

**Letter of Agreement
Between
Tacoma Firefighters Union, Local 31
And
City of Tacoma**

**Subject: One-Time Sick Leave Adjustment
Effective Date: _____**

The Tacoma Firefighters Union, Local 31 (Union) and the City of Tacoma (City) (collectively the Parties) enter into this Letter of Agreement (LOA).

WHEREAS the COVID-19 pandemic placed unprecedented burdens on the City of Tacoma, its departments, and its employees; and

WHEREAS many employees throughout the City were subject to Quarantine and Isolation protocols consistent with best practices recommended by the Centers for Disease Control, the Washington State Health Department, and the Tacoma Pierce County Health Department; and

WHEREAS employees throughout the City had numerous resources available to assist in remaining in a paid status while subject to Quarantine and Isolation protocols; and

WHEREAS when the pandemic began the City of Tacoma acted quickly and announced an emergency leave program which included providing City employees up to two weeks additional paid leave to address medical, quarantine, and childcare complications resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS this emergency leave program was intended to be a stopgap measure until the federal program was finalized; and

WHEREAS on April 1, 2020, the federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) went into effect and applied from April 1, 2020, through December 31, 2020; and

WHEREAS the City of Tacoma voluntarily extended the City's Emergency Sick Leave program five times through March 27, 2022, following the expiration of the FFCRA; and

WHEREAS Section 1.12.230 of the Tacoma Municipal Code ("Sick allowance with pay") has long provided employees with paid release from work for "Quarantine of employee due to exposure to a contagious disease"; and

WHEREAS Section 1.12.230 of the Tacoma Municipal Code has long provided employees with paid release from work for "...illness of employee to such extent as to constitute a hazard to the safety or health of himself or herself or other employees"; and

WHEREAS some City departments were able to accommodate employees continuing to work while subject to Quarantine and Isolation protocols due to telework or remote training opportunities; and

WHEREAS Tacoma Firefighters assigned to 24-hour shifts faced unique hazards during the pandemic, including requisite congregate living, eating, and sleeping facilities; and

WHEREAS Tacoma Firefighters assigned to 24-hour shifts faced unique hazards during the pandemic, including direct medical care for known COVID-19 positive patients; and

WHEREAS the length of 24-hour shifts places disproportionate pressures on employee sick leave balances when an employee must be subject to Quarantine or Isolation for a specific set of calendar days.

NOW, THEREFORE,

The City will provide a one-time deposit of 64 hours of additional sick leave into the bank of Local 31 bargaining unit employees who meet specific qualifications. In order to qualify, an employee must meet all of the following:

- Be employed by the City on the date of City Council ratification of this LOA, and
- Have been regularly assigned to 24-hour shifts at some point between March 12, 2020 (start of City’s COVID-19 emergency declaration) and September 7, 2022 (end of Tacoma Fire Department’s practice of mandatory quarantine for exposed employees).

The City will make this one-time deposit as soon as administratively practicable. This additional sick leave shall be applied prospectively and may not be applied toward previous absences. Employees no longer employed in a Local 31 bargaining unit position on the date of City Council ratification of this LOA will not qualify for this one-time deposit. Qualified employees on the Personal Time Off (PTO) plan will have the sick leave deposited into their frozen sick leave banks.

This LOA shall not establish precedent for the parties hereto, nor for any other collective bargaining units or Departments of the City. The LOA shall become effective following City Council ratification.

For Tacoma Firefighters Union, Local 31

For the City of Tacoma

Allyson Hinzman, President Date
Tacoma Firefighters Union, Local 31

Elizabeth Pauli Date
City Manager

Patrick McElligott, Vice-President Date
Tacoma Firefighters Union, Local 31

Tory Green Date
Fire Chief

Matt Frank, Secretary-Treasurer Date
Tacoma Firefighters Union, Local 31

Shelby Fritz Date
Human Resources Director

Approved as to form:

Cheryl Comer Date
Deputy City Attorney