

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF ISLAND COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

**IN THE MATTER OF PREMIUM PAY)
FOR COUNTY EMPLOYEES UNDER) RESOLUTION NO. C- 52 -21
THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN)**

WHEREAS, SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) disease is caused by a virus that spreads easily from person to person and may result in serious illness or death, and is classified by the World Health Organization as a worldwide pandemic; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 has broadly spread throughout Washington State and remains a significant health risk to the community, especially members of our most vulnerable populations; and

WHEREAS, on February 29, 2020, Washington Governor Jay Inslee issued proclamation 20-05, proclaiming a state of emergency for all counties throughout the state of Washington in response to new cases of COVID-19, and directing state agencies to use all resources necessary to prepare for and respond to the outbreak; and

WHEREAS, On March 3, 2020, the Board of Island County Commissioners issued a “County Proclamation of Emergency” in Resolution C-15-20 for COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, On March 23, 2020, Washington Governor Jay Inslee issued Proclamation 20-25, a “Stay Home – Stay Healthy” order closing non-essential workplaces, requiring people to stay home except to participate in essential activities or to provide essential business services, and banning all gatherings for social, spiritual, and recreational purposes. This order was extended multiple times. Under the “Stay Home – Stay Healthy” proclamation all County employees were deemed “Essential Critical Infrastructure Workers” performing work to protect communities and ensure continuity of functions critical to public health and safety as well as economic and national security; and

WHEREAS, on March 24, 2020, the Board of Island County Commissioners adopted Resolution C-29-20, Continuing Essential County Operations in Compliance With The Stay Home, Stay Healthy Proclamation, requiring essential county employees to continue to work during the pandemic, and assigning employees to emergency operations; and

WHEREAS, On January 28, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported that multiple COVID-19 variants are circulating globally. Scientists are working to learn more about these variants to better understand how easily they might be transmitted and the effectiveness of currently authorized vaccines against them; and

WHEREAS, On March 8, 2021, the CDC stated that preliminary evidence suggests that the currently authorized COVID-19 vaccines may provide some protection against a variety of strains. The CDC further stated, however, that the risks of COVID-19 infection in fully vaccinated people cannot be completely eliminated as long as there is continued community transmission of the virus. Recent reports have shown that vaccinated people can still contract COVID-19 through “breakthrough infections,” and may be able to spread it to others; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State Department of Health’s COVID-19 vaccine timeline made some County employees in Washington State eligible for vaccination starting on March 17, 2021 and all remaining County employees eligible starting on April 15, 2021. While many County employees may now be vaccinated, the risks of COVID-19 infection in fully vaccinated people cannot be completely eliminated as long as there is continued community transmission.

ATTACHMENT
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WHEREAS, providing COVID-19 premium pay to eligible County workers for frontline work that they continue to perform, for the citizens of Island County during the COVID-19 emergency will promote job retention, compensate for the risks of working on the frontlines of a global pandemic, improve financial ability to access resources for protecting themselves and their families from catching or spreading the virus or coping with illness caused by the virus, and support the access to government services for the greater community; and

WHEREAS, since March 2020, most County employees have been required to be on the front lines ensuring citizen access to government services since the beginning of the pandemic despite facing the danger of workplace exposure to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, throughout the entirety of the COVID-19 emergency, citizens of Island County have been relying upon the work of County employees who face the risk of exposure to COVID-19 to maintain government services; and

WHEREAS, most County employees cannot choose to work from home and must come to work to perform their jobs, which can involve substantial interaction with customers and co-workers that could potentially spread the virus. They are wearing masks, trying as much as possible to social distance, performing safety protocols, and learning new skills to decrease transmission of the virus to protect themselves and the public; and

WHEREAS, eligible County employees working during the COVID-19 emergency merit premium pay because they are required to continue to perform duties involving additional risk of exposure to the COVID-19 virus. Most County employees have been working under such conditions since the beginning of the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2021, the United States Congress passed the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (“ARPA”), providing direct relief to units of local government through the United States Department of Treasury; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Treasury has issued guidance for the allowable uses of the direct relief funds, and one permissible use of ARPA funds is to provide premium pay to eligible local government workers facing increased risk due to COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Island County Commissioners acknowledges the value of employees whose continued employment during this Coronavirus pandemic resulted in continuous, excellent service to the community and performance of the added responsibilities undertaken and the Board therefore desires to incentivize their retention as employees; and

WHEREAS, ensuring that eligible County employees are compensated for the risks of working during the COVID-19 emergency incentivizes the retention of these vital workers, and compensates them for the additional health and financial risks they expose themselves and their families to by performing their essential duties. These incentives are particularly directed at employees who have proven their value, courage and altruism by exposing themselves and their families to financial and health risks during the pandemic; and



WHEREAS, the Board of Island County Commissioners chooses to use funding under the American Rescue Plan Act to provide premium pay to its essential employees for work they continue to perform due to the Coronavirus pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Island County Commissioners will provide premium pay to all eligible employees in Island County, except Elected Officials and employees who do not meet American Rescue Plan Act eligibility.


NOW THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED,

1. The following County employees are eligible for premium pay under the ARPA funding:
 - a. Employed by Island County in a regular full or part-time position budgeted for at least twenty (20) hours per week.
 - b. Employed in the position and assigned regular duties on August 17, 2021.
 - c. During employment is required by a supervisor or manager to perform job duties on-site (as opposed to remote telework) that places the person in a position of potential exposure to COVID-19. As used in this Resolution, a position of potential exposure to COVID-19 means performing job duties in an on-site work location where the employee must interact in person with members of the public for a cumulative total of at least fifteen (15) minutes in a twenty-four (24) hour period, or with co-workers that in the same day interacted with members of the public for a cumulative total of at least fifteen (15) minutes in a twenty-four (24) hour period.
2. Eligibility shall be conclusively determined by the Human Resources Director, in consultation with an employee’s supervising Department Head or Elected Official.
3. An eligible employee shall receive premium pay for hours scheduled, up to a maximum total of \$2,880 as follows:
 - a. All employees shall receive premium pay of \$12.00 per hour, for up to 40 hours scheduled per week for each week between August 29, 2021 and October 9, 2021.

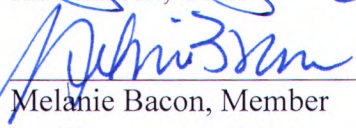
ADOPTED this 17th day of August, 2021.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ISLAND COUNTY, WASHINGTON

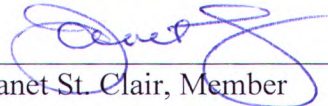




Jill Johnson, Chair

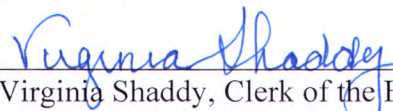


Melanie Bacon, Member



Janet St. Clair, Member

ATTEST:



Virginia Shaddy, Clerk of the Board

