



Special Announcements & Resources

InSync Newsletter: Quarter 2
April - June 2022

Understanding the Difference Between Change and Transition

Sudden and unexpected change is difficult, but the **transition**, the process by which we adjust to that change, can be made easier. Thoughtful **transition management** is needed, which involves taking the time and space for employees to process their experiences. This article offers some tools to facilitate intentional conversations with team members about the current changes. This can help ease the transition and support individuals in moving through impacts that such changes bring. This is a leadership responsibility-- to check in with staff when changes and transitions happen. Not taking this important step can have impact/slow down for the team and the organization in moving forward.



Learn more

A Safe and Respectful Work Environment for All

Everyone deserves a safe and respectful work environment. Please know that hostile work environments, harassment, or discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated in the County of Ventura. Discrimination is any conduct which results in inequality of treatment of any person or group because of race, color, religion, national origin, citizen status, sex, gender identity expression, sexual orientation, age, medical condition, marital status, military or veteran status, disability, genetic information, or request for family leave.



Our County wants to address any work situation that creates a hostile work environment. If the investigation of a complaint reveals any illegal discrimination, harassment, retaliation or other inappropriate actions, the County's Human Resources Department has the duty to recommend disciplinary action, including dismissal of the responsible party.

We want to encourage employees and whistleblowers to make their concerns known as soon as the offensive behavior occurs. A whistleblower is an employee who shares information with another employee who has the authority to investigate, discover, or correct the illegal behavior of the responsible party. Whistleblowers are protected by multiple laws. Employees are encouraged to first discuss concerns with their supervisors, then their agency/department HR representatives. If resolution is still not reached, more information and options are available on the [County's Complaint Resolution webpage](#).

Having discussions regarding inappropriate workplace misconduct fosters a psychologically safe culture in which all employees can feel comfortable and safe reporting workplace misconduct. The following resources, internal and external to the County, are available to make a complaint:

- **Employee Misconduct line - (805) 684-6523:** This is a third-party facilitator whose purpose is to receive and respond to employees experiencing discourteous treatment, inappropriate behavior, and harassment.
- **Your HR Representative:** Every agency/department has a Human Resources representative who is trained to respond to misconduct complaints while protecting the complainant and lawfully launching an investigation.
- **Your Supervisor, Manager, or Department Head:** They are legally responsible to act immediately when an employee notifies them of harassment or discrimination.
- **Ventura County's Equal Employment Opportunity Officer - (805) 662-6584**
- **Your Union:** If you are represented by a union, they know the protocol to act immediately on claims of harassment or discrimination.
- **California's Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) - (800) 884-1684.**
- **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission:** www.eeoc.gov/.

*Calls and online reporting can be anonymous so there is no fear of retaliation.
Human Resources is committed to compliance and your participation is essential.*

Coping with Complex Emotions

People feel more secure when they feel like they have a predictable routine and have some control over a situation. How can you create a more stable environment for yourself, in the midst of external changes?

Change, whether at work or home, can produce a variety of reactions and complex emotions. It can look and feel like grief, with its predictable stages of shock and denial, bargaining, anger, depression, and finally acceptance. There can also be temporary disorientation, memories of past losses or trauma, disappointment in perceived authority figures and structures, and even existential issues, i.e., "Everything changes, and do I matter?" Change can bring up fear of the unknown and anxiety about what else may happen. You can cope with these complex emotions by creating a predictable routine for yourself, finding a safe space to talk, and seeking out more resources, if needed.

Connecting with friends and loved ones is one way to feel more grounded and less alone in the midst of

change. Asking for help brings people together. When one person honestly expresses themselves, it gives permission for others to do so, increasing the level of trust between them. Offering help is a healthy way to manage stress, too. It’s actually known as the “tend and befriend” response. You can help others by noticing if they are struggling and offering resources.

How to approach someone who may be struggling or impaired.

