

# County of San Mateo Limited Term Employee Handbook

Updated on 8/4/2016



Human Resources Department

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

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# Welcome to the County of San Mateo

## About Limited Term Employment

In our efforts to become a more agile organization, the County of San Mateo created limited term employment. Limited term employees are employees who serve the County for a period of up to 6,240 hours. Limited term employees are typically brought on to work on special projects, help the department address a significant spike in workload, or backfill for a regular employee who is on leave or working out of class. Limited term employees subject to the AFSCME/SEIU Extra-Help MOU can only be used in circumstances outlined in the AFSCME/SEIU Extra-Help MOU.

To the extent limited term employees are hired to facilitate work on planned projects, Departments are encouraged to, and the County may exercise its discretion to, assign such project work to regular employees while the limited term employees backfill Regular Employee job duties.

Limited term employment offers individuals the opportunity to experience and learn about the County without making a long-term commitment to the organization. At the end of the term, an employee may choose to either apply for a regular County position or explore the external job market.

Since 2013, limited term employees have greatly helped the County diversify and maximize its staffing resources. Limited term employees have enabled departments to significantly expand their operations and pilot new systems and processes aimed to enhance service delivery.

## Limited Term vs. Extra-Help

Limited Term employees differ from extra-help employees in the scope of work, length of service, and retirement and health benefits\*. Below is a chart outlining the differences between the two worker types.

	Limited Term	Extra-Help
Scope of Work	Primarily used for special projects, pilot programs, implementation of new organizational and technological changes, or to backfill for an employee on extended leave.	Primarily used to staff seasonal assignments and assist departments during brief periods of heightened workloads.
Span of Work	At most 6,240 hours	Length of assignment may vary – maximum of 1040 hours unless additional time is approved
Health Benefits	Full health benefits	Eligible for Kaiser high-deductible plan only if employed 30 hours or more per week
Retirement Benefits	Defined contribution retirement plan (401a); Eligible to enroll in County's deferred compensation plan	Mandatory defined contribution retirement plan (457) at 7.5%; Eligible to enroll in County's traditional deferred compensation plan

\*Additional benefits for limited term employees are covered in this handbook.

## Employment

### Employment At-Will

All limited term employees are at-will employees, and their assignments can be terminated at any time, with or without cause. The phrase “limited-term” refers to a maximum length of employment with the County and is not a guarantee of employment for the length of specified term. Because limited term employees are at-will, there is no probationary period for limited term employees. Limited term employees subject to the AFSME/SEIU Extra Help MOU may have the right to the Reconsideration Process specified in the MOU if they qualify under its provisions.

### Recruitment

Limited term employee recruitments are not bound by the standard Civil Service Recruitment Process, so limited term employees can be selected for a position in any of the following ways:

- Participation in a standard Civil Service recruitment process and selection from the eligibility list
- Participation in a standard non-Civil Service recruitment process and selection
- Selection from an already active eligibility list
- Special appointment

For limited term employees who went through a standard Civil Service Recruitment for a job classification and were placed onto the eligibility list, they may be selected by a department to interview for a regular permanent position for that same job classification without going through another Civil Service recruitment process. Regardless of whether a Civil Service recruitment process is utilized, limited term employees are not classified employees and are not covered by the County's Civil Service Rules.

### Moving From Extra-Help to Limited Term Employment

Limited term employees who served the County as extra-help employees prior to their hiring do **not** receive any restoration of vacation and sick leave allowance accrued as an extra-help employee. They will start their limited term position with a balance of zero and accrue vacation and sick time at the standard rates.

### End of Assignment

Limited term employment shall not last longer than 6,240 hours. If a limited term employee has completed 6,240 hours of service, they may seek out regular County employment opportunities or opportunities outside of the organization.

If a limited term employee's assignment ends prior to the 6,240 hour maximum service time allowed, they may seek out other regular, limited term, or extra-help opportunities within the County. If said employee finds an extra-help or another limited term opportunity, they may only serve until the cumulative time between their original limited term employment and their new opportunity reaches 6,240 hours.

