

# LEAVE OF ABSENCE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## INITIATING A LEAVE OF ABSENCE

### WHEN DO I NEED A LEAVE?

Per DEC (LOCAL):

“An employee absent beyond five consecutive workdays, except for vacation, shall apply for a leave of absence.”

“Failure to apply for a leave of absence shall constitute grounds for appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination.”

On the sixth missed consecutive business day, you must initiate a leave by calling the Leaves Administrators.

### DO I NEED A LEAVE FOR VACATION?

Policy states that you do not need a leave of absence for time away due to vacation.

### WHEN IS MY JOB PROTECTED?

Once you have officially initiated a leave of absence, your job is protected under the leave of absence process.

Once the leave ends or is denied, your job is no longer protected as of that day, and you are expected to return to work the next business day.

## AT A GLANCE

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## INITIATE A LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Please call the Leaves  
Administrator at  
972-925-4000; Option 1

The Leave Representative will  
take your information and  
connect you with a case manager  
within 24-48 hours.

The case manager will provide  
the required leave paperwork,  
and guide you through the leaves  
process.

## TYPES OF LEAVES

### LEGAL LEAVES

#### Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)\*

To be eligible for FMLA, you must have worked for the district a total of 12 months, *and* have worked 1,250 hours in the last 12 months.

Eligible employees can take up to 12 weeks of FMLA for themselves or a family member.

#### Intermittent Leave Under FMLA

If eligible for FMLA, employees can apply for up to 12 weeks of an Intermittent Leave. This leave allows employees to work while also able to take time for frequent doctors appointments, flare-ups, or to care for a family member.

#### General Medical Leave (Gen Med)\*

General Medical Leave is available for employees to take time for their own medical condition. Employees can take up to 180 days of Gen Med. There is no length of employment requirement for this leave.

### HOW DO I KNOW WHICH LEAVE TO APPLY FOR?

While the District provides many leaves for employees, your case manager will be able to assist with eligibility requirements.

The Benefits Department will also be able to assist you with any questions pertaining to eligibility.

### LOCAL LEAVES

#### Hardship Leave

A Hardship Leave may be granted only if the employee is not eligible for or has exhausted any other leave entitlement. The employee can apply for the first 20 days through the Leaves Administrators, and 20 additional days through the Benefits Review Committee, if needed.

#### Local Leave

Employees can apply for a Local Leave only if the employee is not eligible for or has exhausted any other leave entitlement. The employee and their physician will need to fill out the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) forms, and submit them to the Benefits Review Committee by email: [BenefitsReviewCommittee@dallasisd.org](mailto:BenefitsReviewCommittee@dallasisd.org).

\*If a medical condition fits under both FMLA and General Medical, the leave will be run concurrently and use leave entitlement from both.

## OTHER LEAVES

### Bereavement Leave

Bereavement leave of up to three days may be granted for the death of a family member. The days will not be deducted from the employee's time off. Additional days of absence may result in a deduction of accumulated time off.

The Bereavement days do not have to be taken consecutively.

The three bereavement days do not count towards the limit of five consecutive days before needing to initiate a leave of absence. The employee can miss three days for bereavement, followed by five days of absence, before a leave must be initiated.

## HOW TO APPLY:

To apply for Bereavement days, a Professional Leave, or an Emergency Leave, please visit the Benefits Website at [www.dallasisd.org/benefits](http://www.dallasisd.org/benefits) or email [Benefits@dallasisd.org](mailto:Benefits@dallasisd.org).

For more information, please contact us:  
[BenefitsLeaves@dallasisd.org](mailto:BenefitsLeaves@dallasisd.org)  
[BenefitsReviewComittee@dallasisd.org](mailto:BenefitsReviewComittee@dallasisd.org).

## WHO CAN I USE BEREAVEMENT DAYS FOR?

DEC (LOCAL) qualifies the term "family" as,

1. Spouse including common law and same-sex marriage based on documentation and state law.
2. Son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a current son- or daughter-in-law, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands in loco parentis.
3. Parent, stepparent, current parent-in-law, or other individual who stands in loco parentis to the employee.
4. Sibling, stepsibling, sibling-in-law.
5. Grandparent, grandchild, and spouse's grandparent.
6. Any person related to the employee by blood or marriage who may be residing in the employee's household at the time of illness or death.

### Professional Leave

Professional leave may be granted if the activity is in the best interest of the District. Requests must be submitted to the Benefits Review Committee (BRC). The leave may be granted for up to one school year. An employee may choose a paid status if Paid Time Off (PTO) is available.

### Emergency Leave

Emergency leave includes, but is not limited to, unforeseen natural disasters or destruction of a vehicle or domicile by flood, fire, or storm involving the employee or a member of the employee's family. Employees may be granted three paid days of emergency leave by the BRC.



## PARENTAL PLANNING

Employees are eligible for up to 12 weeks under the Family Medical Leave Act, or 6-8 weeks under General Medical Leave. Your Leave will be paid if you have sufficient PTO days (local and state days) to cover your time away.

Contact the Benefits Leave Team so that a case manager can get started with your request. You can contact the Leaves Team up to 30 days before your due date. Please call 972-925-4000, Option 1 to initiate a leave of absence. The case manager will provide your paperwork, start your leave, and guide you through the whole process.

### HOW LONG IS MY LEAVE?

If you do not qualify for FMLA, your leave will be approved under a General Medical Leave. This leave provides mothers six weeks to heal from a vaginal birth or eight weeks from a caesarean birth.

If you meet all of the qualifications for a leave under FMLA, you will get a total of 12 weeks.

- Six weeks for healing with a vaginal birth + six weeks for Baby Bonding = 12 weeks.

OR

- Eight weeks for healing with a caesarean birth + four weeks for Baby Bonding = 12 weeks.

