travelers are traveling in the same automobile on the same trip.
- Actual costs of ferries, bridge tolls, parking, etc., will also be reimbursed. Receipts are required.
- Actual cost of coach or economy fares for travel by public conveyance will be reimbursed.
- Other methods of transportation (i.e., rental car, taxi, trains, planes, subway, etc.) may be authorized for out-of-town travel.

Mileage

Regular commute miles are not reimbursable. Regular commute mileage are miles driven to and from your home to the designated office worksite (e.g. Bellingham or Mount Vernon Office) for that day.

Employees whose position requires a presence in both the Bellingham and Mount Vernon offices will prearrange their worksite schedule with their supervisor. Miles incurred according to the prearranged worksite schedule will be considered regular commute miles and are not reimbursable.

Travel for businesses purposes is reimbursable. Mileage for business purposes may occur due to:

- Home visits to and from the designated worksite (Your home, Bellingham or Mount Vernon Office)
- Offsite training, as approved by a supervisor
- Business related errands, as approved by a supervisor

- A telecommuting agreement, in which your home is your designated worksite for that day, and you are requested or required by management to leave your home to fulfill a business need.
 - Schedule changes which deviate from the telework agreement at the employee's request, will not be considered reimbursable mileage. For example, an employee submits a one-time request to switch their remote working day during the week to suit their personal scheduling needs. The mileage to the office will not be reimbursed on the day they are normally scheduled to be at home, as it was at the employee's request and is considered commute mileage.

If unsure as to whether mileage incurred is reimbursable, employee is to discuss with their supervisor to determine whether mileage should be reimbursed. If unable to determine at the supervisory level, the supervisor may consult with the Executive Director or Human Resources for a final determination.

Food/M meal Costs

NWRC complies with Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules regarding taxability of meal reimbursement.

NWRC employees, volunteers, members of the various Boards, members of the NWRC, and other authorized individuals will be reimbursed meals, based on the state approved per diem rate, related to the official business situations listed below, provided that such have been allocated in the appropriate budget:

Reimbursable Meals Non-taxable

- Costs of Board and Council members and related staff at official events and other NWRC business related meetings and activities.
- Cost of coffee and other refreshments at training sessions or staff meetings for NWRC employees, including employees of other jurisdictions.
- Cost of working lunches and/or light refreshments such as with citizen committees, government officials and the like.
- Cost of meals and/or refreshments at employee training events and/or meetings.
- Cost of meals when traveling away from home overnight.

Reimbursable Day Meals Taxable

NWRC employees may be reimbursed for a meal expense if they travel for NWRC business more than 50 miles from their home office and are away from

the home office for 3 or more hours. In these instances, the meal is not an integral part of NWRC business, and the employee receives a break for the meal. Meals reimbursed under these circumstances are considered day meals and taxable income per IRS Publication 463.

All employee reimbursement requests must be approved by the employee's supervisor or designee. Except in limited circumstances, meal cost must be incurred and paid by the claimant. (See documentation section.)

Lodging

Lodging will be reimbursed at a reasonable rate (actual cost for the employee only) for a single room. Room sharing is encouraged. —Employees are required to ask for [discount rates, such as conference, government, and similar government rates](#). NWRC consults the state's approved per diem rate to determine a reasonable rate for lodging and may ask for supporting documentation to be provided from the employee to evidence the need for a reimbursement that is greater than the state approved per diem rate.

Registration Fees

Registration fees for attendance at approved conferences, workshops, etc. are allowable expenses, including reasonable cost for CEU administrative fee.

