



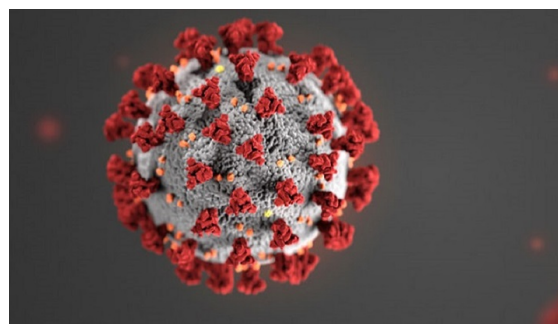
## Special Announcements & Resources

**InSync Newsletter:** Quarter 1  
January - March 2022

After a pause due to the pandemic, InSync is back this year and we're eager to keep you informed about your benefits and what's happening in Human Resources. We give our deepest thanks to the hundreds of employees who have answered the call to serve as Disaster Service Workers (DSWs) to meet the extraordinary needs of our communities during the pandemic. Your work was critical in continuing the important services we provide the public. We hope you enjoy this, and future issues, of *InSync*. Have a safe, healthy, and prosperous New Year!

### COVID Surge – Focusing on Worksite Safety

Over the past few weeks, we have seen the Omicron variant surge throughout our nation and within our County. With this rise in COVID cases, we are seeing an increase in absences from work. As we continue to focus on the safety and well-being of our County family, we want to remind you of the steps to take if you are exposed to or test positive to COVID-19, and the benefits/entitlements that may be available.



- Employees experiencing symptoms should avoid entering County worksites and are encouraged to consider testing for COVID-19. Employees reporting to County worksites should wear masks in compliance with local guidance. To the extent possible, telework can be explored during quarantine/isolation when feasible to avoid absence from work. However, in instances where telework is not viable, employees are encouraged to contact their HR representative to discuss potential pay and leave options.
- Within the Emergency Temporary Standards (ETS) regulations, Cal/OSHA defines a close contact as being within six feet of a someone who is COVID positive for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or greater in any 24-hour period within or overlapping with the "high-risk exposure period." This definition applies regardless of the use of face coverings. Depending on an employee's vaccination status, a close contact will necessitate quarantine from the worksite and/or increased use of masking and social distancing.
- Cal/OSHA ETS require employees to promptly notify their employer if they test positive for COVID-19. If you receive a COVID-19 positive test result, you must notify your Human Resources representative immediately. Prompt reporting by employees ensures proper notification to those at the worksite, guidance through any applicable leave/entitlement process, and remediation of the worksite.

Issues relating to COVID-19 continue to evolve quickly. We are monitoring these changes closely to determine if any other action is needed, and we will continue to keep you updated as we receive new information. Thank you for all you are doing to help our communities stay safe and well through this time of crisis.

### County Welcomes the Addition of Clinic Employees

The 2021/22 fiscal year started with the affiliated Clinic integration when over 600 employees were welcomed into the County family from 18 Primary Care Clinics. These new County employees have enhanced our staff of professionals in the Health Care Agency who provide consistent quality care to our community.



To help fill critical staffing positions, HCA-HR held virtual hiring events in March 2020, and then again in September 2021. HCA-HR also coordinated the onboarding of the new County clinic employees in a short timeframe.

### Benefits Plan Year 2022 is Here

Your open enrollment selections of health insurance plans and spending accounts for plan year 2022 are now in effect.

*Please review your paycheck deductions.*

If the correct health insurance plan names and deduction amounts do not appear on your paycheck, let your agency/department Benefits Representative know **immediately**.



If you find an error in your elections, you must report the error(s) by **Friday, January 21, 2022**.

In the event errors are not corrected, the Flexible Benefits Program plan elections will remain in effect as they appear on your paycheck and those plans and deductions will remain in effect for the 2022 plan year (December 26, 2021, through December 24, 2022).

Check the link below to find a wealth of information on health plans, flexible spending accounts, optional life insurance, absence management, and disability plans.



[Learn more](#)



## Don't Miss Your Opportunity to Speak with Future employees.

The first 2022 cohort of the Public Service Internship is scheduled to begin mid-Spring for college and graduate school students. This is a great opportunity to extend the generational pipeline for your industry and to share your experience as a County employee. There will be multiple opportunities to address the interns during the 2022 year. If you are interested in coming to share about what your agency does and how it positively impacts the County of Ventura, contact Sabrina Anderson, the Internship Director, at [Sabrina.Anderson@ventura.org](mailto:Sabrina.Anderson@ventura.org).

## An Opportunity to Donate and Make a Difference

The Health Care Foundation for Ventura County, Inc. (HCFVC) is a non-profit corporation, dedicated to strengthening the capacity of the Ventura County Health Care Agency to provide quality health care for all. Through the WeGive Employee Giving program, employees can donate annual leave/vacation hours to HCFVC. This donation is tax-deductible and further supports the message that County employees not only work here but also truly believe in the mission to serve all people through exemplary health care.

