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WTD SEIU 925 LMC regarding an Operator in Training Pilot Program

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The Wastewater Treatment Division and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Local 925 recognizes the need for recruiting diverse candidates for the Wastewater Operator classification. It is recognized that the Wastewater Treatment Division has critical staffing needs for experienced and technically proficient Wastewater Treatment Operators.

In an effort to prepare for succession planning and to share the knowledge held by long term employees, an Operator in Training Pilot Program has been established. The anticipated benefits for this pilot program will expand workforce diversity, candidate pool and opportunities for current staff while maintaining a limit of Full Time Employees (FTE's).

Additional benefits to WTD would include savings in recruiting and selection process for future operator positions and reductions in time to fill positions.

King County Wastewater Treatment Division will implement the current contract language as follows as it relates to the pilot training program, for new temporary employees and existing employees wishing to avail themselves of the training opportunities.

1. Management will establish positions for short-term temporary (STT) Utility Workers which will be represented by SEIU, Local 925.
  - a. These short term temporary employees will be limited to 6-months of full-time employment (1040 hours), as such they will not be eligible to receive benefits, they will not be members of the King County Career Service, and will be considered as hired in "at will" status.
2. Management will recruit candidates, focusing on diversity, non-traditional candidates and veterans to meet Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) goals.
  - a. Recruitment and selection will include demonstration of aptitude and interest in Wastewater treatment operations career, including the ability to work shift schedule, and at any WTD location. A shift or location change will be subject to two week's advanced notification. All attempts will be made to identify location assignments with as much advanced notice as possible.
  - b. Current career service employees represented by SEIU 925 who express an interest and aptitude for the operator in training classification will be given an opportunity to apply for a special duty assignment. Internal candidates placed in the pilot program would be subject to the same requirements to work any shift at any WTD location for the duration of the assignment. Three special duty assignments will be available to fill with internal candidates.
3. The Pilot project STT Utility worker I will be hired at range 37, step 2 (entry)
  - a. The STT Utility Worker may be released at any time during the pilot program. The STT employees may not grieve or appeal discharge or discipline under the collective bargaining agreement.
  - b. Career service employees assigned to special duty in the OIT Training Pilot Program will be compensated consistent with Article 8.6 of the collective bargaining agreement. A special duty assignment in the OIT Training Pilot Program may be revoked at any time at the discretion of the Section Manager, and employees may not grieve or appeal the decision to return them to their regular position.
4. These Pilot project STT Utility Workers will be given assignments, basic training, on the job training and access to study materials in order to assist them to qualify for WA Department of Ecology (DOE) certification as operator-in-training (OIT), which the Pilot Program Utility Worker will be required to secure within 6 months of hire.

**ATTACHMENT 1**

5. If the Pilot Program Utility Worker is unable to obtain certification within 6 months, the Pilot Program Utility worker will be released with no rights to the appeal or grievance process. A regular employee participating in the program will be returned to his/her regular classification.
6. If the Pilot Program employee does obtain the DOE OIT certification, the employee will be directly hired to a term-limited temporary Operator In Training (OIT) position and assigned to a shift crew at any location (East, West, BW, Offsite etc),
  - a. The TLT OIT employee may be moved to any shift or location for the duration of the TLT assignment. A shift or location change will be subject to two week's advanced notification. All attempts will be made to identify location assignments with as much advanced notice as possible.
  - b. The TLT OIT may be released at any time during the pilot program. TLT employees may not grieve or appeal discharge or discipline under the collective bargaining agreement.
  - c. A regular employee in a Pilot OIT training assignment may be moved to any shift or location for the duration of the TLT assignment. A special duty assignment in the OIT Training Pilot Program may be revoked at any time at the discretion of the Section Manager, and employees may not grieve or appeal the decision to return them to their regular position.
  - d. A TLT OIT will not be used to backfill any Career Service position.
7. Wage placement upon transition to TLT OIT will be range 38, step 6 which is the entry level salary.
8. The TLT for the OIT will be established for two years during which time the OIT is expected to obtain WA DOE Operator Group I certification.
  - a. If the TLT OIT employee cannot obtain group 1 certification within 2 years, the OIT will be released, or the regular employee will be returned to his/her regular classification and work assignment.
9. Subsequent to the attainment of the Group I license, the TLT OIT will be encouraged and eligible to apply for any Operator vacancy within the division. Protocol for consideration will be:
  - Contract language regarding seniority for transfer placement
  - Internal competitive, including TLT OITs
  - Reassignment and/or review and placement
  - Application and placement in other positions and classifications will be pursuant to contract language
10. A TLT OIT who has not had the opportunity to be placed in a career service operator position, may at management's discretion have the term of the TLT assignment extended in six month increments up to one additional year (three years total).
  - a. TLT OIT will receive annual performance feedback and be eligible for discretionary step increase on his/her anniversary date.
  - b. A regular employee acting in an OIT position may not be extended beyond two years.
11. A TLT OIT who does not obtain career service employment at the end of the OIT term will be released.
  - a. A TLT OIT may be released at any time during the pilot program. TLT employees may not grieve or appeal discharge or discipline under the collective bargaining agreement.