Documentation

No expense claim for reimbursement shall be paid unless it includes specific documentation of the business purpose in the "Purpose of the Trip" column and is accompanied by the required receipts. Such receipts should show the date, a description of the purchase, vendor identification and amount paid. Receipts are required as follows:

- **Meals.** For **taxable/day** meal reimbursement for travel during the workday, include miles driven and hours away from home office in the "Purpose of Trip" column. Please refer to the Food/M meal costs section for details on allowable meal reimbursement and taxability.
- **Lodging.** Actual itemized hotel/motel bill must be submitted.
- **Transportation.** Reimbursement for taxi, bus, airplane, train, rental car, and gas purchases requires a receipt. Reimbursement for parking and bridge tolls, and ferry travel will be reimbursed at actual costs; receipts are required if they are available.
- **Registration fees.** These costs are normally paid directly to the vendor by the NWRC. In the event the employee pays the registration fee, a receipt from the event must be submitted to secure reimbursement. ~~A copy of the cancelled check (front and back), made payable to the event, may be used to document payment in lieu of a receipt.~~

A vendor may bill the NWRC directly for certain travel expenses, such as air fare, lodging, and registration fees. A vendor may invoice the NWRC directly for group meals. These expenses must be authorized in advance by the Executive Director of the NWRC.

Expenses shared between two or more employees may be included on one bill. If such shared expenses are combined on one bill, the bill will be attached to one expense claim, with the names of all employees' meals included listed on the bill, along with the circumstances of the event. A photocopy of the bill will be attached to each participant's expense claim, identifying the name of the employee submitting the original receipt. Actual receipts are required in this instance.

Allowable Incidental Expenses

Employees may be reimbursed for the following incidental expenses:

- When other payment methods are not available (petty cash, NWRC account, purchase order), employees may be reimbursed for allowable costs incurred to purchase such items as copies, office supplies, shipping, etc. A receipt is required for reimbursement.
- If an employee makes NWRC-related calls on their personal cellular phone, the cost of the call may be reimbursed when it actually creates a charge for the call (not included in the "free" portion of the monthly charge). Employee must attach a copy of the telephone bill to their Expense Claim. Reimbursement will include tax at the rate identified on the telephone bill.
- When out of town on NWRC business, employees may be reimbursed for brief telephone calls to family members to notify them of a change in their return date/time.

Ineligible Expenses

Certain expenses are considered personal and not essential to the transaction of official NWRC business. Such non-reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Liquor.
- Travel paid for by any other organization.
- Personal entertainment and transportation.
- Theft, loss or damage to personal property.
- Expense of spouse, family or other persons not authorized to receive reimbursement under this policy.
- Trip insurance.
- Personal telephone calls, except as noted under Allowable Incidental Expenses

Reimbursement Expense Submission Deadline

Expense claims must be submitted, with proper documentation, to an employee's supervisor at least once each calendar quarter. Due to funding period restrictions, expense claims not submitted by July 10th (for the period January 1st - June 30th) or January 10th (for the period July 1st -December 31st) cannot be reimbursed.

8.02 LIGHT REFRESHMENT AND MEALS FOR MEETINGS

[Northwest Regional Council](#)~~||~~[NWRC](#) activities are supported by volunteer citizen advisory boards, committees and other public involvement. In addition, NWRC employees participate on intergovernmental and other public committees involving issues and matters important to the NWRC. It is sometimes necessary, healthy, and desirable to provide light refreshment or meals at meetings. Therefore, within reasonable limits established by the Executive Director, coffee, light refreshments, and meals may be provided for meetings, retreats, formal training sessions and community meetings involving NWRC employees, volunteers, advisory board members and NWRC members. Consultation with a member of the management team prior to purchase of light refreshments is required. Approval by the Executive Director is required prior to the provision of meals for meetings. A receipt is required for reimbursement of above expenses.

Definition:—Light refreshment includes any nonalcoholic beverage such as coffee, tea, soft drinks, juice or milk, as well as edible items that may be served between meals. Examples of such items are donuts, muffins, cookies, sweet rolls, fruit, vegetables, cheese, etc. Items such as plates, cups, napkins, coffee creamer, sugar, etc. may also be purchased under this provision.

