



AGENDA MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 27, 2024

TO: Forest Preserve District Finance & Administration Committee

FROM: Jennifer Clough, Director of Human Resources
Benjamin Haberthur, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Presentation and Approval of the Forest Preserve District's Holiday Schedule 2025

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Committee with information to consider when directing staff to prepare a resolution setting the 2025 Holiday Schedule for the Forest Preserve District of Kane County.

BACKGROUND:

Currently, the Forest Preserve offers employees eleven (11) paid holidays. The Board approves these by resolution on an annual basis, and they are further codified in the Employee Handbook.

When the final report of the District's recently completed Compensation and Classification Report was adopted, staff committed to reviewing the supplemental benefits analysis and bringing recommendations to the Board for consideration and approval. McGrath Human Resources Group provided data from comparable organizations reporting holiday schedules between 11 and 17 days. This information confirms that the District is on the lowest end of this benefit range and that it is less competitive when recruiting and retaining talent as a result. The District's total compensation package, which is inclusive of its paid time off benefits, is critical to supporting these efforts.

One of the reasons the District lags its comparable organizations in holiday benefits offered is that, in 2015, the District chose to concede a portion of its recognized holidays to, instead, offer the equivalent personal time to employees. On January 1, 2024, the Illinois Paid Leave for All Workers Act required employers to provide for up to forty (40) hours, or 5 days, of leave from work each year. While other public organizations have created additional paid time off banks to satisfy this new legislation, the District repurposed its personal time to comply. This decision further underscores the District's less competitive time-off package at a time when employees are seeking career opportunities that offer the most work/life balance.

Presently, the Kane County Board of Commissioners adopts a holiday schedule for County employees that aligns with the Supreme Court of Illinois' State Court Holiday Calendar. In comparison, this schedule provides for fifteen (15) paid holidays and represents one of the District's competitors for public employees. For the benefits of providing Forest Preserve staff with holidays recognized by the state of Illinois, consistency with an organization served by the same board of commissioners, and a more competitive advantage for recruitment and retention purposes, the committee might consider the addition of the following holidays not currently recognized by the Forest Preserve District: Lincoln's Birthday, Washington's Birthday, Spring Holiday, and Columbus Day. A draft of the holiday schedule with these additions is included for reference.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact associated with the Holiday Schedule.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff requests the Committee review the resolution setting the 2025 Holiday Schedule for the Forest Preserve District of Kane County and provide direction for modifications if appropriate prior to presentation before the Executive Committee on September 5, 2024.

ATTACHMENTS:

A Resolution Setting the 2025 Holiday Schedule for the Forest Preserve District of Kane County
Exhibit A: Proposed 2025 Holiday Schedule