## Compensation

### Standard Work Time

All limited term employees occupying full-time positions are expected to work a standard work week of 40 hours, unless otherwise specified by their supervisor.

### Vacation Time

Limited term employees are entitled to vacation with pay and accrue vacation hours at a rate of 4 hours for each bi-weekly pay period. The time at which limited term employees shall be granted vacations is at the discretion of their supervisor. When a limited term employee separates from County service, their remaining vacation allowance will be added to their final compensation.

### Sick Leave

Limited term employees accrue sick leave at a rate of 3.7 hours for each bi-weekly pay period of full-time work. Employees are entitled to be paid for sick leave used, to a maximum of the time accrued, under the following conditions:

- Sick leave may be used for an employee or a family member, for preventive care or diagnosis, care or treatment of an existing health condition, or for specified purposes if the employee is a victim of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking.
- Family members includes the employee's parent, child, spouse, registered domestic partner, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, mother in-law and/or father in-law.

Employees should notify their supervisors as promptly as possible if they are requesting authorization for sick leave. When a limited term employee separates from County service, their remaining sick leave allowance will **not** be added to their final compensation.

### Bereavement Leave

Limited term employees may receive up to two days of paid bereavement leave upon the death of an employee's parent, spouse, domestic partner, child or step-child, sibling, mother-in-law, father-in-law, grandparent or grandchild.

### Holiday Time

Limited term employees are entitled to take all authorized holidays on full pay, not to exceed 8 hours for any one day. Holidays for the County are listed below:

Holiday	Date
New Year's Day	January 1 <sup>st</sup>
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday in January
Presidents' Day	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday in February
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May
Independence Day	July 4 <sup>th</sup>
Labor Day	1 <sup>st</sup> Monday in September
Columbus Day	2 <sup>nd</sup> Monday in October
Veterans Day	November 11 <sup>th</sup>
Thanksgiving Day	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday in November
Day After Thanksgiving	4 <sup>th</sup> Friday in November
Christmas Day	December 25 <sup>th</sup>

## Overtime

Limited term employees will be paid overtime at the rate of 1.5 times their base salary if required under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

## MOT for Nurse Practitioners/Nurse Practitioner Exempt Status

Limited term employees are eligible for Nurse Practitioner Exempt Status. Nurse Practitioners shall have exempt status under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and do not receive compensation for hours worked in excess of forty (40) per week.

Nurse Practitioners whose FTE status is seventy-five percent (75%) or greater shall receive the equivalent of 3 hours per pay period of time placed into a bank for their use as paid time off throughout the year (seventy-eight (78) hours). This bank will be established the first full pay-period of each fiscal year and must be used prior to the final full pay period in the fiscal year. Balances remaining at the end of the fiscal year will be forfeited with no cash value. Processes for advanced approvals for time off will not change and the Nurse Practitioners will be expected to follow established policies when requesting to use this time.

If a Nurse Practitioner works as additional, full shift (defined as four (4) hours or more) beyond his or her regularly assigned work hours which results in the Nurse Practitioner actually working more than forty (40) hours in a workweek, the Nurse Practitioner shall earn straight time pay for the additional hours worked. This shift of four (4) hours or more must be utilized to provide patient care and not for administrative purposes.

## Administrative/Management Leave Time

Limited term employees that are in management positions are eligible to receive 5 hours of administrative leave each pay period as long as they are management employees that do not receive overtime compensation.

Administrative leave is maxed at 260 hours. Part-time management employees shall be entitled to Administrative Leave hours in proportion to the designation of the position as either half or three-quarters time, not the specific hours worked. Half-time will equal 2.5 hours per pay period and three-quarters time will equal 3.75 hours per pay period.

