

Employee Leaves and Absences Information

The information outlined is a summary of policies and procedures and is not intended to be a comprehensive guide to leave.

Paid Time Off Leave (PTO)

Policy GCCA

Employees earn one day of Paid Time Off leave (prorated according to the employee's approved work hours) for each calendar month worked. Paid Time Off leave is earned if the employee is on active paid status. For example, a certified teacher earns 10 prorated days of Paid Time Off leave per school year.

Paid Time Off leave may be used for the following purposes:

1. An employee's mental or physical illness, injury or health condition; an employee's need for medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury or health condition; an employee's need for preventive medical care.
2. Care of a family member with a mental or physical illness, injury or health condition; care of a family member who needs medical diagnosis, care, or treatment of a mental or physical illness, injury or health condition; care of a family member who needs preventive medical care.
3. Closure of the employee's place of business by order of a public official due to a public health emergency or an employee's need to care for a child whose school or place of care has been closed by order of a public official due to a public health emergency, or care for oneself or a family member when it has been determined by the health authorities having jurisdiction or by a health care provider that the employee's or family member's presence in the community may jeopardize the health of others because of his or her exposure to a communicable disease, whether or not the employee or family member has actually contracted the communicable disease;
4. Notwithstanding section 13-4439, Arizona Revised Statutes, absence necessary due to domestic violence, sexual violence, abuse or stalking, provided the leave is to allow the employee to obtain for the employee or the employee's family member:
 - a) Medical attention needed to recover from physical or psychological injury or disability caused by domestic violence, sexual violence, abuse of stalking.
 - b) Service from a domestic violence or sexual violence program or victim services organization.
 - c) Psychological or other counseling.
 - d) Relocation or taking steps to secure an existing home due to domestic violence, sexual violence, abuse or stalking; or
 - e) Legal Services, including but not limited to preparing for or participating in any civil or criminal legal proceeding related to or resulting from domestic violence, sexual violence, abuse or stalking.
5. Childbirth during the time the physician verifies that the employee is physically unable to perform her normal duties.

6. Adoption of a child during the six (six) weeks of initial care immediately following the time the employee takes custody of the child.
7. Paid Time Off may be used to observe recognized religious holidays.
8. Paid Time Off can be used for general purposes.

Paid Time Off leave for a reason other than illness or emergencies may not be used during the first or last two weeks of student days, nor can it be used the day before or after an intersession without pre-approval. (See Pre-approval Form.)

All Paid Time Off leave rolls over to the next fiscal year and accumulates without limit.

Vacation - Policy GCD, GDD

All 12-month employees working 30+ hours per week earn vacation. Vacation is earned at the rate of 3.20, 4.8, or 6.4 hours per pay period (prorated for less than 40 hours per week). Upon completion of 5 years of service, 12-month employees on the support service calendar (Calendar #2612) begin accumulating 4.8 hours per pay period. An employee must work 15 days in a month to earn a day of vacation. Vacation is earned as long as the employee is on active paid status. The purpose of vacation is for the employee to take time off work to relax and refresh. However, vacation must be scheduled with the approval of the supervisor in order to ensure effective operation of the department/site. Earned vacation may be carried over from one fiscal year to the next; however, carryover vacation must be used by June 30th of the next fiscal year. For example, all vacation earned in 2022-23 must be taken by June 30, 2024. Earned vacation balances will be adjusted annually after the first week of July. To calculate vacation hours that must be used by the end of the year, multiply the hours earned per pay period (3.20, 4.8, or 6.4 hours) times the 25 pay periods (the number of pay period accruals allocated). Subtract that amount (vacation earned in current year) from your vacation balance on Employee Access.

Comp Time/Overtime (Support Staff, Nonexempt, Hourly Only)

All hours (physically worked) over 40 per work week are paid at time and one half pay. At the discretion of the supervisor and based upon the needs of the department/site, hours worked over 40 may be credited to comp time. Comp time is earned at time and one-half. Employees should not work over their approved hours per week without supervisor's approval. Employee comp time balances as reported on Employee Access reflect comp time at time and one-half calculation. Comp time balances are limited to 24 hours at a time.

Bereavement - Policy GCCH

Upon the death of a family member, employees may take up to 5 days if necessary. Bereavement leave is not deducted from the employee's earned leave; however, it is limited to activities directly related to the death of a family member, including planning, and attending funeral/memorial service and travel necessary to attend services. If an extension beyond five days is necessary and the related business cannot be scheduled on a non-workday, the employee may request available Paid Time Off leave. In the event of a delayed memorial service, employees may postpone the use of bereavement leave.

Family, for purposes of bereavement leave, shall include *spouse, children, parents, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, and like relations created by marriage (e.g., stepchild, father-in-law, et cetera)*. In the event of the death of a close friend or relative beyond those listed, employees may use Paid Time Off leave if available.

Employees should report bereavement leave using the absence management system and to their immediate supervisor.

Jury Duty and Military Leave - Policy GCCD

Employees may serve on jury duty, if called, without loss of pay. If an employee is issued a subpoena as a result of his/her district job responsibilities, jury duty may be used. A copy of earnings from jury duty (excluding mileage) should be forwarded to payroll and will be deducted on the employee's pay. In addition to jury duty, the Board will grant leave for military service. Request should be made on the appropriate form. Employees who are directed to call the court after the workday to determine if attendance is required should report to work as scheduled. Employees should work with their supervisors to ensure coverage in the event coverage is required midday.

