

January - March 2021



COUNTY OF VENTURA HUMAN RESOURCES



[Visit our website](#)

Special Announcements & Resources



As Ventura County continues to feel the impacts of COVID-19, we have adapted our strategies for responding to a variety of extraordinary demands resulting from the crisis. With your support since the COVID-19 pandemic began, hundreds of County employees have been reassigned from their normal duties and locations as Disaster Service Workers (DSWs) to serve in indispensable roles that assist with critical services in our community. DSWs are working with the Area Agency on Aging, Human Services Agency, Emergency Operations Center, Resource Management Agency, Continuum of Care Emergency Shelters, and as health screeners at County worksites, at COVID-19 testing centers, and as contact tracers for Public Health. We thank all County employees who are helping in a variety of extraordinary ways.

As the pandemic continues, it may be necessary to ask you for your support and assistance as a DSW. Although these reassignments can pose hurdles for the operations of your agency/department, and may at times create challenges and hardships for those employees called to new assignments, the sacrifices made by our reassigned DSWs are helping to meet urgent community needs and are making real differences in people's lives as we fight COVID-19. For these reasons, we would greatly appreciate it if you will continue to lend your assistance and/or answer the call if you are asked to help as a DSW to serve the most vulnerable in our county during this unprecedented time.

Save the Date and Spread the Word!

Ventura County Medical Center & Santa Paula Hospital



Virtual Hospital Job Fair - January 9, 2020

The 2021 Health Care Agency (HCA) Job Fair is scheduled for January 9, 2021. Due to the pandemic, the Job Fair this year will be virtual and will include several hospital healthcare support positions including Nurses, Nursing Assistants, Radiology Technicians, Operating Room Technicians, Sterile Processing Technicians, Clinical Lab Scientists, Certified Phlebotomists, and Cooks.

The virtual job fair will feature interactive functionality and will include common questions and answers, video, information, the ability to submit applications and receive job offers on the day of the event.

The most recent Job Fair, which was held in March 2020 on the cusp of the pandemic, was successful beyond expectations. We look forward to this year's virtual event being just as successful.

For more information, please visit the [County of Ventura Human Resources website](#).

Benefits Plan Year 2021 Is Here!

Your open enrollment selections of health insurance plans and spending accounts for Plan Year 2021 are now in effect.

Review Your Paycheck Benefit Deductions and Report Errors

If you find an error in your elections or on your paycheck benefit deductions, you must report the error(s) by **Friday, January 22, 2021**.

Failure to report the error(s) indicates that you agree to the Flexible Benefits Program plan elections as they appear on your paycheck. Without correction, those plans and deductions will remain in effect for the 2021 plan year (December 27, 2020 - December 25, 2021).



Please email [Benefits](#) to provide notification of any errors in your elections.

Employee Benefits Website

You can find a wealth of information on the [HR/Benefits](#) website related to health plans, flexible spending accounts, optional life insurance, absence management, disability plans, and more.



WELLthy Reward\$ 2021

The 2021 WELLthy Reward\$ incentive program will kick off in January with more large cash awards than ever before! This year, there will be a greater variety of wellness activities to earn points, beginning with our monthly health education classes. Don't miss out on your chance to earn a cash award ranging from \$100 - \$300! Visit the [WELLthy Reward\\$](#) webpage to learn more.



Free Financial Workshop ~ Living Within Your Means

Presented by the Ventura County Area Agency on Aging and hosted by the WorkLife Program

Living Within Your Means is a financial workshop presented by the VCAAA in partnership with the Ventura County Credit Union. This workshop offers tips and tools for budgeting and saving money, and is designed specifically for people 60 and older who are living on a fixed income. This workshop (presented on Zoom) may be useful for you or members of your family.

DATE: February 10, 2021

TIME: Noon - 1:00pm

REGISTER: email the [WorkLife Program](#) to register. Please include your employee ID number and your agency/department. You will receive the Zoom link several days prior to the event.



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 the HR representative in your department/agency. 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 has made a commitment to compliance and your participation is essential.

Employee Assistance Program

Happy New Year from EAP!

The start of the New Year is a time to reflect on what we have learned and to make commitments to new endeavors. This year, New Year's resolutions might look a little different, as we are still navigating our way out of a pandemic. Rather than charging ahead to new heights, we may be learning how to pace ourselves; how to practice patience and to have realistic expectations of ourselves and our loved ones. Being more mindful may be a different, but no less worthy, goal for the New Year.



