

DISCRETIONARY LEAVES

The board recognizes that the demands of the workplace and of families need to be balanced to promote family stability and economic security for school district employees. Conditions for the authorized use of accumulated leave for family leaves are to be fairly construed in a manner consistent with this policy, and other relevant district policies.

Unless a leave is governed by an applicable collective bargaining agreement, the following apply:

A. Bereavement Leave

The district will allow each full-time employee a maximum of five (5) days leave upon the death of an employee's immediate family member. For purposes of this leave, immediate family shall consist of spouse, parent, grandparent, siblings, children, grandchildren, or spouse's parents, grandparent, siblings, children or grandchildren or any person living in the same household as the employee.

Up to two (2) days will be granted for bereavement for a person of close personal ties.

In cases where emergency factors of long distance are involved, the employee may request up to two (2) additional days of leave. Such requests should be provided to the Human Services department documenting the need for the additional time and the location involved.

In cases where additional days are necessary beyond the maximum days provided, leave may be taken under vacation or annual accrued leave balances or a leave without pay may be requested in advance.

The deaths of more than one family member resulting from a common occurrence will be treated as a single death with respect to the length of leave granted.

B. Domestic Violence Leave

The district will allow victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking as well as family members of victims to take reasonable leave from work, intermittent leave. The leave may be sick leave, other accrued leave or leave without pay. Family member includes a child, spouse, parent, parent in-law, grandparent or an individual with whom the victim has a dating relationship. The employee will provide advance notice of their intent to take leave. If advance

notice is not possible, due to an emergency, notice should be provided no later than the end of the first day that the employee takes the leave.

C. Health Related Leave of Absence

An extended unpaid leave of absence for a period up to the beginning of the next school year may be approved at the discretion of the district based upon consideration of educational program needs and the desires of the employee, together with any recommendation of their medical practitioner regarding the leave request.

Employees are to submit their request for a Health Related Leave of Absence to their immediate supervisor and the Superintendent in writing. The request should document the reasons for the leave, the anticipated start and end dates and should be accompanied by documentation from a medical practitioner regarding the leave request.

During the leave the employee may elect COBRA coverage to ensure continuation of benefits for the employee and his/her family.

An employee will be entitled to return to a position in the district at the end of the leave of absence subject to the availability of a position for which the employee is qualified. The employee granted a leave of absence will inform the board by April 1 as to his/her intentions to assume a position in the district for the ensuing school year. If said notification is not received, the individual's employment rights with the district will be terminated.

D. Leave Without Pay/Unpaid Leaves of Absence (LWOP)

The district may grant LWOP for specific periods of time from one (1) hour up to one (1) school year upon application by an employee, the recommendation of the superintendent/designee and the approval of the board granted prior to the commencement of the leave. Such leaves will be without pay and may affect fringe benefits. The needs of students and the district educational programs warrant primary consideration. LWOP will be granted only when it will not have an undesirable impact upon the educational program or business operations. Employees requesting LWOP shall be required to use all available leave balances prior to taking LWOP as it will not be granted in lieu of vacation, annual or sick leave, nor will it be granted as a yearly and/or reoccurring leave option. Employees requesting LWOP for medical or child bonding purposes have the option to elect to maintain up to 40 hours of annual leave and/or 40 hours of sick leave in reserve.

Employees wishing to take LWOP are to submit their request to their immediate supervisor and the superintendent/designee in writing at least 30 days in advance. The request should thoroughly document the reasons for the leave as well as the anticipated start and end dates.

If LWOP extends into one full pay period or longer the leave may affect the employee's benefits at which point the employee will be offered and may elect COBRA coverage to ensure continuation of benefits for the employee and his/her covered family members.

An employee will be entitled to return to a position in the district at the end of the LWOP subject to the availability of a position for which the employee is qualified. Any employee granted LWOP for the duration of the current 2nd semester or the entire school year must inform the board by April 1 as to his/her intentions to assume a position in the district for the ensuing school year. If said notification is not received, the individual's employment rights with the district will be terminated.

Employees on LWOP will not earn any salary schedule experience credit or any sick leave credit or benefits during the leave of absence. In addition, LWOP may impact an employee's seniority date.

- Cross Reference:** Policy 5021 Applicability of Personnel Policies
- Legal Reference:** RCW 28A.400.300 Hiring and Discharging Employees –
Written Leave Policies – Seniority and
Leave Benefits of Employees Transferring
Between School Districts
Chapter 49.76 RCW Domestic Violence Leave
- Management Resources:** *Policy News*, October 2011 Policy Manual Revisions
Policy News, April 2009 Domestic Violence Leave

- Adopted:** October 8, 2012
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