**AGENDA**
**BUDGET & PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING**
**4808 Elizabeth Street**
**Texarkana, Texas 75503**
**June 24, 2026; 1:00 PM**

**Webinar/Conference Call Meeting**

**Use the following link to join the meeting:**
*https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/5VBkVYlMROWR8zWa9Kmj3A*

*If you experience issues joining the meeting or do not have access to a computer, please contact Marla Matthews at least two (2) workdays prior to the meeting at 903.255.3555 or mmatthews@atcog.org.*

1. Call to Order.
2. Review and consider approval of minutes dated August 25, 2025. (See page 2)
3. Review and consider recommendation of the annual approval of the Investment Policy that establishes procedures to be followed in investing funds for the Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG). (See page 5; to be presented by Executive Director Mary Beth Rudel)
4. Review and consider recommendation of revision to the Accounting Policy and Procedures Manual that establishes procedures to be followed in the Finance Department for the Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG). (See page 9; to be presented by staff member Laura Cowling)
5. Review and consider recommendation of the proposed Salary Schedule for ATCOG for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2027. (See page 14; to be presented by Executive Director Mary Beth Rudel)
6. Review and consider recommendation authorizing the Executive Director to sign the Rerate and Benefit Verification Form with Texas Health Benefits Pool (TxHB) to continue to provide health, dental, and life insurance benefits to staff for Plan Year 2026-2027. (See page 16; to be presented by staff member Amber Murr)
7. Review and consider the recommendation of revision to the Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG) Policies and Procedures Manual. (See page 21; to be presented by Deputy Director Leslie McBride)
8. Adjourn

*Pursuant to the Texas Open Meeting Act, Government Code Chapter 551, one or more of the above items may be considered in an executive session closed to the public, including but not limited to consultation with an attorney pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 and Section 551.074 arising out of the attorney's ethical duty to advise ATCOG concerning legal issues arising from an agenda item. Any decision held on such a matter will be taken or conducted in an open session following the conclusion of the executive session. Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need auxiliary aids or services are requested to contact the Administration at 903-832-8636, two (2) workdays prior to the meeting, so that appropriate arrangements can be made.*

*All agendas are sent electronically and are available on the ATCOG website at www.atcog.org. Should any Board Member need a copy printed and available at the meeting, please call 903.255.3555 or email mmatthews@atcog.org.*

**MINUTES**
**BUDGET/PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**
**ARK-TEX COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS**
**August 25, 2025, 3:00 p.m.**

The Budget/Personnel Committee of the Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG) met via videoconference at 3:00 p.m. on Monday, August 25, 2025.

Item 1. Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County, called the meeting to order.

Item 2. The next order of business was to approve the Budget/Personnel Committee meeting minutes held on June 23, 2025.

Motion to approve was made by Doug Reeder, Judge, Morris County, and seconded by Scott Norton, Executive Director/CEO, TexAmericas Center. It was approved.

Item 3. Mary Beth Rudel, Executive Director, presented for review and consideration the recommendation of ATCOG's Financial Plan for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2026, to be adopted by the ATCOG Board of Directors.

Ms. Rudel stated the Plan reflects anticipated revenues and expenditures of $27,646,541. This document combines a Work Program and a Financial Plan. It is not technically a budget because ATCOG does not have taxing or oversight authority. Within each State or Federal grant that ATCOG administers, the funding agency regulates the categories in which we are allowed to spend funds. The funding source has complete oversight of the individual grant programs.

Ms. Rudel stated that each program area, specific project-by-project tasks, and performance measures are delineated for the year. Each project is assigned an objective, work tasks, performance measures, and human resource requirements.

There are 14 Managed Programs with over 60 Projects/Contracts that make up the revenue sources in the FY 2026 Ark-Tex Council of Governments Strategic Work Program and Financial Plan.

Ms. Rudel stated that this Plan does include various merit step increases for staff. Funding is provided for the Salary Schedule effective October 1, 2025. This Plan includes a COLA for all staff. The total COLA increases for the past 10 years add up to 27.20%, while the SSI COLA increased by a total of 28.3% prior to FY2026.

ATCOG has 80 full-time and 15 part-time personnel, for a total of 84.22 FTEs.

Ms. Rudel stated that ATCOG's healthcare provider continues to be the Texas Health Benefits (TXHB). Premiums for our basic medical plan remained the same this year. ATCOG's defined contribution amount is $946.54 per month for each employee's basic medical coverage, which is 100% of the employee's premium. Employees have the option to "buy up" to a medical plan with a lower deductible and/or out-of-pocket costs and to make extra contributions to their HSA. Additional premium costs over the defined employer contribution of $946.54 per month will be paid by the employee. Employee dental insurance premiums remain $30.72 per employee per month. Rates for life, accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D) did not change.

Ms. Rudel stated that ATCOG's current retirement plan is under TCDRS. We are currently at a 200% employer-to-employee match with an employee contribution rate of 4%.

The Benefit rate is estimated to be 52.8%, which includes utilizing the FY24 overallocation.

Per Texas Health and Human Services (HHS), ATCOG's State Cognizant Agency, which reviews/approves the indirect rate each year, ATCOG will utilize the fixed with carry-forward calculation based on prior year audit figures. The indirect rate is applied to salaries and benefits, and the approved rate is 20.8%.

Ms. Rudel stated it was reported last year that ATCOG program revenues would trend back down due to the previous utilization of CARES and ARPA funding. Revenues and Expenses may continue to see some adjustments as the timing of funding and other factors are considered.