In April of each year, employees will have the opportunity to convert 50% of their current Administrative Leave hours balance as cash payment. Time balances remaining at separation from County employment shall be cashed out post separation.

## Jury Duty Pay

Limited term employees will receive full pay, not to exceed 8 hours, for each day they serve on a jury or testify as a witness in a criminal case, other than as a defendant. All employees are expected to notify their supervisor prior to their required attendance in court. As a condition of receiving such full pay, the worker must remit to the County Treasurer, through the worker's department head within fifteen (15) days after receipt, all fees received except those specifically allowed for mileage and expenses.

## Bilingual Pay

The County offers bilingual pay for employees who use a second language as part of their work duties. Limited term employees are eligible for bilingual pay as long as they meet the general eligibility requirements.

For more information about bilingual pay and procedures, please visit: <http://hr.smcgov.org/bilingual-salary-differential-allowance-policy-form>

## Military Pay

Any limited term employee who is a member of the reserve corps of the Armed Forces of the United States, National Guard, or Naval Militia is entitled to a “temporary military leave of absence,” provided that it does not exceed 180 days. A temporary military leave of absence means a leave of absence from public employment to engage in ordered military duty.

Limited term employees who are called to engage in ordered military duty after serving one year (6,240 hours) with the County are entitled to receive their salary as a public employee for the first 30 calendar days of their absence. The County may, but is not required to, provide paid military leaves of absence.

Upon returning to the County, a limited term employee has a right to be restored to his or her previously held position, provided that the position still exists. If the position has been abolished when the employee was on leave, they have a right to be reinstated to a similar position. If no similar position exists, the term employee will receive the same benefits they would have received if they had completed their term with the County. For more information on Military Pay benefits, please see the Military and Veterans Code of the State of California, Chapter 7, “Privileges and Penalties”:

<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/cgi-bin/calawquery?codesection=mvc>

## Uniform

County departments that require employees to wear uniforms will individually determine the means by which employees will acquire the required uniforms.

## On-Call Pay

Limited term employees are eligible for on-call pay. For more information regarding on-call pay, please refer to the department supervisor or manager.

## Shift Differential

Limited term employees are eligible for shift differential. For more information regarding shift differential, please refer to the department supervisor or manager.

## Staffing Differential

Limited term employees are eligible for Staffing Differential, which allows nurses working in Correctional Health, Acute Psychiatry, Psych Emergency (PES), and the Emergency Department to be paid a differential of \$1.00 per hour in addition to any differentials paid such as Shift Differentials and Weekend Differential.

## Weekend Differential

Limited term employees are eligible for Weekend Differential, which allows nurses working weekends to be paid a differential of six percent (6%) more than their base rate for any work performed between



Friday 2315 hours and Sunday 2315 hours except for Correctional Facilities where the differential shall be paid for all work performed between Friday midnight and Sunday midnight.

### Relief Acting Charge Nurse

Limited term employees are eligible for Relief Acting Char Nurse pay. A nurse who is assigned to be "in charge" of a unit at SMMC, outpatient clinics, or the Jail for four (4) or more hours of a shift shall be paid an additional thirty dollars (\$30.00) for that shift provided that no more than one nurse is assigned "in charge" of each unit for each shift. For RN's who have regularly been assigned as a "charge nurse" for thirty (30) days or more immediately before a paid holiday, sick leave or the start of a vacation, the applicable additional pay shall be included in the RN's holiday or vacation pay.

### Continuing Education Leave

Limited term employees are eligible for Continuing Education Leave. For more specific information, please refer to the department supervisor or manager.

### Long Term Care (LTC) Wage Pass Through

Limited term employees assigned to a long term care unit and provide direct care to long term care patients during the fiscal year are eligible for LTC Wage Pass Through, which allocates additional pay to eligible employees based on a grant given to the San Mateo Medical Center.

### Transportation Allowance

Certain employees designated by the County Manager are eligible for transportation allowance. Depending on the County Manager's designation, limited term employees may elect to receive transportation allowance in the form of a biweekly allowance.