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 have new meditation videos posted weekly on our website, along with other resources, including a link to a curated booklist through the Ventura County Library, and a hand out from our recent Parenting in Pandemic Virtual discussion (co-sponsored with the Ventura County Management Council).

For more information call (805) 654-4357 or visit our website <https://hr.ventura.org/benefits/employee-assistance-program>

Learning & Organizational Development

Thank you for prioritizing your continuous learning during these uncertain times. We appreciate your flexibility as we developed alternative solutions for training delivery. In support of continuous process improvement, and your professional growth, we are happy to share what's new in CEO/HR Learning & Organizational Development.

CEO/HR Mandatory Training Process Now Streamlined

To better serve County employees, mandatory training courses are exclusively online in [VCHRP](#) in a condensed format:

- Workplace Security = 1 hour
- Discrimination Prevention = 2 hours
- Developing Cultural Competency & Inclusion = 1 hour

Training is assigned automatically by VCHRP or by your agency training rep. If you are due for refresher training, VCHRP will send you automatic reminders at set intervals prior to the training due date with a link to complete the training.

MANDATORY TRAINING

What is mandatory training?

County of Ventura employees must complete the following training within 30 days of hire, and then every two years.

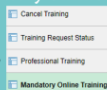
1. Developing Cultural Competency & Inclusion (1 hour)
2. Discrimination Prevention (2 hours)
3. Workplace Security (1 hour)

This training is online, exclusively in VCHRP.
These courses are no longer available in Target Solutions,
LinkedIn, or HSA Café

How is training assigned?

Assignments are made by your agency or automatically by VCHRP. Once an assignment is made, you and your supervisor will receive an email with a link.

VCHRP/Employee Self-Service/Training/Mandatory Online Training



Due for Mandatory Training?

Courses are launched in VCHRP, on or off the County network. Upon completion, certificates will generate automatically in VCHRP and your VCHRP training records will be updated automatically within 24 hours.

New Course Available "Thanks for the Feedback"

Training and Development is delighted to announce a new course offering - *Thanks for the Feedback* (VC0721). Learn the skills for receiving feedback to fuel insight and professional growth. Each session will provide you with the skill sets and techniques to help you manage yourself, lead a team, and navigate a working relationship. Feedback plays a crucial role in developing talent, improving morale, aligning teams, solving programs, and boosting the bottom line.



To enroll, log into [VCHRP](#) and access Employee Self-Service>Training>Request Training Enrollment.

This is a **three-day**, virtual live training. You must commit to all three dates to register.
Thursdays - June 3rd, 10th, and 17th - 9:00-10:30 am

The course access link will be sent to you within 24 hours of the class start date.

Calling All Managers/Supervisors!

Managers and supervisors can now approve training requests for direct reports in VCHRP.

Once a direct report employee requests training, a link to VCHRP will be sent to the immediate supervisor to approve or deny the request.

Training requests can also be approved by accessing the VCHRP Manager Self-Service


**County of Ventura
Learning & Organizational Development**
SUPERVISORS/MANAGERS
APPROVE TRAINING REQUESTS
FOR DIRECT REPORTS

Supervisors/Managers can now approve training requests for their direct reports.

Once a direct report requests training, supervisors will receive an email alert.

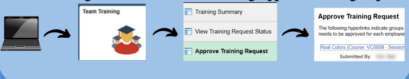
There are two options to approve/deny the request.

Option 1: Access the embedded link from the email to log into the VCHRP and access the "approve training request" page to approve/deny the request.



Option 2: Log into VCHRP using the following to approve/deny the request

VCHRP/Manager Self-Service/Team Training/Approve Training Request



How to approve/deny training requests for direct reports!

For more information, see our [Flyer!](#)

Recommended LinkedIn Learning Course

Difficult Conversations about Politics at Work

Challenging political discussions can impact team cohesion within an organization. When emotions are running high, people struggle to balance their desire to express themselves with the desire to maintain functional relationships. What should they say? How should they say it?



In this **audio-only course**, you learn steps to take to structure and navigate political conversations in the workplace and strategies for managing emotional conversations about politics, including how to mobilize curiosity and lean into joint problem-solving.

Want to read up on this topic? Take a look at the [LinkedIn Learning blog](#).

Risk Management - Test Your COVID-19 Knowledge!



Knowledge is power and helps us to make sound decisions. Take a moment to check your COVID-19 knowledge. Be prepared to learn something new!

[How Does COVID-19 Spread?](#)

[What are the Symptoms of COVID-19?](#)

[How Do You Select, Clean, and Wear a Mask?](#)

[What is Social Distancing?](#)

[Why is Hand Washing Important?](#)



Where can I test, at no cost, if I am symptomatic or have been exposed?

