

Procedure # 4005
Title: <b>REQUESTING VACATION LEAVE (AFSCME)</b>
Category: Personnel
Date of Initial Approval: 01/23/2024
Revision/Reauthorization Dates:
Reviewers: Department Supervisors: Department Head Supervisors

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this procedure is to clarify the process used at the Minnesota State Academies (MSA) to request, approve, and communicate vacation leave for employees covered under the AFSCME bargaining contract.

**II. CRITERIA**

1. Staff members are responsible for completing and submitting vacation leave requests, using the leave request form in the [staff portal](#) on the MSA website, to their supervisor at least 35 calendar days in advance of the time that is being requested, whenever practicable. Supervisors may consider requests that are made with less than a 35-day notice on a case-by-case basis. No request may be submitted for a vacation period more than 6 months in advance.
2. Prior to submitting leave requests, staff members are encouraged to check the vacation leave calendar to ensure that the dates requested are available. MSA supervisors have the discretion of establishing limits on vacation requests for each school day based on availability of substitute coverage and/or school/work schedule flexibility within their departments.
3. Supervisors will evaluate each request and respond within 10 calendar days (following the process listed below). Late requests (less than 35 days of advance notice) or requests on days that multiple staff are already approved for vacation leave may be denied.
4. During school breaks (i.e., winter break, spring break, summer break), employees who are not scheduled to work do not need to submit leave requests to use their vacation leave balances in accordance with the AFSCME bargaining contract (MSA Supplemental agreement – Article 4).

**III. PROCESS**

1. The supervisor will post all requests (without employee names or identifying information) to an internal department calendar for groups with more than 5 AFSCME employees with identical/similar work responsibilities (i.e., MSAB paraprofessionals; MSAB Student Life Staff; MSAD Paraprofessionals; MSAD Student Life Staff; MSA Custodians) to see that a request has been submitted. This is the opportunity for others to submit requests if they need the same days/times off. For groups of less than 5 employees or individuals with different duties, the employees will receive communication directly from their supervisor regarding their leave requests.

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2. The request will be posted for 7 calendar days. After the 7<sup>th</sup> day, the supervisor can proceed with the approval. The approval must be communicated to the employee within one calendar week after the posting period.
3. If multiple requests are submitted for the same day that cannot be covered/approved, the approval process will follow seniority.
4. Once requests are approved, they will be posted on the internal department leave calendar for staff to be aware that that day/time has already been scheduled for another staff member.
5. Each leave request will be evaluated on an individual basis – supervisors reserve the right to deny requests at their discretion.
6. Supervisors will monitor the calendar to ensure that all requests are documented and communicated. Adjustments in staffing and flexibility in vacation requests for each day will be communicated with employees in advance. Supervisors have the discretion of approving any exceptions to daily limits due to mitigating factors.
7. For staff who work directly with students, it is encouraged that longer-term vacation requests be scheduled during school breaks as much as possible. Each leave request will be evaluated on an individual basis prior to posting the leave request.
8. If an employee desires to cancel a vacation request of 5 days or more, they must cancel the entire approved vacation at least 21 days prior to the first day of vacation, unless waived by their supervisor.
9. If an employee decides to cancel their leave request, the employee must communicate the cancellation in email to their supervisors. MSA will then communicate this with employees by updating the leave calendar to free up days/times for other requests. Employees are responsible for enabling email notification from the leave calendar, so they are notified of any changes made.

It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure that they have accrued sufficient leave balances prior to the dates of the leave – Approval of the leave requests will be rescinded if the employee does not have sufficient leave balances at the time of the leave. Use of ETL (leave without pay) will not be approved in those situations.

**References:**

*AFSCME Bargaining Contract (2023-2025) – Article 8, Section 3 and MSA Supplemental – Article 4  
MSA Procedure #4004 – Use of ETL (Leave without Pay)*