Ms. Rudel added that current estimates would utilize about $31,574 of ATCOG Unrestricted Funds for Transportation and Aging match and other needs to support ATCOG programs and personnel. The FY24 Audit reflects an unrestricted balance of $3,447,570, which decreased from the FY23 audit amount of $4,740,183. This is due to the required match for Transportation.

- Housing, Environmental, Criminal Justice, and Regional Development revenues are increasing.
- Transportation will see a significant decrease, which will result in a reduction in services across the region. A reduction in force was implemented prior to the start of the fiscal year.
- Aging, 9-1-1, Economic Development, and Special Projects experienced decreases.

Ms. Rudel asked if the committee had any questions, concerns, or suggestions. Judge Howell requested that the Financial Plan be provided further in advance. Scott Norton recommended correcting the total budget amount in the Budget Revenue Comparison report. In response, Ms. Rudel stated that she would include the indirect rate in the Financial Highlights, update the Budget Revenue report formula to reflect the correct total budget amount, and, in the future, ensure the Financial Plan is delivered to the committee promptly for thorough review.

Once the Budget/Personnel Committee approves the FY2026 Financial Plan, including the proposed changes, it will be sent to the Board of Directors for their review before the board meeting on Thursday, August 28.

A motion to recommend the approval of ATCOG's Financial Plan for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2026, including the proposed changes, to be adopted by the ATCOG Board of Directors, was made by Judge Reeder and seconded by Robert Newsom, Judge, Hopkins County. The motion was approved.

Item 4. With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Judge Newsom and seconded by Judge Reeder. It was approved. Meeting adjourned.

BUDGET/PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT
Bobby Howell, Judge, Bowie County
Doug Reeder, Judge, Morris County
Robert Newsom, Judge, Hopkins County
Scott Norton, Executive Director/CEO, TexAmericas Center

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT
Mary Beth Rudel, Executive Director
Leslie McBride, Deputy Director
Laura Cowling, Finance Director
Amber Murr, Human Resources Director
Marla Matthews, Executive Assistant

______________________________
Scott Norton, Vice President
Board of Directors
Ark-Tex Council of Governments

ATTEST:

______________________________
Signature/Date

## BRIEFING PAPER

### ITEM 3:

Review and consider the annual approval of the Investment Policy that establishes procedures to be followed in investing funds for the Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG).

### BACKGROUND:

ATCOG normally operates on a reimbursable basis, whereby we receive approval for grant funds, provide services, and then are reimbursed our money from the grant. In the event ATCOG receives funds in advance, the Investment Policy stipulates how the funds are invested.

This Investment Policy was amended in April 2014, designating the ATCOG Finance Director as the ATCOG Investment Officer. This is the only amendment to the original document approved in December 2002. That title was changed to Finance Director in 2024.

### DISCUSSION:

The Public Funds Investment Act requires that the ATCOG Board of Directors review and approve the Investment Policy annually. This is an opportunity for the Board to make any necessary changes. The Policy is and will remain a part of the Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual.

### RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval.

**Ark-Tex Council of Governments**

**Investment Policy**

Purpose: The purpose of the policy is to establish the procedures to be followed in investing Ark-Tex Council of Governments funds.

## 1.0. Policy

It is the policy of the Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG) to invest public funds in a manner which will provide the highest investment return with the maximum security while meeting ATCOG's daily cash flow demands and conforming to all federal, state and local statutes governing the investment of public funds.

## 2.0. Prudence

Investments shall be made with judgment and care, under circumstances then prevailing, which persons of prudence, discretion and intelligence exercise in the management of their own affairs, not for speculation, but for investment, considering the probable safety of capital as well as the probable income to be derived. The strategy of the pool is to assure cash flows are matched with adequate liquidity.

## 3.0. Objective and Strategy

The primary objectives, in priority order, of ATCOG's investment activities shall be:

(a) Safety: Safety of principal is the foremost objective of the investment program. Investments of the ATCOG shall be undertaken in a manner that seeks to ensure the preservation of capital.

(b) Liquidity: The ATCOG's investments will remain sufficiently liquid to enable the ATCOG to meet all operating requirements which might be reasonably anticipated.

(c) Yield: ATCOG's investments will be limited to relatively low risk securities in anticipation of earning a fair return relative to the risk being assumed.

## 4.0. Delegation of Authority

The ATCOG's Finance Director is hereby designated as the ATCOG's Investment Officer. The Investment Officer shall be responsible for the implementation of this policy. The Investment Officer shall attend at least one training session within twelve months of assuming duties. The Investment Officer is granted the authority to deposit, withdraw, invest and manage the program.

## 5.0. Ethics and Conflicts of Interest

Officers and employees involved in the investment process shall refrain from personal business activity that could conflict with proper execution of the investment program or which could impair their ability to make impartial investment decisions. The Investment Officer shall disclose to the Texas Ethics Commission and the ATCOG's Board of Directors any personal business relationship or material financial interests with anyone attempting to sell an investment to the ATCOG.

## 6.0. Authorized and Suitable Investments

The Investment Officer may invest in:

(a) Interest Bearing Checking Accounts at ATCOG's designated depository bank;
(b) Eligible Investment Pools; or
(c) Such other investments as the governing body may authorize that are in accordance with federal and state laws and local statutes.

## 7.0 Maximum Maturities

To the extent possible, the ATCOG will attempt to match its investments with anticipated cash flow requirements. Unless matched to a specific cash flow, the ATCOG will not directly invest in securities maturing more than one year from date of purchase. The dollar weighted average maturity for the investment pool fund group will not exceed 180 days.

