

I hope your new year is off to a great start! I have been receiving a lot of calls lately from members who are grateful and excited about the successor Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) contract recently approved.

The official vote was made on Tuesday, January 18th, 2022, by the Board of Supervisors. The MOU then officially took effect January 10, 2022.

Supervisor Steve Brandau pulled the item for discussion, along with the COVID relief item. Brandau began his remarks by saying he supported this item and supported the deputies getting a new contract with increased salaries. He followed up these comments by saying he also supports contracts that would be coming to the DA Investigators and DA Prosecutor Associations. I didn't appreciate that comment, that had nothing to do with our MOU and the passage. Steve also opposed the item that would deliver \$1,500 of COVID relief money to employees who work 32 hours or more per week. Although this money was part of the FDSA MOU, he voted yes for our contract, but no on the pandemic relief money item. Very strange way to get a 5-0 vote but nonetheless that's how it went.

The final vote for our contract was 5-0 and it was 4-1 for the COVID money.

The COVID relief money will be included in your paychecks, Feb. 4, 2022.

COVID Relief

A few weeks ago, Sheriff's Human Resources sent out an email related to absences due to COVID, quarantine, etc. I have attached the table to refamiliarize everyone.

Through the efforts of many public employee groups, who were having problems bridging the gap due to the latest COVID surge- Speaker Toni Atkins, put together state legislation that would fill this void.

A year ago, there was so much time and money given to keeping people off work due to COVID, an exposure or to take care of a loved one. That all seemed to go by the wayside after the first of the year.

Now, the State Legislature is running this bill to bridge the gap.

I have spoken to many of you who have had to use your own time, and for some of you- time you really don't have available. Fortunately, some of you have been accommodated by Sheriff's Management to assist with telephonic reporting unit calls. This has been a way to work, help clear out calls and not have to make personal face-to-face contact. We are grateful for this option because it allows the employee to not go without a paycheck or shortage of pay that you would have received a year ago.

Below is the latest information about the supplemental paid sick leave from the Governor's Office.

YOU ARE.....	ENTERING A PUBLIC SETTING	EXPOSED TO A CONFIRMED COVID+ PERSON	EXPOSED TO A SUSPECTED COVID+ PERSON	SYMPTOMATIC	CONFIRMED COVID+
FULLY VACCINATED	You must wear a facial covering.	May continue working, but monitor for symptoms and must be excluded from the work place if symptoms arise. It is <u>required</u> you wear PPE for at least 14 days from date of contact.	May continue working, but monitor for symptoms and must be excluded from the work place if symptoms arise. It is recommended you wear PPE for at least 10 days from date of contact.	<p>Without Testing: Must isolate for 10 days.</p> <p>With Testing: Isolation may end early if you produce a negative test result, and when fever-free for 24 hours.</p>	ALL FSO EMPLOYEES: Emergency Protocols are in effect. See Below.
PAYMENT FOR MISSED TIME					
WORK-RELATED NON WORK-RELATED				Employee's Sick Time Employee's Sick Time	Employee's Sick Time* Employee's Sick Time
UNVACCINATED	You must wear a facial covering.	<p>Without Testing: Must quarantine for 10 days from exposure. May return after 10 days if non-symptomatic.</p> <p>With Testing: Quarantine may end after 7 days IF the employee is non-symptomatic and tests negative on Day 5 or later.</p>	May continue working, but monitor for symptoms and must be excluded from the work place if symptoms arise. Must wear PPE.	<p>Without Testing: Must isolate for 10 days.</p> <p>With Testing: Isolation may end early if you produce a negative test result, and when fever-free for 24 hours.</p>	ALL FSO EMPLOYEES: Emergency Protocols are in effect. See Below.
PAYMENT FOR MISSED TIME					
WORK-RELATED NON WORK-RELATED		COVID Admin Leave** Employee's Sick Time		Employee's Sick Time Employee's Sick Time	Employee's Sick Time* Employee's Sick Time
<p>Emergency Protocols: Persons who test positive for COVID: Must isolate for 5 days from positive test. You must return to work after 5 days if a) symptoms are not present or are improving and b) a diagnostic specimen *** collected on Day 5 or later tests negative (both A and B must occur in order to return after 5 days). The wearing of a well-fitting N95 mask upon return will be enforced. If symptoms are ongoing, continue isolation until after 10 days.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">If emergency protocol return isn't met: Must isolate for 10 days. You must return to work after 10 days if you are fever-free for at least 24 hours, and other symptoms have improved.</p> <p>*Filing an OJI Claim may result in reimbursement of lost time if claim is accepted. A PCR test is necessary for claim acceptance.</p> <p>**Known work-related exposures resulting in quarantine must be reported to Sheriff's HR. (if/when employee becomes symptomatic, COVID Admin Leave will immediately end and switch to Employee's Sick Time. (Refer to Symptomatic / Confirmed COVID+ columns for further)</p> <p>***A rapid test is preferred.</p>					
<p>Example: If I am unvaccinated and exposed to a confirmed COVID+ person then I must isolate for 7 days, but I can return to work after 7 days if I test negative on Day 5 or later. If this occurred at work, I am eligible for COVID Admin Leave. If this happened during personal time, I must use my sick time.</p>					
<p>Your situation may evolve. You may change from being exposed to a confirmed individual to being symptomatic and untested. These changes may affect your isolation window and when you are permitted to return to work. Contact Sheriff's HR at 600-8500 for confirmation on your isolation period and return-to-work eligibility date.</p>					
<p>10 Days of isolation starts from whichever comes first:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Date of exposure</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Date of positive test (self)</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Date of symptom onset (self)</p>					

