



Legislation Text

File #: 21-883, **Version:** 1

Report Regarding a Resolution to Extend the City Observance of the Christmas Eve Holiday from a Half Day to a Full Day for December 23, 2021. *(Leah Lockhart, Human Resources Director)*

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that City Council approve a resolution to extend the observance of the Christmas Eve holiday from a half day to a full day for December 23, 2021.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION

The City of South San Francisco currently observes ten (10) Federal holidays, as well as the day after Thanksgiving, and two half-day holidays on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. City observance of holidays includes closure of administrative offices and facilities, except for services that require continuous operations to protect the health and safety of the public (Police, Fire, and Water Quality Control Plant operations). City holidays are approved by Council resolution and provisions for staff time off or additional holiday pay are included in the Memorandums of Understanding for each recognized employee organization. This year, Christmas Eve (December 24) and Christmas Day (December 25) fall on a Friday and Saturday, respectively. In accordance with the City's Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), these holidays will be observed on Thursday, December 23 (Christmas Eve) and Friday, December 24 (Christmas Day).

The half-day holidays provide a balance between allowing staff time off to spend with family for the holidays while still allowing limited hours for services to the public on those days. However, the half-day schedule can result in additional strain on employees in terms of commute time and travel planning. Over the past two years, City employees served as essential workers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and in many cases, faced increased workloads and unique challenges due to the unique conditions and community needs. As a result, employees were significantly limited in their ability to take time off or to travel - this was particularly true during the surge of COVID-19 cases in late 2020 and early 2021, around the time of the Christmas and New Year holidays.

Staff recommends extending the Christmas Eve Holiday, to be observed on December 23, 2021 to a full day (8 hours) on a one-time basis in partial recognition of the extraordinary circumstances and contributions of staff throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The expansion of the holiday to a full day will provide a continuous four-day break (including weekend days). This additional closure period will not result in the cancellation of any special events nor impact critical services necessary for maintaining the health and safety of community. The recommended action would be taken on a one-time basis; no permanent changes to the City's holiday schedule would be made unless separate action is taken by Council in conjunction with MOU negotiations with the City's recognized

FISCAL IMPACT

The majority of City employees will receive an additional four (4) hours of paid time off on December 23, 2021, in lieu of working a half day. However, due to holiday pay MOU provisions for employees working in continuous operations, including Police, Fire and the Water Quality Control Plant, additional pay will be granted to those who do not receive time off for the extended holiday. This results in an estimated cost of

\$32,000 to the City's general fund, and \$3,500 to the City's sewer enterprise fund. Costs will be absorbed within the City's current fiscal year operating budgets for the respective departments and no additional appropriations are necessary.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN

The expanded holiday closure for December 23, 2021 is in partial recognition of City employee contributions throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This supports the City's strategic priority of Workforce Development as a method to recognize and reward employees in support of employee retention efforts.

CONCLUSION

Staff recommends that Council approve a resolution to expand the Christmas Eve holiday, to be observed on December 23, 2021, from a half-day to a full day in recognition of employee contributions during the COVID-19 pandemic.