



**County Administrative  
Office  
COUNTY OF TULARE  
AGENDA ITEM**

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

KUYLER CROCKER  
District One  
PETE VANDER POEL  
District Two  
AMY SHUKLIAN  
District Three  
EDDIE VALERO  
District Four  
DENNIS TOWNSEND  
District Five

**AGENDA DATE:** May 5, 2020 - **REVISED**

Public Hearing Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Scheduled Public Hearing w/Clerk	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Published Notice Required	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Advertised Published Notice	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Meet & Confer Required	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Electronic file(s) has been sent	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
Budget Transfer (Aud 308) attached	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Personnel Resolution attached	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Agreements are attached and signature line for Chairman is marked with tab(s)/flag(s)	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CONTACT PERSON: Jason T. Britt    PHONE: (559) 636-5005

**SUBJECT:** Temporary Hiring Freeze

**REQUEST(S):**

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve a hiring freeze of existing vacant positions and future vacancies, effective May 8, 2020, subject to any meet and confer as required by law.
2. Direct the County Administrative Officer to develop hiring freeze guidelines, regarding communication protocols between departments, the County Administrative Office, and Human Resources & Development; current recruitments; transfers; flex and other promotions; the use of Extra Help employees; and the process for requesting exemptions by May 8, 2020.
3. Authorize the County Administrative Officer to approve exemptions on a case-by-case basis.

**SUMMARY:**

On March 19, 2020, in response to a growing COVID-19 pandemic, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-33-20, ordering all California residents to stay at home, except as needed to maintain the continuity of operations in infrastructure sectors critical to protect the health and well-being of all Californians. As has been well noted, the repercussions of the pandemic have touched nearly every sector of the economy, unemployment levels have increased at an unprecedented rate, and stock market benchmarks have experienced one of the worst quarters in history.

Accordingly, the California Legislative Analyst's Office forecasts that the abrupt reduction in consumer spending associated with the closure of businesses and the "stay-at-home" order, coupled with the stock market decline and rising unemployment, will result in significantly lower sales and capital gains tax revenue

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than assumed in the Governor's proposed January budget.

In an April 6 budget update, the State Assembly Committee on Budget predicted that the Governor's May revise will propose a workload budget, defined as a budget that reflects current levels of service, followed by sizable ongoing reductions to major programs. Similarly, the California Department of Finance expects the economic impact of the pandemic to be immediate, affecting fiscal years 2019/20 and 2020/21 and possibly continuing into future years depending on the pace of recovery.

It is anticipated that reduced State revenue will result in decreased budgetary support for key County services. Staff also anticipates reduced County sales tax revenue, which accounts for approximately 25% of all County General Fund discretionary revenue. Although the April 10<sup>th</sup> property tax collection rates were consistent with prior years, County staff is forecasting reduced property tax revenues for fiscal year 2020/21 due to the COVID-19-related fiscal impacts discussed above. It should be noted that property taxes account for 65% of all County General Fund discretionary revenue.

As such, as a preemptive cost-savings measure, it is recommended that the County institute a hiring freeze effective May 8, 2020. Employment offers made before 5:00 p.m. on May 8, 2020 would be honored. The recommended freeze would require all current and future vacant positions to remain unfilled until revenue and operational costs have stabilized, as determined through State and County financial analyses.

It is also requested that the Board authorize the County Administrative Officer (CAO) to approve exemptions to the freeze on a case-by-case basis. Criteria for exemption may include, but not be limited to, public safety positions, grant-funded, and mission-critical positions. The CAO will develop specific guidelines for the hiring freeze process and expects to distribute guidelines to departments by May 8.

Guidelines will include specific direction regarding communication protocol between departments, the CAO's Office, and Human Resources & Development; current recruitments; transfers; flex and other promotions; the use of Extra Help employees; and the process for requesting exemptions.

The savings generated from the proposed hiring freeze will be used to offset the anticipated reductions in revenue discussed above and address potential budget shortfalls in the upcoming fiscal year. As the County prepares the fiscal year 2020/21 budget, the CAO's office will develop protocols for the use of any savings generated by the proposed hiring freeze – including additional reserves, contingencies, or redistributing portions of any such savings back to departments.

**FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:**

It is expected that the proposed hiring freeze may reduce budgeted salaries and benefits by approximately \$64.6 million, \$18.6 million of which may be realized as General Fund savings, based on current vacancies. Any savings generated through

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the hiring freeze would be used to offset anticipated revenue shortfalls in sales tax and property taxes. There is no Net County Cost to the General Fund to institute a hiring freeze.

**LINKAGE TO THE COUNTY OF TULARE STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLAN:**

The County's Strategic Business Plan includes the Organizational Performance initiative, with a directive to provide for the stability of County operations through periods of economic fluctuations. The proposed hiring freeze will support this initiative by preparing the County to weather an economic downturn.

**ADMINISTRATIVE SIGN-OFF:**



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Jason T. Britt  
County Administrative Officer

cc: County Administrative Office

Attachment(s)

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
COUNTY OF TULARE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

IN THE MATTER OF TEMPORARY )  
HIRING FREEZE )  
 ) Resolution No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 )

UPON MOTION OF SUPERVISOR \_\_\_\_\_, SECONDED BY  
SUPERVISOR \_\_\_\_\_, THE FOLLOWING WAS ADOPTED BY THE  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS, AT AN OFFICIAL MEETING HELD \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:  
NOES:  
ABSTAIN:  
ABSENT:

ATTEST: JASON T. BRITT  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/  
CLERK, BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Clerk

\* \* \* \* \*

1. Approved a hiring freeze of existing vacant positions and future vacancies, effective May 8, 2020, subject to any meet and confer as required by law.
2. Directed the County Administrative Officer to develop hiring freeze guidelines, regarding communication protocols between departments, the County Administrative Office, and Human Resources & Development; current recruitments; transfers; flex and other promotions; the use of Extra Help employees; and the process for requesting exemptions by May 8, 2020.
3. Authorized the County Administrative Officer to approve exemptions on a case-by-case basis.