## Health Benefits

Limited term employees are eligible to sign up for all of the health benefits available to regular permanent County employees which include health, vision, and dental plans. All employees are given 14 calendar days from the start of their first day with County to enroll in their preferred benefits plans. To learn more about employee benefits, please visit: <http://hr.smcgov.org/employee-benefits>

*Note: Limited term employees are not eligible for retiree health benefits once they leave the organization.*

## Retirement Benefits

Limited term employees receive a 401(a) retirement plan and a 457 deferred compensation plan, which is a different retirement package than a regular permanent County employees. This retirement package is not part of the County's pension system.

### 401(a) Retirement Plan

Limited term employees receive a 401(a) retirement plan which includes:

- An employer contribution of 2% in year 1 of employment (2,080 hours), 3% in year 2 (4,160 hours), and 4% in year 3 (6,240 hours).
- An additional employer matching contribution based on employee contribution, up to an additional 3%

The employer contributions to the 401(a) plan fully vest at the end of year 3 (6,240 hours). One-third of the County's entire contribution will vest at the end of each year of service. Employer contributions that have not vested upon employee separation shall be forfeited.

### 457 Deferred Compensation Plan

Like regular permanent County employees, limited term employees can contribute a portion of their paychecks to a Roth or Traditional 457 deferred compensation plan. The 457 plan is another way for employees to save and invest for retirement. Employees elect the type of deferred compensation plan as well as the contribution amount when they enroll in their benefits in Workday.

## Other Benefits

The County offers a wide variety of programs geared towards employee health, development, and overall work-life balance. Limited term employees are eligible for all of the following County-sponsored employee programs.

### Wellness Program

The County's Wellness Program is dedicated to creating healthy workspaces and supporting healthy employees. The program hosts a wide variety of activities from County softball and volleyball tournaments, to meditation and nutrition classes. Limited term employees are welcome to participate in any of the County's Wellness classes, events, and programs.

### Tuition Reimbursement

The County is dedicated to the professional development of its employees. Limited term employees are eligible to apply for the County's Tuition Reimbursement Program, which provides financial assistance to employees who are enrolled in degree or certificate programs. For more information on the Tuition Reimbursement Program, please visit: <http://hr.smcgov.org/tuition-reimbursement-program>

### Professional Reimbursement and Medical Staff Dues

Limited term physicians are eligible for Professional Reimbursement. Physicians may be reimbursed for up to \$2,500 per fiscal year for educational expenses authorized for maintenance of their licensure/certification. When educational expense is authorized for training, physicians may be reimbursed for related travel expenses from the \$2,500, provided the travel expense is directly related to the training or coursework. Physicians may also use the \$2,500 to be reimbursed for the purchase of smartphones, iPads or tablets, related smartphone medical software or apps judged to be helpful in their work assignment, to pay for professional license fees, and for fees and memberships in professional associations related to their field of practice.

For Staff Physicians, Psychiatrists, and Dentists who are required to pay medical staff dues to the San Mateo Medical Center, the County agrees to pay the annual medical staff dues for each employee. These funds are in addition to the educational expenses detailed above.

### Commuter Alternatives Program

Limited term employees are eligible to receive monthly public transit, vanpool, carpool, bike, and walk subsidies through the County's Commuter Alternatives Program (CAP). The CAP is designed to reduce traffic congestion and encourage employees to find alternative modes of transportation. For more information on the CAP, please visit: <http://smccap.org/>

## Voluntary Time Off

The Voluntary Time Off (VTO) Program is designed to provide flexible working hours for County employees. The County's VTO policy allows term employees to reduce their time at work by 1%, 2%, 3%, 4%, 5%, 10%, 15%, and 20% without losing many of the benefits available to them. Time allotted to VTO is unpaid. For more information on VTO, please visit: <http://hr.smcgov.org/voluntary-time-vto>