Where do I sign-up for local COVID-19 updates?

Communication is key! Do your part to slow the spread by reporting COVID-19 symptoms, exposures, and hazards to your Sr. Manager or Designee, without fear of reprisal. We must work together to ensure our workplace is safe from the coronavirus!

Deferred Compensation - Your Workplace Savings



2021 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 that you can contribute annually. This limit is for employee contributions only and does not include employer matching contributions.

For 2021, the IRS has announced that the limits will NOT be changing and are reflected in the table below.

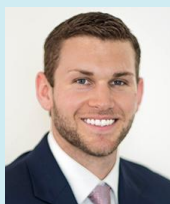
To change your contributions, call Fidelity at 800/ 343-0860 or log on to [Fidelity NetBenefits](#).

Remember, there is a waiting period for making changes to your 457 contributions.

Contact the [Deferred Compensation Program](#) by email or by phone at 805- 654-2620 for more information.



2021 Maximum Annual Deferral	401(k) Shared Savings Plan	Section 457 Plan
Under Age 50	\$19,500	\$19,500
Age 50 and Over Special Catch-up (If you're at least 50 or will turn 50 in 2020)	\$26,000	\$26,000
Section 457 Plan Special Catch-up (You must have prior years of unused deferrals and meet certain age and service requirements.)		\$39,000



Still Here For You

Our dedicated Retirement Planner, Andrew Kremer, CFP, is available to conduct appointments, answer your financial questions, and address your concerns virtually or by e-mail.

If you would like to connect with Andrew, you can schedule an appointment via [Fidelity's online scheduling system](#). You can also e-mail him directly at Andrew.kremer@fmr.com to set up a time that is convenient for you.

Beginning in 2021, Andrew will launch a series of "Ask Fidelity" sessions. You will be able to join him weekly for a brief presentation and to get answers your questions on a variety of topics including:

- Navigating the recent market volatility
- How to manage your plan online
- Saving and budgeting tips in the current conditions
- Preparing for retirement or making the most of Social Security and Medicare.

Watch your e-mail for session topics and dates.

53% of people don't have a named beneficiary

What happens to your savings if something happens to you? Make sure you get to decide.

Declare your beneficiary today.

Fidelity analysis of 17,258 active plan participants with a balance as of 09/30/20. Fidelity Strategic Services LLC, Member NYSE, SIPC, 900 Salem Street, Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10017. © 2020 Fidelity LLC. All rights reserved. 022020-1.0

Take Care of the People Who Matter Most

How long has it been since you have thought about your beneficiaries? With the online beneficiary service, available through [Fidelity NetBenefits](#), managing your beneficiaries is a straightforward, convenient process that takes just minutes.

To use this service, logon to [NetBenefits](#) and select "Beneficiaries" in the "Your Profile" section. If you have both a 401(k) and a 457 Plan account, you will need to designate beneficiaries for each Plan. Take the time to make sure your wishes are followed in the event of your death and designate your beneficiaries online today.

Increase Your Savings . . . Automatically!

The Annual Increase Program allows you to establish regular annual increases to your contribution amounts so you don't need to remember to increase your contributions annually, it will be done for you automatically!

Log in to your account on [NetBenefits](#), select the plan (401(k) and/or 457), contribution amount, and Annual Increase Program. Elect an increase date and percentage of 1% -10%. Now every year, your contribution automatically increases on the date you selected. It doesn't get any easier than that!



Your Input is Needed!

As the record keeper of our deferred compensation plans, Fidelity provides Financial Wellness content and resources to help you better manage your money. In order to better serve you, Fidelity

Examples of Fidelity Financial Resources include:

- Identity protection

is expanding these resources to include services provided by 3rd Party Vendors.

The Deferred Compensation Committee is considering allowing these services to be offered through our plans. The Committee would like your input! You can indicate your interest level in these resources by completing the very brief [Financial Wellness Services Survey](#) by the end of January.

Please note that even if the County decides to add additional Financial Wellness resources, you are under no obligation to use them. Also, if a service has a charge associated with it, you will only be charged for the service(s) you utilize.

The survey only consists of **two questions** because your time is valued. Your input is appreciated! Thank you!