## 8.0. Internal Control

The Investment Officer shall establish an annual process of independent review by an external auditor. The review will provide internal control by assuring compliance with policies and procedures.

## 9.0 Investment Policy Adoption

This policy shall be adopted by the ATCOG's Board of Directors and shall be reviewed as needed by the Board. Any modifications made thereto must be approved by the ATCOG Board of Directors.

Scott Norton, Vice President
Board of Directors
Ark-Tex Council of Governments

ATTEST:

# BRIEFING PAPER

**ITEM 4:**

Review and consider approval of revision to the Accounting Policy and Procedures Manual that establishes procedures to be followed in the Finance Department for the Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG).

**BACKGROUND:**

The ATCOG Accounting Policy and Procedures Manual was first revised by the Board in February 2001 and updated in October 2001, April 2006, September 2008, April 2014, June 2021, and June 2024.

**DISCUSSION:**

The following administrative updates are needed to reflect current practices and improve operational efficiency. The proposed revisions include:

> **Separation of Duties: Journal Vouchers** – Updating the journal voucher approval authority to the Finance Director or designated staff.
>
> **Bank Reconciliation –** Revising bank reconciliation responsibilities from the Payroll Specialist to the Accounting Coordinator.
>
> **Travel: Travel Vouchers** – Establishing a three-day deadline for submission of finalized overnight travel paperwork.

These changes are administrative in nature and are intended to align the policy with current organizational procedures.

ATCOG policy requires that the ATCOG Board review and approve any policy and procedure changes. The Accounting Policy and Procedures Manual is attached for review.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval.

# SEPARATION OF DUTIES

CASH RECEIPTS

1. The Receptionist receives all cash and checks through the mail, or by in person drop off
2. Accounting Specialist processes items to be deposited, either with remote deposit or preparing a deposit to be taken to the bank.
3. Receptionist banks deposits not made remotely.
4. Finance Director or designated Finance staff codes the deposits
5. Accounting Clerk or Specialist enters the coded deposits into the system

CASH DISBURSEMENTS

1. Invoices, Requisitions, and Requests for Purchase Orders are entered into Microix by a designated staff member in each department. Monthly invoices are entered by the Accounting Clerk. Each department has Workflows specific to their department, ensuring the documents are routed correctly.
2. After the documents have been coded and approved by the appropriate staff, they are routed to the Finance Director for approval. Then they are sent to the Accounting Clerk who reviews and processes them into MIP, either as an API ready to be paid, or as an encumbrance, waiting for an invoice.
3. The Executive Assistant provides the blank checks after recording beginning and ending numbers
4. The Accounting Clerk prints the checks and prepares the EFT file for Direct Deposit
5. The Accounting Clerk takes the checks and EFT vouchers with the backup documentation to the Executive Director for signature
6. The Deputy Director or Compliance/Purchasing Officer signs the checks and initials the EFT vouchers in the absence of the ED
7. The checks and vouchers are returned to the Accounting Clerk who then prepares the checks for mailing and creates an EFT file to be sent to the bank
8. The EFT file is reviewed by the Finance Director and sent to the bank
9. The bank notifies the appropriate staff that the file is ready to be reviewed and approved. Staff approved the file.
10. The Accounting Clerk mails the checks

PAYROLL

1. The Human Resource Director prepares Personnel Action Notices from Position Requests approved by the Executive Director

2. The Accounting Specialist enters notices into the HR Management software
3. Time entered by employee into the EWS system is reviewed and approved by the Department Head
4. Electronic timesheets are approved by the Executive or Deputy Director
5. The Accounting Specialist reviews timesheets and sends report to Accounting Specialists for coding approval
6. The Accounting Specialist moves the payroll file to the Accounting software to be processed
7. The direct deposit file is created, reviewed, and sent to the bank by the Finance Director
8. Notice is sent by the bank to approving staff to review and approve the file

JOURNAL VOUCHERS

1. The Accounting Specialists or the Accounting Technician prepare Journal Vouchers
2. The Finance Director or designated Finance staff approves the Journal Vouchers
3. The Accounting Clerk or Assistant enters the Journal Voucher into the system

applicable, the allocation of costs in accordance with CAS takes precedence over the allocation provisions of the section.

## BANK RECONCILIATION

The ~~Payroll Specialist~~, Accounting Coordinator, who has no cash handling duties, will be responsible for reconciling the bank accounts to the general ledger monthly.

A reconciliation is prepared as follows:

1. Each entry in the bank statement is compared to the corresponding check register in the bank reconciliation module
2. Compare outstanding checks, deposits in transit, and suspended items
3. Mark items as cleared in the system
4. Print the bank reconciliation reports
5. Attach the reports to the corresponding bank statement
6. Prepare journal vouchers resulting from the reconciliation and submit to the Finance Director for review and approval
7. Forward the completed reconciliation to the Finance Director for review and approval
8. File the bank reconciliation

# TRAVEL

## TRAVEL VOUCHERS

### OVERNIGHT TRAVEL

Travel expenses must be approved before travel date and will be processed through Microix.

1. Approvals with no Advance and/or Direct Bill charges are entered by the department requester as an ENC(REQ) fifteen to thirty days before travel date.
2. Employee Advances are entered by the department requester as an API into Microix two weeks before travel date. Advances are paid directly to the employee.
3. The Travel Form is completed within ~~one week~~ 3 days of the traveler's return with actual charges – direct bill and employee expenses – and routed appropriately for reconciliation.