Governor Newsom, Legislative Leaders Announce Framework to Extend Supplemental Paid Sick Leave, Protecting Workers and Supporting Businesses Amid COVID Surge

Published: Jan 25, 2022

SACRAMENTO – Amid the national surge in COVID-19 cases driven by the Omicron variant, Governor Gavin Newsom, Senate President pro Tempore Toni G. Atkins and Assembly Speaker Anthony Rendon today announced that they have reached an agreement on a framework to ensure employees continue to have access to COVID-19 supplemental paid sick leave through September 30, 2022:

“California’s ability to take early budget action will protect workers and provide real relief to businesses reeling from this latest surge. Throughout this pandemic, we have come together to address the immediate impacts COVID-19 continues to have on millions of California families, both at home and at work. By extending sick leave to frontline workers with COVID and providing support for California businesses, we can help protect the health of our workforce, while also ensuring that businesses and our economy are able to thrive. We will continue to work to address additional needs of small businesses through the budget – they are the backbone of our communities and continue to be impacted by COVID-19.”

Early budget actions will also include restoring business tax credits, including research and development credits and net operating losses, that were limited during the COVID-19 Recession; tax relief for recipients of federal relief grants for restaurants and shuttered venues; and additional funding for the Small Business Covid-19 Relief Grant Program. The framework includes significant funding to bolster testing capacity, accelerate vaccination and booster efforts, support frontline workers, strengthen the health care system, and battle misinformation.

The Role of the FDSA President

I wanted to take this opportunity to outline and/or explain the role of the FDSA President. I am attaching an excerpt from the MOU language specifically stating the full release President position.

The parties agree that effective January 30, 2006, the Association president shall be released on a paid, full-time basis for purposes of conducting Deputy Sheriff’s Association business. The parties further agree that the Association president shall be paid through the utilization of the Association’s bank of leave hours. Hours deducted from employee balances shall not count toward the 120-hour mandatory annual leave usage requirement. Association representatives using hours from the bank shall report such usage on their time sheets under an earn code specified by the County. The County assumes responsibility for assuring that hours used do not exceed those established in the bank annually.

For “purposes of conducting Deputy Sheriff Association Business” – this would be the area that I would like to discuss and explain exactly what that means.

The FDSA administers all benefits that each one of you has within the bargaining unit. Benefits such as salary, health benefits, long and short-term disability programs, legal defense, etc. These benefit essentially equal millions of dollars that either are income, expenses or simply payroll passthroughs with the association. The FDSA deals with over ten million dollars on an annual basis to ensure all of you and your families are paid on time, benefits are secure, and your legal rights are always represented.

The job of the President means one thing – you must be there for the DSA and its members all the time. Just like police work, the position is a 24/7 job, 365 days a year.

The hours vary. There's no set schedule because of the job description and constant issues that arise and must be triaged accordingly. It is simply impossible to have a schedule set in stone and still respond to the membership. Some issues are must be handled immediately, while there are others that are part of the daily grind.

The job demand exceeds far more hours than the forty (40) hours each week. Being a good manager of time is essential for not burning yourself out and making sure the members are taken care of.

Due to the nature of the job, there is just not enough time in a single business day to conduct all the business for the membership and DSA that needs to be completed. This means continuing to work even when you are not being paid. The job does not allow the president position to be paid for more than 40 hours in a week. Over the last few years, the board made a decision to start tracking the hours through our employee calendar on workforce Telestaff. Those hours begin to tell the story of the actual time put into the job of the President of FDSA.