To participate, email [ac.payroll@ventura.org](mailto: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](https://www.hcfvc.org)

or contact Amy Towner - (805) 652-3361 | [Amy.Towner@ventura.org](mailto:Amy.Towner@ventura.org)

## WELLthy Reward\$ 2022

The 2022 WELLthy Reward\$ cash award program will kick off in January with the award amount for Gold status increased to \$400! This year, we have more opportunities to earn points, including monthly Wellbeats' classes and bi-monthly Wellbeats' challenges. Don't miss out on your chance to earn a cash award ranging from \$100 - \$400 by participating in these fun activities.

[View more details on our website](#)



## Complaint Resolution and Misconduct Hotline

24-Hour Employee Misconduct Hotline

1 (800) 684-6523

We believe employees should be able to voice concerns about tough workplace issues like harassment, discrimination, or discourteous workplace behavior. 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 online reporting are available on the [County HR website](#).

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.

## Hear Directly from Local Real Estate Professionals!

### New Webinar Series

Here is your opportunity to connect with local real estate professionals to find out the latest real estate market conditions and to get your questions answered. Coastal Housing Partnership is hosting a series of webinars that will feature local real estate agents and lenders. As with all of Coastal Housing Partnership's benefits, these webinars are free.

[View the Coastal Housing Newsletter](#)



#### Winter 2022 Schedule:

- **Lender Panel:** Tuesday, January 25, 12 p.m.–1 p.m.
- **Ventura County Real Estate Agent Panel:** Tuesday, February 1, 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.
- **South Coast Santa Barbara Real Estate Agent Panel:** Tuesday, February 8, 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.
- **North County Real Estate Agent Panel:** Tuesday, February 15, 12 p.m. - 1 p.m.

To register for the webinars, please visit the [Coastal Housing Partnership](#) website.

## HR Divisions

### Deferred Compensation

#### 2022 Retirement Plan Contribution Limits

Retirement plan contribution limits are set annually by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). A plan contribution is the amount of money you set aside on a bi-weekly basis for your retirement within the 401(k) and/or 457 plan(s). The contribution limit is the total amount you can contribute each year. This limit is for employee contributions only and does not include employer matching contributions. For 2022, the IRS has announced they will be increasing these limits by \$1,000.00. The 2022 limits are provided in the chart below.

For questions regarding annual limits, please contact Deferred Compensation at 805-654-2620 or email [deferred.compensation@ventura.org](mailto:deferred.compensation@ventura.org).



2022 Maximum Annual Deferral	401(k) Shared Savings Plan	Section 457 Plan
<b>Under Age 50</b>	<b>\$20,500</b>	<b>\$20,500</b>
<b>Age 50+ Catch-Up</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>At least age 50 or will turn age 50 in 2022</i></li></ul>	<b>\$27,000</b>	<b>\$27,000</b>
<b>Section 457 Plan ► Special Catch-Up</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>You must have prior years of unused deferrals and meet certain age and service requirements.</i></li></ul>		<b>Up to \$41,000</b>

#### Take NetBenefits® With You Wherever You Go!

NetBenefits® is the place to access all your Fidelity workplace accounts.

NetBenefits® is a full-service website that allows you to change your contribution election, check your balance, research investment performance, model and request a loan, update your beneficiaries, and view statements. For even more portability, download the [NetBenefits® mobile app](#) to your phone or tablet so you can access your accounts anytime, anywhere.

[Download the NetBenefits Mobile App](#)

#### Download the NetBenefits® mobile app.

Access all your Fidelity® workplace accounts — anytime, anywhere.\*



##### VIEW

Review account balances, investments, your personal rate of return, next steps, and more.

##### ACT

Change contributions or investments, update your profile or beneficiaries, send paperwork, and more.

##### PLAN

See how much you may need in retirement and get your Fidelity Retirement Score™.

##### LEARN

Access articles, videos, podcasts, and interactive tools.

#### Let the Roth 457(b) Option Help You Save for the Future

People tend to be in lower tax brackets when they are younger than when they reach retirement, which is one reason why the Roth governmental 457(b) option is ideal for younger employees.

The Roth governmental 457(b) option doesn't get the same upfront tax break that traditional pre-tax retirement savings plans do. But the holder of a Roth won't owe taxes on any earnings in the account, or on qualified distributions. For younger investors, that can mean decades of tax-free growth and



then tax-free income during retirement.

The sooner you start building your nest egg, the better chance you'll have enough saved for a comfortable retirement. A great way to start saving early is with the Roth governmental 457(b) option.

For more information on Fidelity's Roth governmental 457(b) option, [click HERE](#).