- Talk to the person in private.
- Reassure them of confidentiality.
- Be compassionate and empathetic.
- Let them know that you have noticed some signs of stress.
- Ask how your friend or coworker would like to be supported, what they need.
- Explore options –exercise, engaging with spiritual community, hobbies.
- You don’t have to be a therapist – refer to EAP!



How can you create a sense of stability in uncertain times?

- *Create a predictable routine: do things that bring you comfort and find something you do have control over. This might mean cleaning your space or organizing your desk, having your coffee break at the same time every day. It may also mean adjusting your attitude, if it seems like that is the only thing that you can control.*
- *Emotional Wellbeing:* Be compassionate and humane with yourself and others; use empathy while acknowledging the reality of the situation; be patient, and seek out resources like Wellness, and EAP, and practice self-care.

Bring on the positivity!

- Routine is hugely important in reducing fear. Give yourself predictability in an uncertain world.
- Ask for Help and Offer Help. “Tend and Befriend” is a healthy way to deal with stress.
- Stay positive and highlight progress - always find victories, no matter how small, to celebrate.
- Be thoughtful about how you share information, respect boundaries, and know when to reach out to a professional.
- Take it one step at a time. During times of stress, break up tasks into small chunks so you are not overwhelmed.

Take care of yourself.

You can be a calming presence for others if you have taken the time to process your own feelings and engaged in your favorite self-care activities. You will be better prepared to create a stable and emotionally safe environment for yourself and others if you have taken the time to center yourself.



Visit our website

950 County Square Drive, Suite 200
Ventura, CA 93003
805-654-4327

HCA-HR Recruits Staff in Record Time

CEO HR - HCA Division coordinated a Hiring Event in a record four weeks for Ventura County Medical Center and Santa Paula Hospital. The goal was to set up a one-stop-shop, the end result being to fill dozens of open positions for Registered Nurses (Regular & Per Diem), Sr. Registered Nurses, Clinical Laboratory Scientists, and Certified Phlebotomists.



A 6-point plan was developed and implemented to:

1. Attract qualified applicants via online job boards, English & Spanish news ads, radios, professional associations, institutions, postcard mailers, and a lawn banner.
2. Promote the County of Ventura, HCA, and the human touch via totes, stress balls, and water provided to all attendees, an official welcome, informative and employee testimonial videos and door prizes.
3. Have attendees apply to postings prior to the event or during in our pop-up computer lab.
4. Evaluate applications and create an eligible list of qualified applicants.
5. Provide opportunity for Hiring Managers to interview in person & virtually, and make job offers.
6. Conduct pre-employment physical exams onsite.

The result: 79 applicants attended, and 18 job offers were made and accepted!

Welcoming a New Family Member? Need to Add Them to Your Health Plans?



Don't miss the timeline to add dependents to your health plans. New family members are not automatically enrolled in an employee's insurance plans. To enroll, you must submit a Mid-Year Enrollment and Change request within 31-days. Qualifying events for such additions include a dependent's birth, adoption, adoption placement, marriage, or registration of Domestic Partnership. Contact your agency's HR representative(s) as soon as possible and within 31 days (including the event date) with any questions and to submit the necessary enrollment paperwork. See Chapter 1 of the Benefit Plans Handbook for more information.

[View Benefits Plan Handbook](#)

Reduce Your Carbon Footprint with Commuter Benefits

Save money and help the environment by making your commute to work more ecofriendly by taking advantage of the County's commuter benefits. Interested in taking public transit to work? Through the Transportation Benefit Reimbursement Program, employees can set aside pretax dollars to use for public transit and vanpooling. Need to travel for work? Use the electric vehicles in GSA's motorpool and save your car from wear and tear. Do you bike to work? Sign up for a bike locker to store your bike during work hours. Have you been carpooling? Employees who carpool can get a carpool preferential parking permit. Visit the HR Benefits' Commuter Page to learn more.



[HR Benefits' Commuter Page](#)

WELLthy Reward\$

Are you new to the County, or new to using VC-WELL's wellness programs?

