



# San Bernardino County

## Legislation Text

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**File #: 3496, Agenda Item #: 17**

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### REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO AND RECORD OF ACTION

**January 5, 2021**

**FROM**

**LEONARD X. HERNANDEZ, Chief Executive Officer, County Administrative Office**

**SUBJECT**

Side Letter Agreements to Provide COVID Incentive Differentials

**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**AMENDED:**

1. Approve the proposed Side Letter Agreement between the County of San Bernardino and the California Nurses Association, as supplemented by the Board of Supervisors.
  2. Approve the proposed Side Letter Agreement between the County of San Bernardino and the Teamsters Local 1932, as supplemented by the Board of Supervisors.
  3. Approve the proposed Side Letter Agreement between the County of San Bernardino and Service Employees International Union Local 721, as supplemented by the Board of Supervisors.
- (Presenter: Bob Windle, County Labor Relations Chief, 387-3101)

**COUNTY AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

**Create, Maintain and Grow Jobs and Economic Value in the County.**

**Improve County Government Operations.**

**Operate in a Fiscally-Responsible and Business-Like Manner.**

**Ensure Development of a Well-Planned, Balanced, and Sustainable County.**

**FINANCIAL IMPACT**

Approval of the Side Letter Agreements (Agreements) with California Nurses Association (CNA), Teamsters Local 1932 (Teamsters), and Service Employees International Union Local 721 (SEIU) will not result in the use of Discretionary General Funding (Net County Cost). The Agreements will increase the already existing COVID-19 extra shift and retention incentives to include additional classifications and additional COVID-19 designated departments at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center (ARMC). Both incentives will sunset on June 4, 2021. The total estimated one-time cost associated with the approval of these Agreements is approximately \$850,000 per pay period for a minimum of three pay periods starting in 2020-21, which will be funded by State Medi-Cal, Federal Medicare, private insurances, and other departmental revenue. This program will continue to be evaluated after those three pay periods and potentially extended for an additional eight pay periods, not to exceed the June 4, 2021 sunset date. To the extent that Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding is available, the cost of these Agreements may also be offset by CARES Act funding. Sufficient appropriation and revenue are included in the Arrowhead Regional Medical Center (ARMC) 2020-21 budget.

The Board of Supervisors added an additional amount of \$10 million to be allocated to a retention bonus to be negotiated between the parties.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

### **COVID Extra Shift Incentive Differential**

On December 15, 2020 (Items No. 30 and 35), the Board of Supervisors approved extending the sunset date of an Extra Shift Incentive Differential that provides \$5.50/hour to \$7.50/hour for certain employees at ARMC to assist in filling shifts caused by the surge of COVID-19 patients at ARMC.

However, ARMC has continued to experience an increased demand to fill shifts as a result of the establishment of COVID-19 specific units at the hospital. This increased demand has been exacerbated as a result of staff being exposed to COVID-19 and many employees with pre-existing health conditions that are not available to ARMC as they have taken a leave of absence as recommended by their physicians. Therefore, the County and representatives of Teamsters, SEIU, and CNA met and conferred and agreed to expand the number of classifications and units eligible for the differential and to increase the differential ranging from \$7.50/hour to \$15.00/hour. If approved, this extra shift incentive will be a useful staffing tool to assist covering shifts caused by absences and/or vacancies, or to meet fluctuating census/workload needs related to COVID-19.

This COVID Extra Shift Incentive would sunset on June 4, 2021.

### **COVID Retention Incentive Differential**

As a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, ARMC has experienced challenges in the retention of certain staff whose primary work is on the COVID-19 units. As a result, on September 15, 2020 (Item No. 32), the Board of Supervisors approved a Retention Incentive Differential for nurses at ARMC in an effort to retain these staff members.

However, ARMC has recently experienced additional challenges in the retention of nursing and non-nursing staff whose primary work is on the COVID-19 units. Therefore, the County and representatives of Teamsters, SEIU, and CNA met and conferred and agreed to increase the incentive pay and provide the retention incentive to certain non-nursing classifications whose primary work is on the COVID-19 units. If approved by the Board, this incentive will provide ARMC with a tool to assist in the retention of these staff members who are providing crucial healthcare services during the pandemic.

This COVID Retention Incentive Differential would sunset on June 4, 2021 or upon the Unit no longer being designated by ARMC as a COVID-19 Unit.

In addition, the County is continuing discussions with the employee organizations regarding a retention bonus for eligible employees who remain with the County after a specified period of time.

## **PROCUREMENT**

N/A.

## **REVIEW BY OTHERS**

This item has been reviewed by County Counsel (Cynthia O'Neill, Principal Assistant County Counsel, 387-5455) on December 30, 2020; Labor Relations (Bob Windle, County Labor Relations Chief, 387-3101) on December 30, 2020; Human Resources (Diane Rundle, Human Resources Director, 387-5570) on December 30, 2020; County Finance and Administration (Matthew Erickson, County Chief Financial Officer, 387-5423) on December 30, 2020.