

Adopted: 4/20/2020  
Effective: 4/30/2020

SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL  
Snohomish County, Washington

AMENDED ORDINANCE NO. 20-025

RELATING TO COUNTY EMPLOYMENT, RESTRICTING THE HIRING OF NEW  
EMPLOYEES, ADOPTING A TEMPORARY HIRING FREEZE, AND ADDING A NEW  
CHAPTER 3.90 SCC

WHEREAS, on January 21, 2020, the Washington State Department of Health confirmed the first case of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) in the United States in Snohomish County, Washington, and the Snohomish Health District and the Washington State Department of Health have since worked to identify, contact, monitor and test others in Snohomish County potentially exposed to COVID-19 in coordination with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a new respiratory disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which is a new strain of coronavirus that had not been previously identified in humans and can easily spread from person to person; and

WHEREAS, the impact of COVID-19 is not fully understood at this time, but it can cause serious illness and sometimes death, and older individuals and those with underlying health conditions appear to be at greater risk for serious illness as a result of contracting COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, the potential public health threat that COVID-19 poses to the United States and globally is very high and health officials have advised that person-to-person spread of COVID-19 will continue to occur globally, including within the United States and Snohomish County; and

WHEREAS, the county council has determined that because of anticipated 2020 revenue shortfalls resulting from the world-wide pandemic of COVID-19 and associated economic crisis it is in the best interests of Snohomish County and the public to institute a temporary hiring freeze;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED:

Section 1. A new chapter is added to Title 3 of the Snohomish County Code to read:

Chapter 3.90

TEMPORARY HIRING FREEZE

1 Sections:

2

3 3.90.010 Purpose.

4 3.90.020 Application.

5 3.90.030 Positions to remain vacant.

6 3.90.040 Executive authority.

7 3.90.050 Repeal.

8

9 3.90.010 Purpose.

10 The purpose of this chapter is to impose a temporary freeze on the filling of  
11 vacancies in county employment. The hiring freeze is intended to promote the public  
12 interest and minimize the impacts of possible budget constraints on county programs  
13 and employees.

14

15 3.90.020 Application.

16 This chapter shall apply to all regular, temporary, and acting positions of county  
17 employment regardless of which branch of government or whether the positions are in  
18 the classified or exempt service except as follows: Internal promotions and lateral  
19 transfers shall be allowed with no backfill of the subsequent vacancy.

20

21 3.90.030 Positions to remain vacant.

22 (1) There is hereby imposed a hiring freeze on all positions of county  
23 employment.

24 (2) Any such vacant positions shall not be advertised, offered to be filled, or be  
25 filled unless approved by the county council as provided for under SCC 3.90.030(4).

26 (3) An elected office or department seeking to fill a vacant position shall submit a  
27 motion to the county council who will determine whether filling the vacancy will  
28 adversely affect either the sustainability of the funding source or the annual budget of  
29 the department or office.

30 (4) The county council may authorize filling the vacancy if it determines at a  
31 public meeting after consultation with the requesting department or office and/or  
32 executive that filling the position vacancy is fiscally sustainable and necessary:

33 (a) for performance of a critical health or safety function;

34 (b) for satisfaction of a legal mandate;

35 (c) for efficient and cost-effective operations; or

36 (d) to carry out a county obligation under a related grant or contract.

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38 3.90.040 Executive authority.

39 (1) This chapter does not limit the authority of the county executive to impose  
40 additional restrictions on appointed executive departments subject to the supervisory  
41 authority of the county executive.

42 (2) County officials and agencies not subject to the supervisory authority of the  
43 county executive, including the offices of the county assessor, auditor, clerk, council,  
44 prosecuting attorney, sheriff, treasurer and district and superior courts, may take actions

1 to limit county personnel costs not provided for in this ordinance to the extent consistent  
2 with this ordinance and the county budget adopted under chapter 4.26 SCC, as  
3 amended.

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5 3.90.050 Repeal.


6 This chapter is repealed effective 60 days from the date of enactment,  
7 unless re-enacted or repealed prior to that date.

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9 Section 2. Savings. This ordinance shall not apply to any bona fide offer of  
10 county employment tendered and accepted prior to adoption and actual notice of this  
11 ordinance, regardless of when the employee begins work. The clerk of the council shall  
12 forthwith distribute copies of this ordinance to all county elected officials and department  
13 heads and to such other county officers as directed by the chairperson.

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15 Section 3. Findings. The county council finds as a fact that this ordinance is  
16 necessary to respond to recent estimates of 2020 revenue shortfalls associated with the  
17 ongoing world-wide economic crisis, that immediate action is needed to help curtail  
18 expenditures, and that this ordinance is necessary for the support of county government  
19 and its existing institutions.

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22 PASSED this 20<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2020.

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25 SNOHOMISH COUNTY COUNCIL  
26 Snohomish County, Washington


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31 Council Chair

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34 ATTEST:


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37 \_\_\_\_\_  
38 Asst. Clerk of the Council

- 1 (X) APPROVED
- 2 ( ) EMERGENCY
- 3 ( ) VETOED

DATE: 4/20/2020

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
County Executive

ATTEST:

  
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Approved as to form only:

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Deputy Prosecuting Attorney