### DAY TRAVEL

1. A Day Travel Expense Report will be submitted to Finance for payment a minimum of once a month.
2. For personal expenses, the Day Travel Personal Expense Report should be completed and forwarded to the Microix requester
3. For direct bill charges, (Wex, Citibank, or Enterprise) the Day Travel Direct Bill Expense Report should be completed and forwarded to the Microix requester
4. . Each department has a Workflow for Day Travel ensuring that the travel is reviewed, coded, and approved by the appropriate staff
5. After coding and approvals, the Day Travel is routed to the Finance Director for approval and is forwarded to the Accounting Clerk for processing

## BRIEFING PAPER

**ITEM 5:**

Review and consider approval of the proposed Salary Schedule for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2027.

**BACKGROUND:**

The State requires regional planning commissions to submit a salary schedule 45 days prior to the start of the fiscal year to compare salaries of ATCOG employees with salaries in equivalent jobs and must be approved by the Board of Directors. The State will not allow the salaries of ATCOG employees to exceed those of State employees in equivalent positions.

**DISCUSSION:**

ATCOG employees are paid lower or are at the low end of the State salary scale. There are no positions at ATCOG that exceed the pay of State employees in equivalent positions.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval.

| | POSITION | ATCOG GRADE | ATCOG SALARY RANGE | STATE CLASS # | STATE GROUP | STATE SALARY RANGE | DEPARTMENT |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | AAA P/T Evidence Based Technician | 06 | $39,665 - $50,192 | 5142 | B15 | $38,976 - $58,045 | AAA |
| 2 | AAA Case Manager | 08 | $48,102 - $60,869 | 5229 | B18 | $45,521 - $71,055 | AAA |
| 2 | AAA Benefits Counselor | 08 | $48,102 - $60,869 | 5706 | B17 | $42,976 - $64,469 | AAA |
| 2 | Associate Ombudsman | 07 | $43,984 - $55,658 | 3660 | B17 | $42,976 - $64,469 | AAA |
| 1 | Managing Local Ombudsman | 09 | $53,332 - $67,487 | 3662 | B19 | $48,244 - $76,028 | AAA |
| 1 | AAA Program Assistant | 05 | $35,782 - $45,278 | 0154 | A13 | $35,439 - $52,388 | AAA |
| 1 | AAA Director | 12 | $72,709 - $92,007 | 1602 | B24 | $65,104 - $106,634 | AAA |
| 12 | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Housing Inspector | 07 | $43,984 - $55,658 | 1323 | B15 | $38,976 - $58,045 | Housing |
| 1 | Lead Housing Inspector | 08 | $48,102 - $60,869 | 1325 | B19 | $48,244 - $76,028 | Housing |
| 3 | Housing Program Assistant | 05 | $35,782 - $45,278 | 0059 | A11 | $32,332 - $47,355 | Housing |
| 4 | Housing Specialist | 08 | $48,102 - $60,869 | 5229 | B18 | $45,521 - $71,055 | Housing |
| 2 | FSS Coordinator | 10 | $59,139 - $74,835 | 1574 | B21 | $54,278 - $87,046 | Housing |
| 1 | Housing Coordinator | 09 | $53,332 - $67,487 | 5230 | B20 | $51,158 - $81,351 | Housing |
| 1 | Housing Director | 12 | $72,709 - $92,007 | 1602 | B24 | $65,104 - $106,634 | Housing |
| 15 | | | | | | | |
| 14 | TRAX Driver | 02 | $26,245 - $33,210 | 9322 | A09 | $29,781 - $40,859 | Transportation |
| 11 | TRAX Driver - Part Time | 02 | $26,245 - $33,210 | 9322 | A09 | $29,781 - $40,859 | Transportation |
| 2 | Lead TRAX Driver | 05 | $35,782 - $45,278 | 9324 | A13 | $35,439 - $52,388 | Transportation |
| 2 | Fleet Technician | 07 | $43,984 - $55,658 | 9418 | A16 | $40,918 - $61,130 | Transportation |
| 1 | Fleet Supervisor | 08 | $48,102 - $60,869 | 1996 | B18 | $45,521 - $71,055 | Transportation |
| 4 | Dispatcher/Scheduler | 04 | $32,270 - $40,834 | 0059 | A11 | $32,332 - $47,355 | Transportation |
| 1 | Transportation Supervisor | 08 | $48,102 - $60,869 | 1580 | B17 | $42,976 - $64,469 | Transportation |
| 1 | Transportation Coordinator | 09 | $53,332 - $67,487 | 1573 | B20 | $51,158 - $81,351 | Transportation |
| 1 | Transportation Operations Manager | 11 | $65,571 - $82,975 | 1584 | B21 | $54,278 - $87,046 | Transportation |
| 1 | Transportation Director | 12 | $72,709 - $92,007 | 1602 | B24 | $65,104 - $106,634 | Transportation |
| 38 | | | | | | | |
| 1 | 911 GIS Manager | 11 | $65,571 - $82,975 | 0273 | B24 | $65,104 - $106,634 | 9-1-1 |
| 1 | 911 GIS Specialist | 08 | $48,102 - $60,869 | 1570 | B17 | $42,976 - $64,469 | 9-1-1 |
| 1 | 911 GIS Specialist | 07 | $43,984 - $55,658 | 0270 | B18 | $45,521 - $71,055 | 9-1-1 |
| 1 | 911 GIS Technician-Part Time | 06 | $39,665 - $50,192 | 0270 | B18 | $45,521 - $71,055 | 9-1-1 |
| 1 | 911 GIS Technician | 06 | $39,665 - $50,192 | 0270 | B18 | $45,521 - $71,055 | 9-1-1 |
| 1 | 911 Program Coordinator | 09 | $53,332 - $67,487 | 1572 | B19 | $48,244 - $76,028 | 9-1-1 |
| 1 | 9-1-1 Education Technician | 06 | $39,665 - $50,192 | 0156 | A15 | $38,976 - $58,045 | 9-1-1 |
| 1 | 911 Network Operations Coordinator | 10 | $59,139 - $74,835 | 0291 | B25 | $69,572 - $114,099 | 9-1-1 |
| 1 | 911 GIS Director | 12 | $72,709 - $92,007 | 1602 | B24 | $65,104 - $106,634 | 9-1-1 |
| 9 | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Homeland Security Coordinator | 10 | $59,139 - $74,835 | 6241 | B19 | $48,244 - $76,028 | Homeland Security |
| 1 | Criminal Justice Coordinator | 10 | $59,139 - $74,835 | 1572 | B19 | $48,244 - $76,028 | Criminal Justice |
| 1 | Environmental Resources Coordinator | 11 | $65,571 - $82,975 | 2654 | B22 | $57,614 - $93,138 | Environmental |
| 1 | Development Specialist | 07 | $43,984 - $55,658 | 1570 | B17 | $42,976 - $64,469 | Regional Development |
| 1 | Regional Development Director | 12 | $72,709 - $92,007 | 1602 | B24 | $65,104 - $106,634 | Regional Development |
| 1 | Development Specialist | 07 | $43,984 - $55,658 | 1570 | B17 | $42,976 - $64,469 | Economic Development |
| 1 | Economic Development Director | 12 | $72,709 - $92,007 | 1602 | B24 | $65,104 - $106,634 | Economic Development |
| 1 | Finance Coordinator | 10 | $59,139 - $74,835 | 1018 | B20 | $51,158 - $81,351 | Finance |
| 5 | Accounting Specialist | 08 | $48,102 - $60,869 | 1016 | B17 | $42,976 - $64,469 | Finance |
| 1 | Accounting Clerk | 05 | $35,782 - $45,278 | 1002 | A13 | $35,439 - $52,388 | Finance |
| 1 | Finance Director | 15 | $97,730 - $123,670 | 1620 | B26 | $76,530 - $129,430 | Finance |
| 1 | Public Relations & Media Coordinator | 09 | $53,332 - $67,487 | 1814 | B21 | $54,278 - $87,046 | Administration |
| 1 | IT Assistant - Part Time | 07 | $43,984 - $55,658 | 0229 | B16 | $40,918 - $61,130 | Administration |
| 1 | Custodian/Maintenance - Part Time | 02 | $26,245 - $33,210 | 8005 | A08 | $28,705 - $39,229 | Administration |
| 1 | Admin Assistant | 04 | $32,270 - $40,834 | 0152 | A11 | $32,332 - $47,355 | Administration |
| 1 | Executive Assistant | 08 | $48,102 - $60,869 | 0160 | B17 | $42,976 - $64,469 | Administration |
| 1 | Procurement/Compliance Coordinator | 10 | $59,139 - $74,835 | 1401 | B21 | $54,278 - $87,046 | Administration |
| 1 | Human Resources Director | 12 | $72,709 - $92,007 | 1739 | B25 | $69,572 - $114,099 | Administration |
| 1 | Information Technology Director | 13 | $79,493 - $100,590 | 0314 | B25 | $69,572 - $114,099 | Administration |
| 1 | Deputy Director | 15 | $97,730 - $123,670 | 1620 | B26 | $76,530 - $129,430 | Administration |
| 1 | Executive Director | X | $135,000 - $148,500 | 1624 | B30 | $112,047 - $189,499 | Administration |
| 25 | | | | | | | |
| 99 | | | | | | | |