I would say an average week requires a time commitment of 45-50 hours. The busy weeks will exceed 60 hours a week. This opens the conversation of whether a second full-time position is needed. This topic has been discussed over the years and while a second position could certainly be justified, at this time, I don't think we have the staffing levels necessary to pull another deputy out of the field and charge members for the time/cost to cover this position. I feel this discussion could be explored at a time when staffing levels are in a better level.

At heart, I am a deputy sheriff and still love the primary job I came here to do 25 years ago. That is simply serving the people of Fresno County. Those of you who have ever heard my story as to why I became a deputy sheriff and why I only wanted to work for FSO understand why I still put the people above it all/

Although I spend most of my time serving our membership, which is rewarding, will never pass up the chance to serve in the field as time permits. The change of scenery has several benefits: it allows me to interact firsthand with the line level staff who we represent- often times to see their perspective. This also allows me to see ways we can improve how we do business. I truly believe this is imperative to negotiating for pay and benefits. Finally, it relieves members of mandatory overtime (MOT) shifts. We are still at a place in this agency where there are patrol shortages that equal overtime shifts needing coverage. My leadership style is from the front. I don't talk about what should happen or what needs to happen. My style is going out and showing what must happen. Many of you have worked alongside me on patrol. Others of you, I have covered your MOT shifts so you can have much needed time off. Many of you never get that MOT because I have filled that shift for you. This also means working some holidays, weekends, etc., to ensure our own members get time off they deserve. I sacrifice time with my

own family to fill a need. It's not required, but it's what I feel I need to do as a deputy sheriff representing all of you.

Another part of the job is working with Sheriff Mims and her administration. This means a constant negotiation of give and take for all of us here. There are many times I hold the line for this organization and its members, and other times we elect to reach a deal on the issue. At times things can get uncomfortable, stressful and contentious. However, we make it a priority to solve problems and provide the best working conditions we can under the existing circumstances.

A big part of the job is paying attention to the political climate and staying ahead of the local, and state political happenings. This is most notably important in Fresno County where elected officials determine how we, as law enforcement officers, attain new labor contracts. Being politically involved and politically astute is what separates this organization from others. It's a plain and simple concept. Building relationships and investing in educating our leaders is a central focus of this job. We need those who represent Fresno County to know what deputies do and the sacrifice made to keep the public safe. Having these relationships is important so your membership has both a voice and a seat at the table.

At the state level, the premier law enforcement labor organization is, Peace Officer's Research Association of California - PORAC.

PORAC is at the forefront of the issues, initiatives and campaigns in California related to law enforcement. Their advocacy work is constant and protects our rights as law enforcement officers. PORAC is the law enforcement recognized expert at the State Capital.

For ten years, (2010-2020) I held a PORAC Board of Director position. In 2020, I was elected to represent PORAC as one of eight members at the executive level. This position, I will say, is much busier than I anticipated it would be. The time requirement is such that seven out of eight executive board members are full release presidents. This role entails a continuous stream of emails coming in and going out (many on east coast time) from our federal lobbyists. PORAC has established a stronger federal footprint on Capitol Hill in the last 5-6 years than I have been prior to that. We are fortunate enough to have a full time President and Vice President running the day-to-day operation of the organization. Supported by eight executive board members who help with a lot during the weeks.

There's a lot of other duties I haven't addressed- which often occur unannounced that require my immediate attention. These include officer involved shootings, disciplinary matters, working condition violations, etc.

I want each one of you to know- my commitment to serving all of you will not waiver. Whether it is a critical incident, IA notice, or any general questions you as a member have, I have committed myself to answering those calls at any time of the day or night. Those of you who have been in the situations know the attention I will give to the membership and the issue(s) at hand. I have had to step away from meals, sporting events, family events to tend to this membership. I do that because I would expect the same if I were in your position.

Many of you know I start my day at 4 AM. I have spoken to quite a few of you over the years while on an elliptical or rowing machine at the gym before sunrise. Beginning the day early ensures that I am ready for and able to accommodate any problems, or crises that may come

up during the day. It also accounts for impromptu meetings if needed. Full access is what this position requires.

I hope you have a better understanding of my day-to-day job. I did leave out the most stressful part- which is negotiating our MOU - I'm still recovering!!

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you. It's an honor.

My very best,

Eric