- Student debt refinancing
- Credit counseling
- Debt management services
- Estate planning

The financial resources are offered through third parties, such as:

- Credible
- Money Management International
- ID Notify (part of Experian)
- Legal Zoom

VC-WELL (Wellness Program)

Million Step Marches

From January – August 2020, 631 County employees successfully completed the Million Step March! These ambitious employees logged one million steps and 272 employees accumulated more than two million steps! VC-WELL is again challenging employees to complete either the Million Step March or the Two Million Step March in 2021! Are you up to the challenge? Employees completing each challenge will earn BIG POINTS toward their WELLthy Reward\$ total! Visit [WELLthy Reward\\$](#) for details, or to create a WELLtrek account.



VC-WELL
DIGEST

Monthly Digests

Each month, VC-WELL highlights current and upcoming programs and activities with a county-wide email digest. The best way to stay current on VC-WELL programs and WELLthy Reward\$ points activities is to check out the digest at the beginning of each month!



Resolution Weight Challenge

In 2020, nearly 250 employees completed the Resolution Weight Challenge!

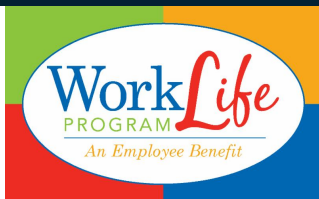
No matter if your New Year's resolution weight goal is to lose, gain, or maintain your weight, this challenge is for you! Employees who complete the challenge will earn 20 points toward their 2021 WELLthy Reward\$ point total. Keep an eye out for the all-County email in January for details or visit [WELLtrek](#) to log-in or create an account.



VC-WELL Is Virtual!

To provide greater access to our workforce, the majority of VC-WELL programs and activities are now virtual! In addition to our WELLtrek virtual physical activity tracking platform, we have added live online meditation sessions, Zumba & Yoga video sessions, and virtual health coaching sessions. In 2021, we look forward to debuting more new programs through third-party vendor

Keeping Your Balance with WorkLife



The WorkLife Program provides resources to help you care for the most important people in your life!

Visit the [WorkLife webpage](#) to access resources on child care discounts, positive parenting, lactation accommodation, elder care support group, housing benefits, and new baby resources.

County of Ventura • CEO Human Resources • WorkLife Program

Child Care/Preschool Discount Program



August 1, 2020
to
July 31, 2021

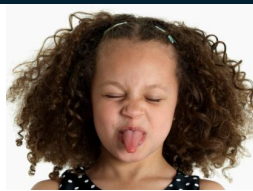
For County of Ventura
Employees



800 South Victoria Avenue • Ventura, CA 93009 • (805) 477-7234

Child Care/Preschool Discount List

Over 70 licensed child care/preschool programs in Ventura County offer discounts to County employees. Click above on the list cover to view.



Get kids to LISTEN
without
Nagging, Reminding, or
YELLING.

You knew parenting wouldn't be easy, but no one told you it would be like this! If you are tired of the exhausting power struggles, the meltdowns, the fights and the guilt, now is the time to make a change! Learn how to break the cycle and be the parent you have always wanted to be!

Watch a [free 60-minute webinar](#), exclusive for County employees, that gives you some tools to reduce the yelling and nagging. You will discover an exciting benefit (available to regular County employees) that will help you feel more confident and successful as a parent.



Elder Care Support Group

Caring for an elderly or sick relative can be stressful, whether your loved one lives with you, is across town, or out-of-state. It is important for caregivers to nourish their spirit, and take care of their physical and mental health. Join us for support and resources at the [Elder Care Support Group](#) on the last Wednesday of each month (January-October).

January 27, February 24, March 31

Noon - 1:00 pm

Support Group meeting will take place by Zoom.

Email the [WorkLife Program](#) to request a Zoom reservation. A limited number of reservations are available.



Thinking about Buying a Home?

**Coastal Housing Partnership
Can Help Get You Started!**

Your Path to Home Ownership!

Don't let lack of information about the home buying process be an obstacle to home ownership. Attend one of our monthly 60-minute webinars to get you started on your path to home ownership! You'll learn about:

- Becoming a more informed buyer
- Navigating the home buying and lending process
- Buying a home with less than a 20% down payment
- Selecting members of your home buying team
- Saving money on your closing costs

These webinars are free for employees of Coastal Housing Partnership member employers.
Webinar dates for the remainder of 2020 are:

- **January 14 Noon-1:00 pm**
- **February 9 6:00-7:00 pm**

Click [HERE](#) to register for an upcoming webinar.

If you can't attend one of the webinars, you are encouraged to view our **Step-by-Step Home Buying Education** to get the information you need to take your next step toward home ownership.

The Coastal Housing Partnership's online home buying education tools are designed to take the confusion out of the process for you – and help you take it one step at a time.

Visit our Website