## BRIEFING PAPER

**ITEM 6:**

Review and consider approval authorizing the Executive Director to sign the Rerate and Benefit Verification Form with Texas Health Benefits Pool (TxHB) to continue to provide health, dental, and life insurance benefits to staff for Plan Year 2026-2027.

**BACKGROUND**

TxHB has provided health, dental, and life insurance benefits to ATCOG for several years, and it is once again time for the renewal of those benefits for FY 2027. The signed Rerate Notice and Benefit Verification Form is due to TxHB Health by July 1, 2026.

**DISCUSSION**

The Rerate Notice for FY 2027 includes a 6% increase for health premiums, no increase for dental, and a decrease for life insurance rates.

**Medical**
**Current Defined Contribution**: $946.54/Month

**Defined Contribution Effective 10/01/2026**: $1003.34/Month

**Employees with coverage as of June 1, 2026**: 76

**Dental**

| Current Dental Rates: | | Rates Effective 10/01/2026: | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Employee Only: | $30.72 | Employee Only: | $30.72 |
| Employee + Spouse: | $72.18 | Employee + Spouse: | $72.18 |
| Employee + Children: | $66.00 | Employee + Children: | $66.00 |
| Employee + Family: | $92.06 | Employee + Family: | $92.06 |

Life Rates:

| Current Life Rates: | | Rates Effective 10/01/2026 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Life: | $0.178 | Life: | $0.17 |
| AD&D: | $0.040 | AD&D: | $0.03 |

ATCOG will be offering four plan options to staff. We are proposing to make a defined contribution of $1003.34 to each employee per month. This will pay for the basic PPO health plan rate of $1003.34. Staff that wish to “buy up” to a more expensive plan may do so at their own expense. There is also a high deductible plan at a rate of $884.22 per month that would allow staff to contribute the remaining defined contribution to a health savings account.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval.