8.03 PROFESSIONAL EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENT

NWRC recognizes expenses incurred by employees to maintain licensure and credentialing associated with one's role in the agency, and will reimburse allowable expenses incurred upon presentation of a completed expense claim, as follows:

Professional Licensure Reimbursement – Nontaxable

NWRC will reimburse up to \$200 annually per behavioral health professional whose position requires professional licensing as required by WA State Department of Health per WAC 246-809-990. Positions eligible for this reimbursement include behavioral health clinicians, behavioral health program supervisor, and the clinical director.

Documentation

Expense claims for reimbursement must include specific documentation of the business purpose and be accompanied by detailed receipts. The date of the receipt will be the claiming year and allocated to that year's allotted amount.

Expenses claims must be submitted within the claiming year to be eligible for reimbursement. Claims made in a subsequent year for expenses incurred the year prior will not be eligible for reimbursement.

If an expense claim exceeds a defined annual allotted amount, fiscal staff will adjust the reimbursement accordingly.

SECTION 9: PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

9.01 PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

To achieve the NWRC's goal to train, promote, and retain the best-qualified employee for every job, the NWRC provides a formal employee performance appraisal process. The appraisal is part of an employee's official personnel file and may be a factor in determining employee development, training needs, validating selection procedures, determining pay increases, promotions, demotions and transfers. The appraisal process may also be used in coordination with planning for layoffs or termination proceedings.

The Executive Director is responsible for developing and maintaining the performance evaluation program and assuring that all positions have written descriptions. Supervisors are responsible for completing performance reviews on time and requesting approval from the Executive Director for any change/additions to position descriptions.

9.02 TRIAL SERVICE PERIOD REVIEWS

Trial service employees shall be evaluated by their supervisor prior to the end of the 6-month probationary period. As with any NWRC employee, the Executive Director may terminate the employment of a trial service employee with or without cause at any time during the trial service period.

Reviews will evaluate the employee's adjustment to employment conditions, integration with the team, job learning progress, attendance, and any other feature of the employee's job that is significant to retention decision-making and prospects of job success. During this period, each employee may receive instruction, review of work, training and any other guidance that is supportive of the employee's opportunity for success on the job.

Circumstances may require additional observation and NWRC may extend the trial service period for a specified length of time.

9.03 ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

All employees will be evaluated on at least an annual basis. The Executive Director may be evaluated by the NWRC. A new step within the salary range schedule is considered at the anniversary date of employment for all employees following an evaluation of successful performance and recommendation by the supervisor with approval by the Executive Director. Employees must receive a "meets expectations" rating (or above) in order to receive the next available step increase.

During the evaluation process, the supervisor will meet with the employee to discuss the employee's performance which will be documented on the

performance review form. At the conclusion of the performance review meeting, the employee will sign to acknowledge the performance review meeting. The employee will receive a copy of the performance review and the original will be placed in the employee's personnel file. Employees may provide their own comments regarding their performance review which will be placed with their review in their personnel file upon request.

If an employee's overall performance is unsatisfactory, the supervisor, in consultation with the Executive Director, may withhold the step increase or may defer the step increase for a stipulated period of time or until the employee's job performance is satisfactory. Such performance reviews may be accompanied with a disciplinary notice which describes the required improvement and timeline.

9.04 DISCRETIONARY REVIEWS

When, in the opinion of the supervisor, a gradual or marked decline in the performance of an employee occurs, the supervisor may conduct a discretionary review. This review would be used as a discussion guide to review the performance changes and identify corrections needed. Discretionary reviews will be completed and reviewed with the employee and placed in the employee's personnel file as a means of formally recognizing the need to correct significant declines in an employee's performance. Such performance review may also be accompanied with disciplinary notices.

This review process is entirely discretionary on the part of the NWRC.

