

**MOTION 2019-15:  
A MOTION OF THE PORT OF SEATTLE COMMISSION**

directing the Executive Director to develop and implement an Infants at Work pilot program as an additional benefit for eligible Port of Seattle employees and their infants and providing deadlines for implementation.

**ADOPTED  
DECEMBER 10, 2019**

**INTRODUCTION**

Infants at Work programs provide new parents or legal guardians an opportunity to bring their infants to the workplace for a limited period of time. The program is intended to help new parents increase bonding time with their infant, maintain continuity at work, and create financial stability by reducing childcare costs. This motion creates an pilot program to evaluate the feasibility of a permanent program at the Port of Seattle.

The Port of Seattle is committed to offering a comprehensive “Total Rewards” benefits package for employees to help meet a range of needs at different points in their lives. These benefits enhance the Port’s reputation as an employer of choice and enable the Port to recruit and retain a diverse and talented workforce with the skills and abilities to help the Port achieve its mission. Accommodating infants at work, within the workspace of the parent or legal guardian, provides a competitive and rewarding option for new families returning to work and a cost-saving alternative to child care.

**TEXT OF THE MOTION**

The Commission hereby directs the Executive Director or a delegate as follows:

- (1) Within 120 days, develop a plan to implement an Infants at Work pilot program to include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - a. Analysis of coordination with the port’s paid parental leave and telecommuting policies
  - b. Analysis of alignment with port’s Equity Tool Kit
  - c. Conduct outreach to all port employees to provide perspectives
  - d. A timeline for the pilot program, including the duration, beginning and end dates, and the scope of employee groups to participate
  - e. A description of program eligibility requirements

- f. A description of any workplace environment considerations
- (2) Within 270 days, implement an Infants at Work pilot program to include, but not be limited to, the following:
- a. Infant at work program participant agreement
  - b. Waiver of liability
  - c. Safety and facilities guidelines
  - d. Policies and procedures for when an infant is disruptive
- (3) Within one year from the exit of the fourth infant in the Infants at Work pilot program, provide a summary report to the commission regarding the pilot program that includes the following:
- a. Employee utilization rate
  - b. Alignment with existing benefits programs
  - c. Participant and non-participant employee feedback
  - d. Budgetary impact assessment
  - e. Recommendations for sustaining or revising the program

#### **STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE MOTION**

Infants at Work programs have become an increasingly popular benefit offered by U.S. employers since the 2008 recession. They gained statewide interest in 2015 when the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) implemented its own program. Other agencies followed suit, including King County and the City of Seattle, which passed a resolution supporting the development of a pilot program in September 2019.

The benefits of infants at work have been well documented and supported by human resource and medical professionals, the Surgeon General, the U.S. Department of Health, and the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, who have had their own Infants at Work program since 1997.

The King County Women’s Advisory Board 2018 report, “Supporting King County’s Women, Families and Employers: Improving Child Care Access and Affordability Throughout King County,” states that King County is one of the least affordable places to live and to secure affordable infant child care in the United States. The report further states that in addition to improving employee morale and family health, infant at work programs have been shown to boost families’ economic mobility by diminishing the wage gap and inequity in the workplace by allowing parents to work while caring for their new child.

The Parenting in the Workplace Institute (PIWI) reports increased retention/lower turnover costs, higher morale and productivity, and increased employee recruitment as some of the benefits described by participating organizations. Examples of benefits to families include increased bonding, easier breastfeeding, and lower day care costs. They also report that more

than 2,100 infants in more than 200 organizations have been successfully brought to work in office-based, cubicle-based, and open-plan environments.

PIWI has been a key resource used by Washington State and King County, as well as many other agencies across the country. They have provided guidance on best practices and guidelines for businesses (including nonprofit and government agencies) and parents interested in supporting infants at work since 2007.

The Port of Seattle values its employees and their contributions to achieving the goals of the organization. The development and implementation of an Infants at Work program aligns with the port's Total Reward philosophy for a healthy work-life balance, innovation, and creative problem solving.