

ORDINANCE O-4927

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF KIRKLAND RELATING TO VACATION LEAVE BENEFITS FOR NON-REPRESENTED STAFF TO GRANT THE CITY MANAGER DISCRETION TO INCLUDE YEARS OF PRIOR GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-PROFIT EXPERIENCE FOR VACATION ACCRUAL RATES THROUGH AN AMENDMENT TO KIRKLAND MUNICIPAL CODE 3.80.090 AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

1 WHEREAS, recent recruitments of non-represented staff have highlighted the
2 importance of leave benefits for attracting and retaining highly qualified staff; and
3

4 WHEREAS, vacation leave accrual tiers under KMC 3.80.090 are based solely on
5 years of employment with the City of Kirkland, and new hires accrue vacation leave at the first
6 year of employment tier regardless of their prior employment experience elsewhere, whether
7 governmental (local, state, or federal) or private sector; and
8

9 WHEREAS, other comparable local jurisdictions allow for accelerated vacation accrual
10 rates for new hires based on prior employment experience; and
11

12 WHEREAS, remaining competitive in leave benefits supports timely recruitment and
13 helps ensure a strong and diverse candidate pool for critical leadership positions; and
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15 WHEREAS, in a regular public meeting on February 3, 2026, the City Council received
16 a report and recommendation from Human Resources staff relating to vacation and
17 management leave for non-represented staff.
18

19 NOW, THEREFORE, the City Council of the City of Kirkland do ordain as follows:
20

21 Section 1. Section 3.80.090 of the Kirkland Municipal Code and the corresponding
22 portions of Ordinance No. O-4854 § 1 (2023), is amended to read as follows, with new text
23 shown in underline and deleted text shown in ~~strikethrough~~:
24

25 **3.80.090 Vacation leave.**

26 (a) *Approval.* An employee shall be eligible to use paid vacation leave as it is accumulated.
27 All requests for vacation leave must be scheduled and approved at least five days prior to the
28 requested vacation time, unless an exception is granted by the department director. Vacation
29 leave shall be granted by the department director only in the best interests of the city.
30 Department directors requesting vacation leave must coordinate such request with the city
31 manager's office.
32

33 (b) *Vacation Accrual Schedule.*
34

35 (1) Vacation leave does not accrue nor may it be used until the first day of the following
36 pay period in which it is earned, meaning leave cannot be used during the period
37 in which it is earned.
38

39 (2) Each regular and temporary full-time and part-time employee shall accrue vacation
40 leave according to the following hourly rate schedule for regular working hours
41 compensated, excluding overtime:

Year of Employment	Vacation Leave Hours per Regular Hours Compensated	Annual Vacation Accrual Based on 2,080 Working Hours per Year
*1st year of employment	0.0500 hours	104 hours vacation
*2nd year of employment	0.0500 hours	104 hours vacation
*3rd year of employment	0.0500 hours	104 hours vacation
*4th year of employment	0.0500 hours	104 hours vacation
*5th year of employment	0.0616 hours	128 hours vacation
*6th year of employment	0.0616 hours	128 hours vacation
*7th year of employment	0.0616 hours	128 hours vacation
*8th year of employment	0.0658 hours	136 hours vacation
*9th year of employment	0.0658 hours	136 hours vacation
10th year of employment	0.0658 hours	136 hours vacation
11th year of employment	0.0693 hours	144 hours vacation
12th year of employment	0.0693 hours	144 hours vacation
13th year of employment	0.0693 hours	144 hours vacation
14th year of employment	0.0770 hours	160 hours vacation
15th year of employment	0.0770 hours	160 hours vacation
16th year of employment	0.0770 hours	160 hours vacation
17th year of employment	0.0847 hours	176 hours vacation
18th year of employment	0.0847 hours	176 hours vacation
19th year of employment	0.0847 hours	176 hours vacation
20th year of employment	0.0924 hours	192 hours vacation
25th year of employment and thereafter	0.0962 hours	200 hours vacation

42 (c) *Accumulation.* Vacation leave shall not be accumulated in excess of two hundred eighty
43 hours within a calendar year without the express prior written authorization of the city manager
44 or his or her designee. No more than two hundred forty hours may be carried over from one
45 calendar year to the next except as provided in this subsection. Requests to the city manager

46 or designee for exceptions shall be for a specific number of hours to be used for a specific
47 purpose and to be taken by a specific date. Accrued unused vacation leave shall not, under
48 any circumstances, exceed three hundred twenty hours. Any vacation leave accrued in excess
49 of the above referenced maximums shall be forfeited and shall not form the basis of any
50 severance pay or additional compensation.

51
52 (d) *Payment in Lieu of Vacation Leave.* There shall be no pay in lieu of unused vacation
53 leave, except as specifically authorized by this section.