### DON'T FORGET

#### Add Your New Dependent

You will have 31 days from the birth or adoption of your child to add them to your benefit coverage. You will need to email the Verification of Birth Facts to [Benefits@dallasisd.org](mailto:Benefits@dallasisd.org).

#### Medical Release

To return to work after giving birth, you must provide a Medical Release from your physician. If a release is not received by the time of return, you will be sent home until one can be provided.

### WHAT DOES PARENTAL PLANNING INCLUDE?

- Birth of a Child
- Adoption of a Child
- Fostering of a Child
- To Care for a Spouse or Child

### HOW WILL THIS INFORMATION BE DIFFERENT FOR A PARENT WHO IS NOT GIVING BIRTH?

You will only be eligible for a leave to bond with your new child, if you are eligible for FMLA.

If problems arise and you are needed at home, but do not qualify for FMLA, you can apply for a Hardship Leave.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Leaves are **unpaid** unless you choose to apply your PTO (Personal Time Off).

### PERSONAL TIME OFF (PTO)

To get your PTO balance, please contact the Payroll Department or your Payroll Specialist. The Benefits Department cannot provide these details. If you exhaust all PTO, and you are not enrolled in the Sick Leave Bank (SLB) or disability coverage, your check will be docked.

### SICK LEAVE BANK (SLB)

To utilize the SLB, you must meet all three qualifications. You can receive up to 20 paid days, by donating one local PTO day.

#### 1. Enrolled in the SLB.

You can enroll in the SLB during annual enrollment.

#### 2. Exhaust all PTO

You must exhaust all of your PTO, to be eligible to receive any days from the SLB.

#### 3. Approved Leave of Absence

You will not be rewarded any days if you are not on an approved Leave of Absence.

**For all Pay or PTO inquiries,  
please contact the Payroll  
Department or your Payroll  
Specialist.**

**972-925-4200; Option 3**

\*You must submit the Sick Leave Bank Request form to notify the Benefits Review Committee (BRC) that you would like to utilize the benefit. This can be found on our Website ([www.dallasisd.org/benefits](http://www.dallasisd.org/benefits)).

### WHAT ORDER DO I USE THE FINANCIAL BENEFITS?

1. The Employee's PTO.
2. Sick Leave Bank.\*
3. Disability Coverage.\*

### DISABILITY

If enrolled in the disability coverage with Dallas ISD, the employee would need to file a claim with Blue Cross Blue Shield. Submit a claim online ([ancillary.bcbstx.com](http://ancillary.bcbstx.com)), telephonically (877-442-4207, 7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. CST, Monday - Friday), or US Mail (download the STD claim forms at [bcbstx.com/ancillary/employees/forms](http://bcbstx.com/ancillary/employees/forms). Once completed, you can email the forms to [DisabilityClaimsTX@bcbstx.com](mailto:DisabilityClaimsTX@bcbstx.com), or you can fax or mail them to the number/address on the claim form).

\*Must be previously enrolled.

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION

### RETURNING WITH RESTRICTIONS

If an employee's Medical Release, provided by the physician, contains restrictions to return to work, the case manager will inform the direct supervisor. If the restrictions can be locally accommodated, the employee will be informed, and able to return to work the next business day.

If the restrictions are not able to be accommodated locally (by the supervisor), the employee will need to fill out an Americans Disabilities Act (ADA) Form. This can be found on the Benefits Website ([www.dallasisd.org/benefits](http://www.dallasisd.org/benefits)).

### 20% RULE

The 20% Rule only applies to instructional employees.

If an employee is missing more than 20% of the work-week due to a medical condition, the District may request the employee to consider a continuous leave of absence.

### DISTRICT ACCESS

Once an employee's leave is approved, they will lose all access to their Dallas ISD systems.

The employee will not regain access until they are released by their physician and have physically returned to work. The employee or supervisor will need to inform the Benefits Department of the employees return.

### WHAT IF MY LEAVE IS DENIED?

If your Leave of Absence request is denied, you are expected to return to work the next business day. Your job is no longer protected after a leave denial.

### BENEFIT DEDUCTIONS WHILE ON LEAVE

If the employee is receiving a payroll check, the deductions are consistently being taken to cover the benefit deductibles.

If the employee is not receiving pay from the District while on a Leave of Absence, they will owe the District arrears upon their return.

Employees also have the option to pay the monthly deductions through the Treasury Department (972)-925-3812 or through the RevTrak System <https://dallasisd.revtrak.net/>.

### EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

Dallas ISD provides a free and confidential counseling service for employees and their families.

Please call:  
972-925-4000; Option 3



## CONTACT THE BENEFITS DEPARTMENT

### DALLAS ISD CONTACT CENTER:

**Please Call: 972-925-4000**

- Option 1 - Leave of Absence
- Option 2 - Benefits
- Option 3 - Employee Assistance Program

### WHAT WILL I NEED TO INITIATE A LEAVE?

Employees will need to provide...

- Name
- EID (Employee ID Number)
- Expected First Day of Leave
- Personal Phone Number
- Personal Email Address
- The Type of Leave Needed

### WHEN SHOULD I INITIATE A LEAVE?

Please call approximately 30 days before you will need to be out on a Leave of Absence.

### WHAT IF I NEED AN UNPLANNED LEAVE?

If an emergency arises and you need a leave right away, please call the Leave Administrators as soon as possible to protect your job and receive the needed paperwork.

### INTERNAL BENEFITS DEPARTMENT:

**Email Us:**

[Benefits@dallasisd.org](mailto:Benefits@dallasisd.org)

[BenefitsLeaves@dallasisd.org](mailto:BenefitsLeaves@dallasisd.org)

**Call Us:**

972-925-4300