# Renewal Notice and Benefit Verification Form

## Ark Tex COG

**Original**

**Plan Year 10/01/2026 - 09/30/2027 (12 Months)**

***IMPORTANT NOTICE:*** *A signed renewal is required by the due date in your cover letter. If TX Health Benefits Pool does not receive the fully executed renewal notice by the indicated due date, you will no longer have an option to change benefits which will result in renewal of the benefit plans listed below at the new rates and the current employer contributions.*

### Medical

**Collective Plans**

| Plan | Benefit Percent | In Net Ded | Out Net Ded | In Net OOP | Office Visit | Rates | Current | New |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Collective III Copay-1K-3K ER-DAW1&2 | 80/50 | $1000 | $2000 | $3000 | $30 | EE Only: | $1,208.46 | $1,280.98 |
| | | | | | | EE + Spouse: | $2,453.14 | $2,600.34 |
| | | | | | | EE + Child(ren): | $2,126.90 | $2,254.54 |
| | | | | | | EE + Family: | $3,564.88 | $3,778.80 |
| Collective III HSA-3400 E-DAW1&2 | 100/70 | $3400 | $6800 | $3400 | N/A | EE Only: | $1,024.78 | $1,086.28 |
| | | | | | | EE + Spouse: | $2,080.30 | $2,205.14 |
| | | | | | | EE + Child(ren): | $1,803.64 | $1,911.88 |
| | | | | | | EE + Family: | $3,023.02 | $3,204.42 |
| Collective III Copay-3K-6K ER-DAW1&2 | 80/50 | $3000 | $6000 | $6000 | $30 | EE Only: | $946.54 | $1,003.34 |
| | | | | | | EE + Spouse: | $1,921.48 | $2,036.78 |
| | | | | | | EE + Child(ren): | $1,665.92 | $1,765.88 |
| | | | | | | EE + Family: | $2,792.24 | $2,959.78 |
| Collective III HSA-4K-6K E-DAW1&2 | 80/50 | $4000 | $8000 | $6000 | N/A | EE Only: | $834.16 | $884.22 |
| | | | | | | EE + Spouse: | $1,693.36 | $1,794.98 |
| | | | | | | EE + Child(ren): | $1,468.12 | $1,556.22 |
| | | | | | | EE + Family: | $2,460.74 | $2,608.40 |

In Network Deductible applies towards In Network OOP.

Medical and Dental Plan Accumulators will be based on Calendar Year.

### Monthly Employer Contribution Amounts

TX Health Benefits Pool requires 75% employer contribution toward employee medical – Minimum employer contribution is $663.18.

Please enter your monthly employer contribution amounts for active employees here, in dollars or percentages:

| Plan | EE Only: | EE+Spouse*: | EE+Child(ren)*: | EE+Family*: |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Collective III Copay-1K-3K ER-DAW1&2 | Amount % of Rate** $________ or ________% | Amount % of Rate** $________ or ________% | Amount % of Rate** $________ or ________% | Amount % of Rate** $________ or ________% |
| Collective III HSA-3400 E-DAW1&2 | Amount % of Rate** $________ or ________% | Amount % of Rate** $________ or ________% | Amount % of Rate** $________ or ________% | Amount % of Rate** $________ or ________% |
| Collective III Copay-3K-6K ER-DAW1&2 | Amount % of Rate** $________ or ________% | Amount % of Rate** $________ or ________% | Amount % of Rate** $________ or ________% | Amount % of Rate** $________ or ________% |
| Collective III HSA-4K-6K E-DAW1&2 | Amount % of Rate** $________ or ________% | Amount % of Rate** $________ or ________% | Amount % of Rate** $________ or ________% | Amount % of Rate** $________ or ________% |

*If entering contributions in dollars, the dependent tier(s) **must** include the EE Only amount paid by employer in addition to any employer paid amounts for dependents. Percentages for dependent tier(s) will apply to the dependent tier amount less the EE Only amount.

****NOTE:** *If a contribution percentage is provided, it will be rounded up to the nearest penny.*

Are there different contributions based on other factors (ex: hourly vs salary, department or location based)? If so, please explain here:

## Dental

| Rates | Current (Dental IV) | New (Dental IV) |
|---|---|---|
| EE Only: | $30.72 | $30.72 |
| EE + Spouse: | $72.18 | $72.18 |
| EE + Child(ren): | $66.00 | $66.00 |
| EE + Family: | $92.06 | $92.06 |

Please enter your monthly employer contribution amounts for active employees here, in dollars or percentages:

| EE Only: | | EE+Spouse*: | | EE+Child(ren)*: | | EE+Family*: | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Amount | % of Rate** | Amount | % of Rate** | Amount | % of Rate** | Amount | % of Rate** |
| $___________ or | ___________% | $___________ or | ___________% | $___________ or | ___________% | $___________ or | ___________% |

*If entering contributions in dollars, the dependent tier(s) **must** include the EE Only amount paid by employer in addition to any employer paid amounts for dependents. Percentages for dependent tier(s) will apply to the dependent tier amount less the EE Only amount.