Employees earning a WELLthy Reward\$ cash award for the first time this year will receive a one-time \$50 bonus.



[Visit our website](#)

A Donation Makes a Difference



WeGive Employee Giving is a platform by which all county employees can come together to invest locally in their health care. Ventura County is a place where people work, live, and play together, and by supporting the Health Care Foundation, we send a powerful message that we value a healthy community. Your donations support the Health Care Agency to ensure everyone has an opportunity to be healthy and well.

Where are WeGive dollars directed?
Your donations go directly to the greatest and most urgent needs in medical equipment.

Check out [WeGive 2021 Video](#), or [PDF](#) to learn more.

To participate, email ac.payroll@ventura.org from your work email stating how many hours you want to donate with the following statement completed with your details:

“I, (employee name) (Employee ID#), wish to donate (# up to 40) hours to HCFVC.”

To learn more please visit:

HCFVC.org

or contact Amy Towner - (805) 652-3361 | Amy.Towner@ventura.org



HR Divisions

Deferred Compensation

Notice Regarding Your Annual Benefit Statement

Each year an Annual Benefit Statement is prepared in partnership with VCERA utilizing your 401(k) and 457 account balance information as of the last day of the prior year. The future planning projections included in these statements are estimates of the approximate growth for your accounts. The statements (soon to be mailed out), reflect balance and projection information as of 12/31/2021. Due to recent market volatility, this information may not reflect your current balance.



Andrew Kremer

Dedicated Fidelity Retirement Planner for County of Ventura Employees
858-349-6877
Andrew.kremer@fmr.com.

If you have concerns or questions about your retirement savings, you may want to utilize the services of the County's dedicated Fidelity Retirement Planner, Andrew Kremer, to assist with developing or reviewing your current retirement plan.

Other sources of information and assistance are available through Fidelity's phone-based representatives (800-343-0860) and on the NetBenefits website (search under "Tools").

Do You Know Your Numbers?

A million to one. Two cents' worth. Three cheers! Ever wonder why so many expressions involve numbers?

Maybe it's because numbers are specific. They're clear and easy to understand and can be a reference point to help determine whether something is progressing. When it comes to managing your money, wouldn't it be helpful to have a number to see where you stand, and if there's room to do better?



With the [financial wellness checkup](#), you'll get just that. Answer a few questions to see your personal financial wellness score in each of 4 categories: budgeting, debt management, savings, and protection. These are your numbers, plotted on a 25-point scale, so you can easily see how you're doing financially. You also get a summary of your financial strengths, and suggestions for next steps to help improve your score—and improve your overall financial well-being.

It's as easy as one-two-three to begin improving your financial picture. Get a [financial wellness checkup](#) today at [NetBenefits.com/financialwellness](https://netbenefits.com/financialwellness), and any time you want to reassess your progress or get new steps if your situation changes.

Tips for Turbulent Times

As market volatility continues to evolve, keeping emotions in check can be difficult. Understanding market cycles and the emotions we feel during these transitions can help steady the nerves and guide us through what we should do versus what we want to do. The recent issue of Fidelity Viewpoints [Market Volatility: 6 Tips to Navigate Volatile Markets](#) provides helpful insight into these market cycles and managing the emotions that come with them.



Wellness Program - VC-WELL

New Health Coaching Program Starts May 1

After the recent retirement of our long-time health coach, Silvina Cox, VC-WELL has partnered with a new coaching vendor to provide coaching services - American Institute for Preventive Medicine. Regular employees and their spouses/domestic partners will have access to their coaching programs that provide an unlimited amount of coaching sessions. Please



visit our website on or after May 1 to learn more and register for a program.



Wellness Screenings are Back

VC-WELL has partnered with a third party vendor, Onsite Wellness, to offer health screenings beginning in April.

