Riverside County
Passport Program

What is the Passport Program?

Aloha!

The Passport Program is a new cross-training program being utilized within Departments.

The program is intended to provide employees with exposure to all functional areas of the department. For example, an employee with significant experience in recruiting may seek to gain experience in leave management or employee relations. The Passport Program provides them with the opportunity to do so. Participating in the Passport Program enables a staff member (the "traveler") to learn how to execute specific tasks and projects in a given functional area, by working with another staff member or team for a set period of time.

This program benefits employees, as well as departments, as it promotes future talent, development, and makes us all more familiar with the various functions of a department.

The following Passport Program brochure details all facets of the Passport Program, including the terms and definitions, benefits of participating, information on how to sign up, and frequently asked questions about the program.

Happy travels!

Passport Program Terms and Definitions

Traveler: The employee who is learning a new area, the trainee.

Passport: Document detailing where you've traveled for cross-training. Stamps are issued in your Passport Book once you have completed all activities and projects on the Destination's travel itinerary.

Travel Itinerary: Document detailing all projects or activities a traveler would be expected to complete when visiting a team.

Travel Alert: Issued when a destination team has a project or activity that they need a traveler for.

Travel Guide(s): The employee(s) who are training the traveler on their area of expertise.

Destination: The team the traveler is visiting.

Boarding Pass: Document issued by a manager, granting their employee permission to travel, to where, and for how long. A Boarding Pass is required in order to apply for a travel alert.

Travel Agents: Managers, either on the original team or destination team.

Travel Agency: Departmental Passport Program Administrator.

What is Cross-Training?

The Passport Program is a cross-training program. Cross-training involves teaching an employee who was hired to perform one job function the skills required to perform other job functions.

Employees involved in cross-training programs become skilled at tasks outside the usual parameters of their jobs and thus become greater assets for the organization, while gaining knowledge and skills that benefit them personally and professionally.

How does the Passport Program Operate?

STEP ONE
Travel Agent (Manager) submits Travel Alerts to Passport Administrator Team (Travel Agency)

STEP TWO
Traevl Agency sends Travel Alert (E-mail Blast to Department)

STEP THREE
Employee applies to Travel Alert on Passport Program SharePoint site (Note: Must already have Boarding Pass)

STEP FOUR
Travel Agency evaluates eligibility

STEP FIVE
Travel Agency alerts traveler and both managers of approval

STEP SIX
Travel Agency coordinates beginning of travel with Travel Destination

Why Should I Participate in the Passport Program?

Travelers:
- Broadens your network and helps build your reputation within the department and the industry
- Learn new skills and expand your understanding of the business and your role
- Allows you to test out an area of interest without making a permanent commitment to the new area
- Makes you more marketable and well-rounded in all areas of Human Resources

Travel Guides:
- As a guide, you can share knowledge, expertise and skills in a particular area, which allows you to review and reflect on your own work and gain a fresh point of view
- Support colleagues in their career development and aspirations

Destination Team:
- Creating an environment of continuous learning
- Gain new ideas and good practices from travelers with a fresh point of view
- Affords the guides the opportunity to gain new skills in training and teaching in their area

Traveler's Team:
- Support staff in their career development and aspirations
- Gain new ideas and good practices from staff members returning with a fresh point of view

How does the Passport Program Benefit Our Department?

- Improved employee awareness of organization's roles and functions.

- Knowledge transfer for succession planning.

- Increased opportunities for employee advancement.

- Opportunity to strengthen customer support with more knowledgeable employees.

- Ability to keep employees motivated and "fresh" through assignment rotation.

- Reduced absenteeism and employee turnover.

- Increased ability for managers to evaluate employees across an array of roles.

How Do I Get Started?

Want to gain experience in another area of your Department? Did you see a travel alert that interested you?

- Are you eligible for travel at this time?
    - Regular employee (Not TAP)
    - Not on probation
    - Not on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

- If you have determined you are eligible to participate, approach your manager and convey your interest in participating in the Passport Program. Have a conversation about what it is you want to learn, where you would like to travel to, and what your professional development and career goals are. How would participation in the Passport Program help you reach your goals?

Once you have obtained a Boarding Pass:

- You are now able to apply for a travel alert! Watch for the release of travel alerts for the area(s) you are cleared for travel to.

- Once a travel alert is released, follow the link in the e-mail to apply on the Program's SharePoint site. Remember, opportunities are generally granted on a first come, first serve basis!

- Complete and submit the form in its entirety, including an upload of your Boarding Pass. You and your manager will receive a confirmation e-mail upon submittal of your application.

- A member of the Departmental Passport Program Administrator team will be in contact shortly regarding your passport to travel!

Assignment of travel is generally based on a first come, first serve basis, but consideration is also given to the following factors:

- Recent completion of Passport Program for same area being applied to.
- Other traveler applying is near completion of Passport for the area.

Program FAQ's

Who administers the Passport Program? Who do I contact if I have questions?

The Passport Program is administered by your Departmental Passport Program Administrator. E-mail them with any questions or for additional information.

How do you decide who gets to travel and who doesn't?

Participation in a travel alert is based on a first come, first serve basis. Generally speaking, if you apply first, meet all of the program criteria, and already have your boarding pass, you will be granted for travel to the destination.

Can I travel to another Department outside of my current Department?
No. At this time, cross-training opportunities are only within your assigned Department.

What is a boarding pass? How do I get one? Do I need to have a boarding pass prior to applying to a travel alert?

Possession of a boarding pass means you are cleared to participate in the program. A boarding pass lists what area(s) you are cleared to travel for, for how long, and for how many hours per week.