*****NOTE:** If a contribution percentage is provided, it will be rounded up to the nearest penny.*

## Basic Life and AD&D

| | Current Rate (Plan 43) | New Rate (Plan 43) |
|---|---|---|
| Life: | $0.178 | $0.17 |
| AD&D: | $0.040 | $0.03 |

***Note: Plan requires 100% Participation and is 100% EMPLOYER paid.***

## Additional Employee Life and AD&D

| Age of Employee | Current Rate per $1000 | New Rate per $1000 |
|---|---|---|
| Under 30 | 0.041 | 0.05 |
| 30 - 34 | 0.052 | 0.06 |
| 35 - 39 | 0.091 | 0.09 |
| 40 - 44 | 0.129 | 0.13 |
| 45 - 49 | 0.198 | 0.20 |
| 50 - 54 | 0.332 | 0.33 |
| 55 - 59 | 0.595 | 0.60 |
| 60 - 64 | 0.913 | 0.91 |
| 65 - 69 | 1.513 | 1.52 |
| 70 and over | 2.431 | 2.43 |

***Note: Plan is EMPLOYEE paid.***

## COBRA Eligibility and Administration (Continuation of Coverage)

COBRA Eligible? Yes

COBRA Administration through TX Health Benefits Pool Yes

***NOTE: Employer will be charged a flat monthly fee of $80 per month regardless of how many members are utilizing COBRA, as well as $10 per month for each member who elects COBRA.***

## Benefit Waiting Period

1st of mo after date of hire

## Consumer-Driven Health Plans

| FSA Admin | DCA Admin | HRA Admin | HSA Admin | RRA Admin |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| No | No | No | Yes | No |

**Note: If employer accesses FSA and/or HRA, HSA, or RRA, one charge of $3.70 per participant per month will be incurred and paid by EMPLOYER, unless it is for a COBRA participant, then it is paid by the COBRA participant..**

## HSA Administration

Is the employer making deposits? No ☐ Yes* ☐ *If yes, please select deposit type and enter amount(s).

1. Monthly deposit. ☐

   Please enter the monthly deposit amounts here:

   | EE Only | EE + Spouse | EE + Child(ren) | EE + Family |
   |---|---|---|---|
   | $__________ | $__________ | $__________ | $__________ |

2. One-Time Prefunded deposit. ☐

   Please enter the prefunded deposit amounts here:

   | EE Only | EE + Spouse | EE + Child(ren) | EE + Family |
   |---|---|---|---|
   | $__________ | $__________ | $__________ | $__________ |

   Will new employees hired during the plan year receive the full amount, prorated amount, other amount, or no deposits?

   ☐ Full amount

   ☐ Prorated amount

   ***NOTE: Prorated amounts will be calculated as follows: (Prefunded deposit ÷ 12) x remaining number of months in Plan Year***

   ☐ Other amount

   | EE Only | EE + Spouse | EE + Child(ren) | EE + Family |
   |---|---|---|---|
   | $__________ | $__________ | $__________ | $__________ |

   ☐ No deposit

Are there different contributions based on other factors (ex: hourly vs salary)? If so, please explain here or attach additional information:

______________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________

Employer/Applicant acknowledges that TX Health Benefits Pool is not a Bank and cannot operate as a Bank Custodian. Because an HSA is a tax-exempt trust or custodial account set up with a qualified HSA trustee/custodian to pay or reimburse certain medical expenses incurred by a participating employee, TX Health Benefits Pool has no responsibility or liability for HSA trustee/custodian services. Employer Applicant further acknowledges that TX Health Benefits Pool can only assist with accessing the HSA vendor by assisting with enrollment, billing, and import of HSA contributions for deposit with the HSA vendor and only associated with Employer Applicant's qualifying High Deductible Health Plans (HDHP Plans). Employer/Applicant assumes the liability and responsibility of complying with any IRS or other federal regulations related to HSAs.

## Required Annual Eligibility and Enrollment Information

Please provide the following information:

1. Will you allow Employee Self Service (ESS) via TXHB Online for Open Enrollment and Qualifying Life Events? No ☐ Yes ☐
2. Our records indicate that Employer Member DOES NOT currently have an Ordinance or Resolution authorizing the offering of Elected Official Benefit Coverage. Please contact your Account Executive/Account Manager if this needs to be updated.

## Signature Section

The undersigned employer hereby acknowledges that for an employee to receive coverage, TX Health Benefits Pool must receive enrollment information within thirty-one (31) days of the date of hire or by the coverage effective date, whichever is later. If an enrollment is not submitted within this timeline, the employee cannot be added to the Plan until the next Open Enrollment period or a qualifying event occurs.

### Employer Member Additional Acknowledgements and Agreements

1. Employer Member acknowledges and agrees that its signature on this Renewal Notice and Benefit Verification Form indicates its binding selections for renewal services through TX Health Benefits Pool.
2. Employer Member acknowledges that certain benefit service selections require completion and execution of additional forms and agreements and agrees that it will work with all due diligence and in good faith to complete, execute, and return all necessary forms and agreements to TX Health Benefits Pool prior to the beginning of the Group's open enrollment.
3. Employer Member acknowledges that TX Health Benefits Pool will only allow open enrollment for renewal services in good faith and without receiving all necessary signed benefit service forms and agreements if:
   A. A signed Renewal Notice and Benefit Verification Form with all necessary Employer Member selections and information has been received; and
   B. Employer Member has in good faith attempted but failed to approve and return the applicable benefit service forms and agreements timely.
4. Employer Member certifies that it has adopted an Employee Flexible Benefits Plan under Section 125 of the Internal Revenue Code. This Plan is offered to all eligible employees who are qualified by employment status.
5. Employer Member certifies that it will provide notice of the creditable status of the coverage it offers to new enrollees prior to the effective date of their coverage, as required by the Medicare Modernization Act.
6. TX Health Benefits requires groups to enroll 100% of their benefit eligible employees. This is also known as the 100% Participation Rule. Employers may have employees that wish to waive Medical coverage through TX Health Benefits Pool, however, waivers may only be granted for the reasons enumerated in your Plan Book.
7. By executing this renewal and/or agreeing to the Terms of Use within the SIMON platform, the Employer Member represents and warrants that any individual performing duties in SIMON has full authority to bind the Employer Member to such Terms of Use. The Employer Member agrees that it is responsible for all actions taken within the SIMON platform by individuals accessing the system under its account credentials.