Visit our website

Employee Bowling Tournament

Our 3rd Annual Employee Bowling Tournament takes place on Saturday, April 23, at Buena Lanes in Ventura, with all team slots filled. Be sure to come cheer on your colleagues during this fun and exciting team-building event. Good luck bowlers!



Team Competition

Don't miss out participating in VC-WELL's popular WELLtrek Team Competition in May! Employees who complete the competition will earn 20 WELLthy Reward\$ points.

Login or Create an Account

Risk Management

Why is summer so risky?

The extra hour of daylight in the evening alerts us that summer is quickly approaching. More injuries occur during the summer months than other times of the year. Summer is the busiest travel season. The "RISKIEST" days of summer are between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Check out these [37 Summer Safety Tips](#) to ensure you stay happy and healthy this summer.



Learning & Organizational Development

Real Colors

Real Colors is a fun, fast-paced, interactive 4-hour learning program that can be a stepping-stone to enhancing your team culture while increasing productivity, reducing conflicts, and increasing employee engagement.

Real Colors provides a roadmap for how to be successful with people who have different approaches to communicating and getting things done, and helps increase productive collaboration with your team.

Real Colors gives you:

- The ability to recognize your strengths and the strengths of others.
- The ability to quickly build rapport.
- An enhanced ability to understand how others process information.
- The ability to modify your communications style.
- Includes self-assessment to reveal your colors.

Self-register for the course:

- Access VCHRP/Main Menu/Employee Self-Service/Training/Request Training Enrollment/Searcy by Date

Or

- Contact Training.Administration@ventura.org.



3,300 County employees have already completed the assessment!

**Join us for our next sessions:
4/26/22 or 6/1/22**

Today’s Tools for Workplace Efficiency

As the definition of what makes up today’s worksite evolves, we can all use some tips and advice on how to maximize efficiency and productivity, improve time management, look our best on video calls, manage stress, develop resourcefulness, and build resilience in these new days of Zoom, Teams, and teleworking. Check out the LinkedIn Learning playlist linked here for more information.

Click the link below to access this playlist.*

*If accessing this information from our Intranet site (MyVCWeb) please follow these steps:

MyVCWeb

1. Go to MyVCWeb and click on "Training" located at the bottom right of the page.
2. This will take you to the **Learning & Organizational Development** webpage. Click on the (**LinkedIn Learning**) icon at the bottom of the page.
3. This will take you to the LinkedIn Learning webpage. Click anywhere in the Playlist section (on the second page) and it will take you to the Playlists.
4. Click on the **Maximize Efficiency and Productivity of Remote WorkOR Working Remotely** links and it will take you to the **Working Remotely Playlist**.

For any questions, please contact us directly at Training.Administration@ventura.org

WorkLife Program



Thinking about Buying a Home?

Coastal Housing Partnership Can Help Get You Started!

One of the biggest obstacles to homeownership is often a lack of education about the home buying process. Attend one of our 60-minute webinars to get you started on your path to homeownership!

The Spring 2022 Webinar Series features a local lender panel. This panel of experts will help you navigate the process of obtaining a home loan.

Here is your opportunity to connect with local lenders and get your questions answered! These webinars are free for employees of Coastal Housing Partnership member employers.

- **Lender Panel – Navigating the Home Buying Process: April 12, 12-1**
[Register in advance for this webinar on the Coastal Housing website](#)

- **Lender Panel – Navigating the Home Buying Process: May 24, 12 – 1**
[Register in advance for this webinar on the Coastal Housing website](#)

Coastal Housing can also help with your rental search! [Coastal Housing Rentals](#) is a rental search service providing information on available rentals in Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties.

This website was created to provide local employees of Coastal Housing Partnership member companies with a simple way to search for rentals that meet their housing needs. Local landlords are able to post their listings in Ventura & Santa Barbara Counties for free. Access to this service is provided to employees at no charge.



COUNTY of VENTURA
Human Resources



Thank you for reading this edition of InSync.

[Please complete our brief survey to assist us in publishing the best newsletter possible.](#)