SECTION 10: CONCERN RESOLUTION AND DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

10.01 PROCEDURES FOR RESOLUTION OF CONCERNS

The NWRC recognizes that fostering a work environment which allows employees the opportunity to openly voice their concerns, suggestions, and problems can contribute significantly to improving the overall quality of work and conditions of employment. Toward that end, the agency will support an “open door” management style and encourages employees to share their concerns, suggestions, or problems before they escalate to a more severe situation.

Employees are encouraged to contact their supervisor to discuss any concern, problem, or suggestions. Those employees who do not wish to voice their concern, problem, or suggestion in an oral, face-to-face manner may submit their concerns in writing. While the NWRC encourages employees to resolve concerns on the most immediate level, in the event the employee’s concern relates directly to the employee’s supervisor, the employee should contact the next level (i.e., the supervisor’s supervisor) [or human resources](#). When attempts have been made to resolve the situation at the previous levels, employees may bring their concerns/issues directly to the Executive Director.

10.02 DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

The disciplinary guidelines outlined below are simply guidelines which describe in general terms the options for discipline. Supervisors and managers have the full discretion and authority to determine disciplinary action most appropriate based on the circumstances of the particular situation.

When an employee fails to adequately perform the requirements of their job or to meet reasonable standards of conduct, the supervisor will notify the employee, according to the principle of progressive discipline.

In the event that discipline is necessary, any of the following types of disciplinary actions may be used:

1. **Verbal Warning.** A verbal warning is a counseling session on the subject of the employee’s conduct, performance, or their failure to observe a guideline, policy, regulation, or administrative instruction. During this session, the supervisor will discuss NWRC expectations and the change in behavior required by the employee. The manager/supervisor will document the discussion on a “Verbal Warning Form.”
2. **Written Warning.** A written warning is a formal written disciplinary action for inadequate performance, misconduct, or violations of NWRC policy. Written reprimands will be documented on a “Corrective Action Form” and discussed with the employee.

3. **Suspension/Last Warning.** A suspension is a temporary, unpaid absence from work, which may be imposed as a result of inadequate performance, misconduct, or violations of NWRC policy. A Last Warning is a message to the employee indicating that any further unsatisfactory conduct or performance will result in termination. Last warning disciplinary action may be given when the employee is being disciplined at this level, but NWRC is not requiring unpaid leave. Suspension/Last Warning reprimands will be documented on a "Corrective Action Form" and discussed with the employee.
4. **Termination.** This level of disciplinary action ends the employment relationship. A termination is documented on a "Corrective Action Form" form and discussed with the employee.

The employee will receive a copy of the disciplinary notice and all originals will be maintained in the employee's personnel file. The level of disciplinary action is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The NWRC recognizes the benefits, in some cases, of using progressive discipline, but retains the discretion and flexibility to use the discipline it considers appropriate to any particular situation, up to and including immediate termination. Nothing in this policy is intended to change the At-Will status of NWRC employees.

10.03 PRE-TERMINATION MEETING

The Executive Director will give the employee written notice that such action may be taken and state the reasons. The employee will be provided an opportunity to respond verbally or in writing prior to any action being taken.

SECTION 11: EMPLOYMENT SEPARATION

11.01 LAYOFFS

In the event of a position elimination due to an organizational restructure, lack of funds, or other reasons outside the employee's control, the employee concerned will receive a minimum of two (2) weeks written notice from the Executive Director. The NWRC reserves the right to provide two (2) weeks compensation in lieu of written notice at the discretion of the Executive Director.

11.02 VOLUNTARY RESIGNATIONS

In case of voluntary resignation, the employee will give a minimum of two (2) worked weeks written notice to the Executive Director, unless there are extenuating circumstances and other arrangements have been made. Failure to comply with this provision shall mean forfeiture of all or part of termination vacation benefits as described in the vacation leave policy.

An employee's last day worked, whether retirement or another type of separation, will be the date of termination. Payment of all eligible vacation will occur as outlined in the vacation policy.

