

EXTENDING PROBATIONARY PERIODS: INFORMATION SHEET

- When you have a probationary employee who is having any type of “problems” on the job which you think are correctable, keep in mind that you have the option to extend their probationary period. However, this should be a rare occurrence. Four months should generally be ample time for a new employee to demonstrate the ability to do most jobs here at MCO. If the employee hasn’t done so, it is doubtful that they will be able to do so with additional time.
- Review Policy 26 of the AFSCME contract. The probationary period begins on the date of hire and ends on the 120th calendar day. Don’t wait until the last minute!
- This form and option was generated for those employees who you feel could truly change, who really need additional time to prove it to you. Recruitment and retention costs money, as we all know. Think very hard as to whether or not it is worth the additional time and cost INVESTMENT in this person, or, would the money be better spent in recruiting someone else. This is a tough decision, but one that is your job to make wisely.
- Also understand that the first 6 months is supposed to be their BEST in terms of work performance, attitude, attendance, etc.! It is rare that employees will truly change their behavior for the long term. The ones who do are those that had very unusual circumstances for them occur during their first 6 months on the job. Just think....how well do you attempt to do within your first six months of employment here at MCO?
- You may extend the probationary period. I would recommend that you request an additional 3 – 4 months (i.e., 90 – 120 days) and I can attempt to negotiate that with the union. An additional 30 – 60 days flies by, and anyone can be “good” for that short of a time.
- Human Resources DOES expect that if you do extend someone’s probation that you develop a written action plan with the employee which identifies the key issues, the resources available to the them, follow up commitments by management AND the employee, and consequences if they fail to improve. Action planning information is available from the Administrative Director of Labor Relations and I can assist you and the employee to plan for their development.
- Also note that when you extend someone’s probation, it does NOT affect other benefits that they may otherwise be eligible for.

***Please note:* For employees represented by AFSCME, the probationary period can only be extended if the employee, you, AND the Union Representative agree to it in writing. Thus, be sure to have a meeting with those parties present to discuss and gain agreement. **THE MEETING MUST BE HELD PRIOR TO THE END OF THE PROBATIONARY PERIOD.** You cannot extend probation **AFTER** the 120 calendar days.**