On-the-Job Injury - Policy GCCA

If an employee suffers a work-related injury, the first seven days will be charged to the individual's Paid Time Off leave. Any additional days will be charged at the rate of 1/3 day of Paid Time Off leave for each day absent. Worker's compensation insurance pays .66 of the daily rate. Light duty will be available for injured employees contingent upon the restrictions and the needs of the organization. Decisions regarding light duty are based upon a number of factors including but not limited to, the length of recuperation, availability of acceptable work, etc.

Reporting Leaves and Absences - Policy GCC

Reporting absences correctly is the responsibility of each employee. Absences should be reported as soon as possible to allow the site to prepare for coverage. The electronic absence management system is used by all employees - administrative, certified and support staff - regardless of how many hours per day worked, and whether a substitute is needed. The purposes for reporting absences are to notify the site of the employee's absence and deduct the appropriate amount of leave from the employee's leave balances. Employees who have no earned leave available should select "No earned leave available" when reporting absence.

Full-day absences must be reported a minimum of one hour prior to the scheduled start time. For planned absences (e.g., professional leave, scheduled medical appointments, general reasons, etc.), earlier reporting is expected. Correct start and end times are important. If absence start and end times are different from the recording, an employee should enter the correct absence start and end times following the system prompts.

Employees absent six or more consecutive days must submit a Medical Leave of Absence Request.

Employees who 1) work less than 8 hours per day or 2) are reporting a partial day absence should use the start and end times to record the amount of leave needed to cover the absence. Hourly employees should allow for lunch breaks.

Earned leave is intended to cover the scheduled work hours in a pay week. If the employee's reported hours in the pay week exceed his/her scheduled work hours resulting in overtime (or time in excess of approved work hours), the reported leave will be adjusted.

Non-substitute positions only: With supervisor pre-approval, partial day absences may be called at any time during the date of absence. For example, if an employee has a doctor's appointment in the morning and does

not know how much leave will be needed, the employee may call after-the-fact. In all cases, partial absences should be called in no later than prior to midnight on the date of absence.

Generally, employees may only use one type of leave for each absence. This includes vacation, comp time, Paid Time Off leave, etc.

Failure to call and report an absence (full or partial) will result in a loss of pay. Satisfactory evidence of accurate absence reporting will be the job number assigned at the close of transaction. Do not hang up without a job number.

Loss of Pay

If an employee does not have applicable earned leave, he/she will not be paid for time off work. Exempt employees such as teachers who are paid a salary will be docked based upon the daily rate of pay. A teacher's daily rate is calculated by dividing the annual salary by number of work paid days. If possible, exempt employees will be notified two weeks prior to a reduction in pay.

Holiday Pay

In order to be paid for a holiday, employees must be on paid status (at work or on paid leave for any portion of the day) before and after the holiday.

Leave Totals

Leave is current on Employee Access as of Wednesday, one week before payday.

Attendance Incentive

The daily attendance of all employees is critical to the operation of our schools. For the majority of employees, absences should occur infrequently and only when necessary. An employee's earned leave acts as an insurance policy in the event of an illness or injury. One additional day of Paid Time Off leave will be credited for employees who do not use any Paid Time Off leave or in the previous fiscal year.

Payment of Unused Leave at Separation – Paid Time Off Leave, Comp Time, Vacation

Paid Time Off leave is paid to the employee at the time of separation. The rate is based upon the substitute rate and increases with the length of service.

Vacation and comp time are paid at the employee's regular rate; however, vacation and comp time are for the purpose of taking time off and should be used prior to separation. Earned leave may not be used to extend employment, e.g. paid vacation used to delay the effective date of termination.

Employee Leaves and Absences FAQ

Q: What happens with my existing sick leave?

A: Effective July 1, 2023, any available sick leave balance will roll over to Paid Time Off.

Q: What happens if I am out for six consecutive days?

A: You must complete a Leave of Absence Request form and attach medical documentation.

Q: I am a 12-month employee, what is the timeline for leave accrual?

A: All 12-month employees earn leave through Pay Period 25.

Q: Do I get all my leave days up front?

A: No, Paid Time Off is accrued every paycheck.

Q: Can I back up Paid Time Off to my vacation to extend my time off?

A: Paid Time Off can only back up to vacation with Supervisor approval to ensure adequate department coverage.

Q: Can I choose to take an unpaid day if I have no leave available?

A: Unpaid days require Supervisor and HR approval.

Q: Can I take an unpaid day if I have leave available?

A: No, Paid Time Off must be used.

Q: Will the district continue to offer what is currently known as “Sick Leave Incentive”?

A: Yes, employees with perfect attendance (no Paid Time Off taken in a fiscal year) will be awarded an additional paid time off day in September.

Q: Will I be unpaid if I am absent on a Blackout Day due to illness or an emergency related absence?

A: No. Illness or emergency-related absences will not be a reason for an unpaid day on blackout dates if employee has leave available.