On occasion, the NWRC may deem it in the best interest of the organization to end the employment relationship at the time the employee provides their written notice. In such cases, the NWRC reserves the right to accept the voluntary resignation at the time it is given and compensate the employee for the notice period (two weeks or less). In such cases, the date of termination will be at the conclusion of the paid notice.

11.03 RETIREMENT

The NWRC is a member of the federal Social Security System and the Washington Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). If an employee is contemplating retirement or has questions about the retirement system they should contact the appropriate agency [or consult with human resources](#).

11.04 BENEFITS & COMPENSATION AT SEPARATION

Accrual of vacation and sick leave shall cease on the date of termination. Eligibility for other benefits shall also cease on the date of termination, except where coverage under specific insurance programs automatically continues to the end of a month under terms of the contract or agreement governing such insurance and except as provided for under the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA).

Regular employees who are terminating active employment shall receive, in addition to their earned salary for the last month of employment, payment on the

same payroll for all vacation accrued, but not used, at the time of their separation. Trial service employees do not receive compensation for any accrued vacation.

(Cross Reference Section 6.02, SICK LEAVE AND FAMILY CARE)

Upon retiring under PERS, the monetary equivalent of fifty-two (52) percent of an employee's accrued sick leave will be contributed to the employee's Retirement Health Savings Plan Account.

Upon separation (termination, discharge, or layoff,) but not retiring, from NWRC after 20 years or more longevity, an employee with 80 hours or more of sick leave will receive the monetary equivalent of fifty-two (52) percent of an employee's accrued sick leave will be contributed to the employee's Retirement Health Savings Plan Account. In the event of termination of employment for gross misconduct, the employee will not be eligible for a Retirement Health Savings Plan Account.

An employee who chooses not to enroll in a RHS Account will forfeit accrued eligible sick leave.

In all other cases, sick leave is forfeited at the time of separation. When an employee leaves NWRC and is rehired within twelve months of separation, previously accrued and unused sick leave at the time of separation that has not been cashed out (as referenced above) will be reinstated and the previous period of employment will be counted for purposes of determining the employee's eligibility to use sick leave.

11.05 EXIT INTERVIEW

At an employee's separation, NWRC will attempt to conduct an exit interview to gain insight into the reason for the employee's separation and to identify areas in which the agency can improve selection, training, or business operations.

SECTION 12: SAFETY AND ON-THE-JOB INJURIES

12.01 GENERAL SAFETY

NWRC strives to provide for a healthy and safe work environment. All employees are responsible to observe and practice the highest standard of safety at all times in performing their jobs. Employees who violate safety standards or who do not perform their duties in a safe manner will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

12.02 REPORTING ON-THE-JOB INJURIES OR NEAR MISSES

Employees who are injured on the job, or whose injuries are directly related to the performance of their job duties, are required to report such injuries to their supervisor immediately, regardless of how minor the injury may be. In addition, incidents in which an employee is almost injured or suffers a near miss should also be reported. Employees need to follow these steps when injured or there is a “near miss” on the job:

1. The employee must complete the “Employee Injury/Accident Report” and return it to their immediate supervisor for review and completion of the supervisory section.
2. The employees will cooperate to their fullest extent on all accident investigation and injury inquiries.
3. If medical treatment is necessary, the employee should notify the treating physician that the injury was work-related and that the NWRC is covered under the State Worker’s Compensation Fund program.
4. The employee shall contact their supervisor as soon as possible, following a physician’s visit, to provide an update on the employee’s status and ability to return to work.
5. If the employee is injured, a return-to-work release from the treating physician will be required from the employee prior to returning to work.

2025 Draft Meeting Schedule

NORTHWEST REGIONAL COUNCIL

(8 Elected Officials, two from each county)

Meetings begin at 10:00 AM and end at 12:00 PM

- April 17
- July 17
- December 18

NW SENIOR SERVICES BOARD

(22 members appointed by their respective counties)

Regular Meetings begin at 1:00 PM and end at 3:30 PM

- January 14
- March 11
- May 13
- July 8
- September 9
- November 11