

Questions and Answers Emergency Reduction in Hours for Employees Exempt from Civil Service

If you are an employee that is exempt from civil service, this document has been prepared to answer your questions in the event your agency must implement an emergency reduction in hours by reducing your work hours until a budget is enacted for the 2017–19 biennium.

1. Why are my work hours being reduced beginning July 1, 2017?

Agencies do not have the authority to pay you unless the state has an enacted 2017–19 operating, or capital budget to fund staff positions beginning July 1, 2017. You will only receive pay for work hours for which you are scheduled to work.

2. Are there any exceptions to the emergency reduction in work hours?

Yes, the state is determining which services may continue without an operating or capital budget, using the following criteria:

- Services funded from non-appropriated funds.
- Limited services that are mandated by the Washington state constitution, despite lack of an appropriation.
- Limited services that are mandated by federal law, despite lack of an appropriation.
- Services that are funded from the 2017–19 transportation budget passed by the Legislature during the regular legislative session.

3. When will the emergency reduction in work hours' end?

The duration is unknown. Once the state has an enacted 2017–19 budget that funds your position, you will return to work on your next scheduled work shift.

4. How will I know when the emergency reduction in work hours is over?

The state has set up a website and toll free number to let all employees know when the emergency reduction in work hours and/or furloughed state employees should return to work.

- Website: www.ofm.wa.gov/contigency
- Olympia local number: (360) 725-0217
- Toll free number: (877) 264-2952

5. What if I am scheduled to be on paid leave during the emergency reduction in work hours?

If you are scheduled to be on approved paid leave during the emergency reduction in work hours, your leave approval is rescinded. Taking paid leave during emergency reduction in work hours is not permitted. You will not receive pay for your non work hours.

6. Will my seniority date, anniversary date or unbroken service dates be affected?

No, the emergency reduction in work hours will not affect your seniority date, anniversary date or unbroken service dates.

7. Will my leave accruals be affected?

The emergency reduction in work hours will not be considered time in pay status for the purpose of leave accruals. Therefore:

- Full-time employees' accruals may be affected depending on the duration of the emergency reduction in work hours (full-time employees must be in pay status for at least 80 non-overtime hours in the month to earn an accrual).
- Part-time employees earn leave on a pro-rata basis, so time spent on emergency reduction in work hours will affect leave accrual amounts.

8. Will my holiday pay be affected?

Yes, time spent on emergency reduction in hours will not be considered time in pay status for the purpose of holiday compensation.

9. Can I bump another employee or go on a layoff list if my hours are reduced?

No, you cannot bump into any other position and you cannot be placed on any layoff lists.

10. Can I be paid for any of my leave balances?

No, you cannot be paid for any leave balances because the emergency reduction in work hours is due to a lack of funds.

11. How will the emergency reduction in hours affect my health care coverage?

Your PEBB benefits (which include medical, dental, life and long-term disability) will continue during July as long as you are in pay status for at least eight hours before the end of the month.

12. Will I be eligible to collect unemployment?

If the emergency reduction in hours extends beyond one week, you may be eligible for unemployment compensation.

13. How will the emergency reduction in work hours affect me if I am an overtime-exempt employee?

If you return to work from the emergency reduction in work hours after the start of your workweek, you are eligible for overtime if you work more than 40 hours in that workweek. You must not work more than your scheduled work hours during that workweek without prior approval from your supervisor, and you must complete a time and attendance form for the workweek.

14. What kinds of activities are considered “work” that I need to avoid during the work hours that have been reduced?

You should not read or send emails, listen or send voice mails or read or send text messages.