**Please sign by the due date** and return this completed form via email to your Account Executive/Account Manager or marketing@txhb.gov.

| 751293383 | | |
|---|---|---|
| Tax ID Number | Authorized Signature | Date |
| | | |
| Printed Name | Title | |

The rates are based on census information five months prior to plan year. If the census changes by more than 10%, TX Health Benefits Pool reserves the right to revise rates due to census change and underwriting impact.

Rates are subject to change due to intervening events such as action taken by the TX Health Benefits Pool Board of Trustees, legislation passed during the plan year, or other events affecting benefits.

Supplemental benefits cannot be accessed without accessing the TX Health Benefits Pool Medical Benefit Plan.

YOUR RENEWAL QUOTE INCLUDES PROPRIETARY INFORMATION THAT SHOULD NOT BE SHARED WITH OTHER COMPETITORS OR USED TO CIRCUMVENT THE REQUIREMENTS OF TEXAS COMPETITIVE BIDDING LAWS. IN THE EVENT YOU RECEIVE A RENEWAL QUOTE AND LATER DECIDE TO ISSUE AN RFP, THE RENEWAL QUOTE MAY NOT BE SHARED WITH ANY OTHER COMPETITORS AS DOING SO WOULD DISADVANTAGE TX HEALTH BENEFITS POOL IN THE COMPETITIVE PROCESS. TX HEALTH BENEFITS POOL ALSO RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REVISE PREVIOUSLY ISSUED RATES IN RESPONSE TO YOUR RFP.

**BRIEFING PAPER**

**ITEM 7:**

Review and consider approval of revision to the Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG) Policies and Procedures Manual.

**BACKGROUND**

The Board of Directors is required to approve all revisions to the Policies and Procedures Manual.

**DISCUSSION**

The following revisions to the **policy and procedures manual** are being proposed to adjust leave accruals:

> **6.03 Annual Leave Accrual – adding a level of accrual at fifteen (15)+ years**
>
> **6.08 Sick Leave Accrual – increasing from seventy-two (72) hours to ninety-six (96) hours per year**

If approved by the Board, the policy revisions will be distributed to all employees and added to our Policies and Procedures Manual effective October 1, 2026.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends approval.

### 6.03 ANNUAL LEAVE ACCRUAL

All regular employees are eligible to accrue paid annual leave during each "Service Year".

ATCOG employees are encouraged to take regular vacations at least annually.

1. For the purpose of this section "Service Year" shall mean the 12 month period from an employee's date of hire forward to the date of anniversary and for each succeeding 12 month period thereafter (requiring 2,080 hours for full-time employees).

2. New employees accrue annual leave benefits from the date of initial hire; however, none may be taken until after successful completion of the new hire introductory period (normally six months). Annual leave will not be paid upon separation during this period.

3. Regular full-time employees earn annual leave as follows:

   a. During service years one (1) through five (5), employees earn ~~ten (10) days~~ eighty (80) hours~~)~~ annual leave per year at the rate of 3.08 hours per pay period. No leave is available to use until completion of the new hire introductory period. Employees may accrue a maximum total of ~~ten (10) days~~eighty (80) hours without loss of benefits.

   b. During service years six (6) through nine (9), employees earn ~~twelve and one-half (12 ½) days~~ one hundred (100) hours~~)~~ annual leave per year at the rate of 3.85 hours per pay period. Employees may accrue a maximum total of ~~twelve and one-half (12 ½) days~~ one hundred (100) hours without loss of benefits.

   c. During service years ten (10) ~~until separation or retirement from ATCOG~~ through fourteen (14), employees accrue ~~fifteen (15) days~~ one hundred twenty (120) hours~~)~~ annual leave per year at the rate of 4.62 hours per pay period. Employees may accrue a maximum total of ~~fifteen (15) days~~ one hundred twenty (120) hours without loss of benefits.

   d. During service years fifteen (15) until separation or retirement from ATCOG, employees accrue one hundred forty (140) hours annual leave per year at the rate of 5.38 hours per pay period. Employees may accrue a maximum total of one hundred forty (140) hours without loss of benefits.

4. Regular part-time employees working 30 or more hours weekly earn annual leave in the proportion the employee's work time bears to pay period hours, with the same restrictions during the probationary period.

Temporary employees (full-time or part-time) or regular part-time employees working less than 30 hours weekly do not earn annual leave (see Section 13.03 for exception to this policy).

**6.08 SICK LEAVE ACCRUAL**

Regular full-time employees are entitled to accrue ~~nine (9) days~~ 96 hours of paid sick leave per year (or the proportional amount for regular part-time employees who work 30 or more hours weekly). Temporary employees (full-time or part-time) or regular part-time employees working less than 30 hours weekly do not earn sick leave (see Section 13.03 for exception to this policy).

Sick leave is credited to an employee's account on the last day of each payroll period and is not available for use until the beginning of the next payroll period. At the time an employee's sick leave balance reaches maximum accrual (480 hours), the employee will not accrue any further sick leave nor will the employee be compensated for any excess. NOTE: The maximum 480 hours is equivalent to 12 week of sick leave, which is the amount allowed by law under the Family and Medical Leave Act.