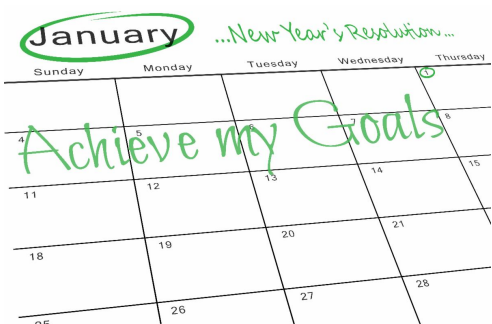
## Wellness Program - VC-WELL



### Million Step Marches

From January – August 2021, 669 county employees successfully completed the Million Step March (MSM), a 6% increase from the previous year! These ambitious employees logged one million steps and 337 employees accumulated more than two million steps (2MSM), a 24% increase from the previous year! VC-WELL is again challenging employees to complete either the MSM or the 2MSM in 2022. Employees completing each challenge can earn up to 80 points toward their WELLthy Reward\$ total. Visit WELLthy Reward\$ for details, or to create a WELLtrek account.

Visit WELLthy Reward\$



### Resolution Weight Challenge

In 2021, 661 employees completed the Resolution Weight Challenge, a 173% increase from the prior year! No matter if your New Year's resolution weight goal is to lose, gain, or maintain your weight, this challenge is for you. Employees who complete the challenge will earn 20 points toward their 2022 WELLthy Reward\$ point total. Keep an eye out for the email in January with details, or visit WELLtrek to log-in or create an account.

Login to  
WELLtrek

### VC-WELL is Virtual

To provide greater access to our workforce, most VC-WELL programs and activities are now virtual. In addition to our WELLtrek virtual physical activity tracking platform, we also offer Wellbeats and Headspace app subscriptions to employees. To learn more about these and other offerings from your award-winning program, including live online meditation sessions, virtual health education courses, health coaching sessions, and the Weight Watchers reimbursement program, visit our updated website. Stay current on VC-WELL offerings by reading our monthly email digests.

Visit our website



### 2021 Co-Ed Softball Tournament Results

The third annual County Co-Ed Employee Softball Tournament took place in October 2021. This year's event included three new agencies and a new two-division format to add to the excitement! This year's tournament featured upsets galore as the lower seeds in every playoff game beat the higher seeded teams.



Competitive Division Champions - Probation





Recreational Division Champions - Human Services Agency

## Employee Assistance Program

### Happy New Year from EAP

The start of the New Year is a time to pause, reflect, and commit to new endeavors. This year, New Year's Resolutions might look a little different, as we are still navigating our way through a pandemic. We may be counting our blessings, looking for silver linings, or making self-care a priority, in addition to our usual focus on achievement.

EAP has resources to help you manage whatever you and your family may be adjusting to at this time. We are available for phone and video counseling sessions.

We also offer a monthly Eldercare Support Group Zoom meeting on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 12 noon. The next Eldercare group dates are January 26, February 23, and March 30, 2022. For access to the Zoom invite/link, please email [Rafael.Ramirez@ventura.org](mailto:Rafael.Ramirez@ventura.org).

Visit our website for more resources, including a link to a curated book list through the Ventura County Library. For more information call (805) 654-4357 or click the link below.

[View more info on EAP](#)



And, keep this thought in mind: If speaking to plants kindly helps them grow, imagine what speaking kindly to humans can do!

## Learning & Organizational Development

### Make Your Search For Learning Easier With LinkedIn Learning!

LinkedIn Learning is a library of 16,000+ online training videos covering a wide range of topics...

To start your journey of learning, click on these playlists:

 <a href="#">Personal and Professional Development Skills</a>	 <a href="#">Courses Related to CEO/HR Topics</a>
 <a href="#">Customer Service/Conflict Management Skills</a>	 <a href="#">Development as a Lead/Supervisor/Manager</a>
 <a href="#">Computer/Software Skills Development</a>	 <a href="#">Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (D.E.I.)</a>

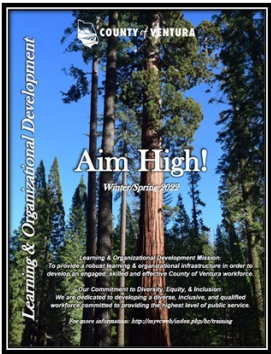
A few sample courses include...

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Emotional Intelligence</li><li>Working Remotely</li><li>LEAN Six Playlist</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Computer Skills for County Employees</li><li>Employee Conflict</li><li>Gender Diversity</li></ul> |
|---|---|

## Winter/Spring 2022 Training Catalog Now Available

The office of Learning and Organizational Development is pleased to offer a variety of training courses that are online, virtual live, and in-person for County of Ventura employees. Courses are focused on enhancing employees' professional development and building their skills to ensure a qualified and effective workforce.

Click on the catalog cover to view the content or use this [MyVCWeb link](#) to view on a County computer.  
Register for a course today! You never know what you might learn.



## An important reminder...



Employees can enroll in mandatory or elective training other than LinkedIn Learning through our VCHRP electronic system. By using the Self-Service option and then going into Training, you can request enrollment. It is important your supervisor approves your request for you to be enrolled in the class when using this option. Please follow up with your supervisor to verify they have approved you for the training. If your supervisor is unavailable, your training rep is their backup and can approve you.

Should you have any questions, please contact us directly at [Training.Administration@ventura.org](mailto:Training.Administration@ventura.org)



**COUNTY of VENTURA**  
Human Resources