Boarding passes are issued by your manager. If you want to participate in the program, and travel over to get some recruiting experience, for example, schedule some time with your manager to convey your interest in obtaining a boarding pass.

You do need a boarding pass prior to applying to a travel alert. Prior to submitting your interest for a travel alert, the system will ask you to upload your boarding pass so that the Passport team may verify.

Program FAQ's

If I complete my "Passport" in a given area, but really enjoy the work, am I able to still "travel" to that area if my manager is willing to let me do so?

Absolutely. However, travelers who have not completed their passport in that area would be given first priority in a travel alert.

Does the Departmental Passport Program Administrator schedule and coordinate my training dates with the destination team?

No. All scheduling and coordination of your cross-training dates and times should take place between you as the traveler, your travel guides, your manager, and the destination manager.

Does participation impact my pay or position in any way? Is this considered a promotion?

No. Participation in the program does not impact your pay or position. It is not a promotional opportunity, but participation in the program certainly can prepare you for future promotional opportunities!

If I don't end up liking the work that I am "traveling" to, am I able to cancel at any time?

Absolutely. If you are not enjoying the work that you are learning, please approach both the destination manager, as well as your manager to discuss ending your travel.

What classifications are eligible to participate?

All classifications are eligible to participate. However, you must not currently be on probation, not on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP), and a regular (not TAP) employee.

Program FAQ's

If I am not the first traveler to apply, and my application is not accepted, do I have to reapply later? Do you save my information?
If your application is not accepted for travel, you will need to apply again the next time a travel alert is released. We do not save your information.

What is a travel alert? How are they distributed?

A travel alert is an alert sent out to the department that we have Passport Program opportunities! Travel alerts will be issued to the entire department via e-mail, as the opportunities arise. One week's prior notice is sent out to the Department via e-mail, letting them know the travel alert will be forthcoming on a certain date.

Future and upcoming travel alerts are also posted on the Passport Program's SharePoint site here.

My boarding pass is about to expire, and I still have projects to complete with my destination. Do I have to complete all itinerary projects or activities in one visit to the destination?

No. If you are not able to complete all activities on a destination's travel itinerary in one visit, you can always apply to another travel alert in the future and visit the destination again to finish up. You will not receive your final completion stamp in your passport until you have completed all activities.

Reach out to the Departmental Passport Program Administrator if you have questions.

Where do I apply?
All Passport Program activities will be administered through the Passport Program SharePoint, here:

https://rivcounty.sharepoint.com/sites/Passport-HR

Program FAQ's

How do I log or track my hours spent participating in the Passport Program?

After you are approved to travel in the program, you will be asked to use the time reporting code "PPG" to account for all hours spent performing Passport Program related training, projects, or activities when submitting your time sheet in People Soft for each pay period. This time code mimics the "REG" time code and is not tied to compensation – this simply allows the Passport team to track time spent participating in the program.

For example: If you are traveling to your Destination team and spent 2 hours on a given day training and/or working on a project, you would enter in 2 hours for that day under time reporting code PPG.   The combination of REG and PPG for the day should add up to the total number of hours you work (9 or 10 for most).

All Managers have been notified to expect this time code on any employee's timesheet who is currently traveling in the program. Upon approval of your travel, you will receive additional information from the Departmental Passport Program Administrator regarding this time reporting requirement.

Can I, or my manager, approach another destination team about opening up a travel alert if they don't currently have one available?

Yes. You are welcome to have these conversations with other destination teams you may be interested in traveling to. However, if the destination team is open to releasing an opportunity for travel, the regular application process must still be followed. The destination team must submit the opportunity for travel to the Departmental Passport Program Administrator, for them to release the travel alert to the Department. The opportunity for travel will generally be awarded on a first come, first serve basis.

Human Resources Passport Program: New SharePoint site FAQ's

Q: Does this new SharePoint site have all of the same information and documents the previous one did?
A: Yes. The new HR Passport Program SharePoint site has all of the same information, documents, and resources that the previous SharePoint site did (Travel Brochures and Itineraries, Fast Fact Documents, Travel Application How-To guides, etc). Contact HRLOD@Rivco.org if you are having trouble locating a document.

Q: Why did we switch to this new SharePoint site?
A: The new site is part of a County-wide SharePoint site that other Departments are to begin utilizing as they implement the Passport Program within their Department. All Departments can access the general Passport Program home site, but only HR Employees can access the HR Passport Program site.
This goes for all other Departments that begin to utilize the Passport Program and this new SharePoint site. You will not be able to access their Department's sites from the dropdown menu on the home site.

**Q: Where can I see any upcoming or currently available travel alerts on the new site?**
A: Utilize this page to view upcoming and currently available travel alerts:
https://rivcounty.sharepoint.com/sites/Passport-HR/Lists/Events/calendar.aspx

Q: Can I still access and utilize the old site?
A: No. Attempting to access the previous SharePoint site will redirect you to the new site effective October 18, 2021.

Q: If I'm on HR's site, how do I get back to the general Passport Program home site?
A: Clicking the highlighted button above from anywhere on the site will take you to the general Passport Program home site (the one that anyone can access regardless of Department).
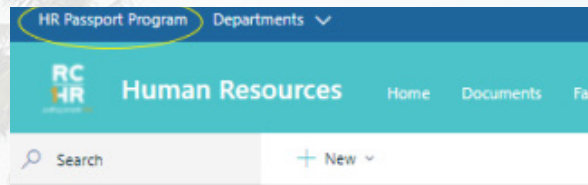
Q: Do I submit applications for travel alerts on this new site?
A: Yes. The procedure to apply for a travel alert is still the same. Utilize the tile shown in the screen shot below to submit your application**.**

Apply to a Travel Alert
Learn more →