54
55 (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, only an employee who has completed
56 at least six months of service and successfully completed probation is eligible to
57 receive payment in lieu of vacation leave.

58
59 (2) In cases of separation from city employment, an eligible employee shall receive
60 pay for any vacation time earned but not taken, up to the date of separation but
61 not to exceed a maximum of two hundred forty hours accumulated vacation leave
62 unless specifically authorized by the city manager.

63
64 (3) In cases of an unforeseen emergency, an eligible employee may apply to the city
65 manager to receive pay in lieu of vacation time earned but not taken. The city
66 manager has discretion to approve such a request and authorize payment in lieu
67 of accrued vacation leave, with such pay limited to the amount necessary to meet
68 the emergency but not to exceed a maximum of two hundred forty hours
69 accumulated vacation leave. At least forty hours of leave must remain to cover
70 unanticipated absences. The city manager shall create a policy regarding
71 consideration of requests for pay in lieu of vacation leave in unforeseen
72 emergencies, which policy shall at minimum require that the employee
73 demonstrate to the city manager that the unforeseen emergency would result in
74 severe financial hardship to the employee if payment were not permitted. An
75 "unforeseen emergency" means an unanticipated occurrence that is caused by an
76 event beyond the control of the employee.

77
78 (4) Should an employee separate from employment within the same calendar year
79 that the employee was granted pay in lieu of vacation leave, the maximum
80 payment received by the employee for vacation time earned but not taken shall be
81 no more than two hundred forty hours accumulated vacation leave unless
82 specifically authorized by the city manager.

83
84 (e) *Front-Loading.* The city manager is authorized to provide new employees with a front-
85 loaded, advanced amount of paid vacation leave before it has accrued; provided, that such
86 front-loading meets the requirements of this section for accrual, use, and carryover. In
87 circumstances where an employee was provided front-loaded vacation hours, those front-
88 loaded vacation hours are not eligible for payment in lieu of vacation leave.

89
90 (f) *Adjusting Years of Employment for Non-Represented Employees.* In order to ensure
91 the city is competitive in hiring and retaining the most qualified employees in non-represented
92 staff positions, the city manager is authorized to recognize years of service with other
93 government agencies and non-profits for new non-represented employees when calculating
94 the year of employment placement in the vacation accrual schedule contained in subsection
95 (b)(2) of this section. The city manager is authorized to establish administrative policies that

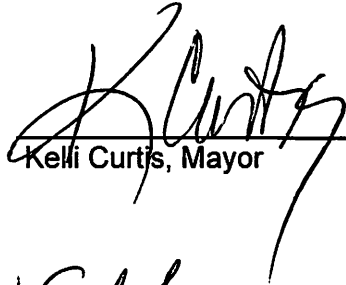
determine how such years of service are calculated and recognized, and is further authorized to establish administrative policies to implement modifications to the year of employment placement for existing non-represented employees hired after December 31, 2021, that recognize prior government and non-profit service years.

Section 2. If any provision of this ordinance or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the ordinance or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected.

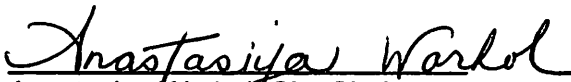
Section 3. This ordinance shall be in force and effect five days from and after its passage by the Kirkland City Council and publication pursuant to Section 1.08.017, Kirkland Municipal Code in the summary form attached to the original of this ordinance and by this reference approved by the City Council and shall apply retroactively to January 1, 2026.

Passed by majority vote of the Kirkland City Council in open meeting this 3rd day of March, 2026.

Signed in authentication thereof this 3rd day of March, 2026.


Kelli Curtjs, Mayor

Attest:


Anastasiya Warhol, City Clerk

Publication Date: March 9, 2026

Approved as to Form:


Darcey Eilers, City Attorney

PUBLICATION SUMMARY
OF ORDINANCE NO. O-4927

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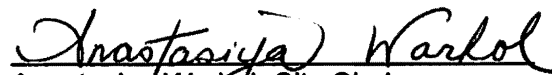
1 SECTION 1. Amends Section 3.80.090 of the Kirkland Municipal Code.
2

3 SECTION 2. Provides a severability clause for the ordinance.
4

5 SECTION 3. Authorizes publication of the ordinance by summary and establishes the
6 effective date as five days after publication of summary and shall apply retroactively to January
7 1, 2026.
8

9 The full text of this Ordinance will be mailed without charge to any person upon request
10 made to the City Clerk for the City of Kirkland. The Ordinance was passed by the Kirkland City
11 Council at its meeting on the 3rd day of March, 2026.
12

13 I certify that the foregoing is a summary of Ordinance O-4927 approved by the Kirkland
14 City Council for summary publication.


Anastasiya Warhol, City Clerk