



Legislation Text

File #: 21-104, **Version:** 1

TITLE:

Approval of a one-time Pandemic Response Payment to Essential Town of Carrboro Employees.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this item is to provide supplemental pay to essential employees of the Town who have maintained continuity of operations and service delivery to citizens during the COVID-19 pandemic.

DEPARTMENT: Human Resources, Finance

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INFORMATION: On March 10, 2020, Governor Cooper, by Executive Order 116, declared a state of emergency to prevent the spread of COVID-19. On March 27, 2020, Executive Order 121 imposed a statewide Stay at Home Order, which directed people to stay at home except to visit essential businesses, exercise outdoors or help family members. The Order also banned gatherings of more than 10 people and directed everyone to physically stay at least 6 feet apart from others.

More Executive Orders followed in connection with the pandemic, which dramatically impacted the manner in which Town services could be provided and the modified work practices and schedules necessary for Town employees to continue delivery of critical public services.

During this time, the employees of the Town have demonstrated creativity, flexibility, resilience, and perseverance in the face of uncertainty to maintain essential critical components of all the Town's infrastructure segments.

The FY2020-21 Adopted Budget included a variety of austerity measures to preserve the Town's financial health. One of these measures was the elimination of across the board pay adjustments for all employees.

Under the American Rescue Plan Act signed into law on March 11, 2021, the Town of Carrboro is estimated to receive \$6.2 million. These funds may be used for a number of purposes, including the provision of premium pay for "essential" workers needed to "maintain continuity of operations of essential critical infrastructure sectors" and additional sectors designated as critical to protecting the health and well-being of Town residents.

Given that all Town employees have been determined to be essential employees necessary to maintain continuity of operations and protect the health and well-being of Town residents, it is recommended that the Town provide a one-time Pandemic Response Payment to essential employees. "General" permanent employees will receive \$900 and certain classes of employees will receive additional hazard pay on top of this amount for a total payment of \$1600. These classes include sworn police and fire department employees, building inspectors and members of the IT department who have continued to have constant interaction with the

public and/or faced other hazards related to the pandemic. Permanent employees who were actively on payroll during as of April 1, 2020 will receive the full payment amount. Employees hired during the time of May 1, 2020 through April 15, 2021 and active part-time permanent employees will receive a pro-rated payment. The payment would occur in April or May 2021.

The Pandemic Response Payments will be funded by the Town's American Rescue Plan funding.

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: Human Resources and the Finance Department estimate that the Pandemic Response Payments will total \$224,795 including appropriate payroll taxes and retirement contributions.

RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Town Council adopt the attached Resolution and budget amendment authorizing a one-time Pandemic Response Payment to essential employees.