## Catastrophic Leave Program

Limited term employees can utilize the County's Catastrophic Leave program, which allows employees who have exhausted all vacation, sick, compensatory, and holiday time due to a serious illness, injury, or condition to receive donations of paid time off from other employees so that they can remain on paid status longer. For more information on the Catastrophic Leave Program, please visit:

<http://hr.smcgov.org/catastrophic-leave-policy>

## Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Limited term employees have access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) through CONCERN, which offers work-life assistance to help employees and their family members manage challenges related to work, personal relationships, stress, finances, substance abuse, and other life concerns. CONCERN services are accessible 24 hours a day, 365 days-a-year nationwide. For services, please contact 800-344-4222.

## Telework

The County of San Mateo's commitment to providing a flexible working environment includes the ability to telework. Telework allows County employees to work offsite, often from home. With supervisor approval, limited term employees in certain types of job classifications may be able to telework as part of their typical work week. To learn more about the County's telework options, please visit:

[http://www.commute.org/files/programs/SMC\\_Telework\\_Toolkit.pdf](http://www.commute.org/files/programs/SMC_Telework_Toolkit.pdf)

## Employee Referral Program (ERP)

Limited term employees are eligible to receive up to \$500 when successfully referring candidates to hard-to-fill positions. \$250 will be awarded on initial hire of referred employee and an additional \$250 will be awarded if the referred employee successfully completes probation. For hard-to-fill classifications, there will be a supplemental question requesting applicants to indicate if they were referred to the position by a County employee and if so, by whom. Every six months, the Human Resources Department will use the following criteria to determine which classifications are hard-to-fill:

1. Over a 10% vacancy rate for a sustained period of time.
2. Length of time of the ongoing recruitment for the classification.
3. Number of appointable candidates on the eligible list.

For more information on the Employee Referral Program, please visit <http://hr.smcgov.org/employee-referral-program>

## Other County Information

### Disability Pay and Accommodations

The County offers short-term disability (STD) insurance for limited-term employees working 20 or more hours per week and who are not enrolled in State Disability Insurance (SDI). New employees enrolled in SDI may also enroll in the basic short term disability program for their first seven months on the job. After seven months, when SDI benefits become payable, the basic STD benefits will be cancelled.

STD insurance is designed to pay a weekly benefit in the event an employee cannot work because of a covered illness or injury. This benefit replaces a portion of income, which can help meet financial commitments in a time of need. The County offers two STD plans: Basic and Expanded. The Basic STD plan offers a lower weekly benefit amount and is available to any employee not enrolled in SDI. The Expanded STD plan offers a greater weekly benefit amount (at a higher cost) and is available only to certain employee groups. For more information, please contact the County's Risk Management Division at (650) 363-7882.

The County of San Mateo does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to, access to, or operations of its programs, services or activities.

### Worker's Compensation

All County employees are covered by the County's Worker's Compensation Policy for any job-related injury, including first-aid type injuries and work-related illnesses. To read more about the types of injuries qualify as "job-related," please visit the County's Worker's Compensation page:

<http://hr.smcgov.org/workers-compensation>

### Parking

Limited term employees located at **County Center in Redwood City** may apply for a parking placard which must be displayed on the vehicle dashboard when parking in the employee lot. Please note that employees who select the parking placard will not be eligible for the Commuter Alternative Program subsidies. Parking placards do not guarantee an employee a parking space, but rather grants them the right to utilize the employee parking area.

The County does not reimburse or reverse any charges for parking tickets. Employees must park their vehicles in accordance with parking regulations.

### Important Contact Information

#### **County of San Mateo Human Resources Department**

455 County Center, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Redwood City, CA 94063

Phone: (650) 363-4343

Fax: (650) 363-4822

Email: [HRwebmaster@smcgov.org](mailto:HRwebmaster@smcgov.org)

#### **County of San Mateo Benefits Division**

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Phone: (650) 363-1919

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