
MENDOCINO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

THOMAS D. ALLMAN, Sheriff-Coroner

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 11-20-2019

TO: Area Commanders

FROM: Captain Gregory L. Van Patten #1184

SUBJECT: *Scheduled Overtime Work Hours Oversight – UPDATE #1*

It has recently come to my attention that Field Services personnel, from time to time, have been working overtime shifts (volunteer work assignments) on the same day they are assigned to work their normally scheduled shift.

These volunteer work assignments could include overtime shift slots in Court Security, Transportation, Dispatch, Lake Patrol, COMMET, BLM contract, Forest Service Contract or approved outside employment.

Personnel working these overtime shifts in combination with their normally scheduled work shift are at times working 16 to 20 hour work days (working overtime hours prior to normal shift or working overtime hours just after normal shift).

These extremely long shifts increase the probability of employee injury (especially in operating a motor vehicle), lack of attention to detail and the probability of an inability to work an extended shift should issues arise towards the end of one's shift (i.e. calls for service). In addition, personnel working overtime shifts on their day(s) off leave less available personnel to work a shift or respond to a call out when a need for additional personnel are required for the safe operation of a shift.

Effective immediately, personnel volunteering to work an overtime work assignment (such as described previously in this memorandum) will be required to notify a supervisor from their assigned area (their normally scheduled shift supervisor if all possible) that they will be working the assignment. This allows for the supervisor to take note of the availability of the employee should a scheduling situation arise.

Once an employee has worked a total of 14 hours, that employee is required to contact a supervisor who will assess the employee's suitability to work beyond that time period.

The supervisor should question the employee, as follows at a minimum, to obtain information prior to rendering a decision:

1. How many days and hours the employee has worked during the preceding 7 days.
2. What is the amount of sleep or rest the employee has had during the preceding 7 days. A general rule of an 8 hours rest between work shifts should be taken into consideration.
3. Is there any report writing requirements that need to be completed at this specific time (such as an in-custody report).
4. What is the travel time the employee will have in driving home after the completion of the work assignment.
5. Does the employee note any signs/symptoms of fatigue.
6. The specific tasks the employee will be performing if allowed to work past 14 hours (such as driving, operating a vessel, supervising inmates, etc.).

If the supervisor believes the employee is suitable to work beyond 14 hours after conducting an assessment then the employee can be authorized to do so for an additional 2 hours. After conducting another assessment the supervisor will contact and brief an Area Commander (their specific Area Commander if possible) of the information of both assessments. The Area Commander will either authorize or prohibit the employee from working beyond the 16 hour period.

Please note the purpose of this memorandum is not to prevent personnel from working overtime shifts or approved outside employment.

The purpose here is to prevent personnel from working long hours that create unsafe working conditions and to allow supervisors to have the knowledge of the availability of personnel when additional personnel needs are required. This procedure will also help to ensure supervisors are engaging in active supervision.

If you have any questions or comments about this memorandum then please contact me as needed.