

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS
LEAVES AND ABSENCES

DEC
(LOCAL)

DEFINITIONS

The term "immediate family" is defined as:

FAMILY

1. Spouse.
2. Son or daughter, including a biological, adopted, or foster child, a son- or daughter-in-law, a stepchild, a legal ward, or a child for whom the employee stands *in loco parentis*.
3. Parent, stepparent, parent-in-law, or other individual who stands *in loco parentis* to the employee.
4. Sibling, stepsibling, and sibling-in-law.
5. Grandparent and grandchild.
6. Any person residing in the employee's household at the time of illness or death.

For purposes of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the definitions of spouse, parent, son or daughter, and next of kin are found in DECA(LEGAL).

FAMILY
EMERGENCY

The term "family emergency" shall be limited to disasters and life-threatening situations involving the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family.

LEAVE DAY

A "leave day" for purposes of earning, use, or recording of leave shall mean the number of hours per day equivalent to the employee's usual assignment, whether full-time or part-time.

CATASTROPHIC
ILLNESS OR INJURY

A catastrophic illness or injury is a severe condition or combination of conditions affecting the mental or physical health of the employee or a member of the employee's immediate family that requires the services of a licensed practitioner for a prolonged period of time and that forces the employee to exhaust all leave time earned by that employee and to lose compensation from the District. Complications resulting from pregnancy shall be treated the same as any other condition.

AVAILABILITY

The District shall make state personal leave and local leave for the current year available for use at the beginning of the school year.

EARNING LOCAL
LEAVE

~~An employee shall work at least one week of the employment year to qualify for advancement of local leave.~~ An employee shall not earn any local leave when he or she is in unpaid status. An employee using full or proportionate paid leave shall be considered to be in paid status.

DEDUCTIONS

LEAVE WITHOUT
PAY

The District shall not approve paid leave for more leave days than have been accumulated in prior years plus leave currently available. Any unapproved absences or absences beyond accumulated and available paid leave shall result in deductions from the employee's pay.

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LEAVE PRORATION EMPLOYED FOR LESS THAN FULL YEAR	<p>If an employee separates from employment with the District before his or her last duty day of the year, or begins employment after the first duty day, state personal leave and local leave shall be prorated based on the actual time employed.</p> <p>If an employee separates from employment before the last duty day of the school year, the employee's final paycheck shall be reduced for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. State personal leave the employee used beyond his or her pro rata entitlement for the school year; and2. Local leave the employee used but had not earned as of the date of separation.
EMPLOYED FOR FULL YEAR	<p>If an employee uses more local leave than he or she earned and remains employed with the District through his or her last duty day, the District shall deduct the cost of the excess leave days from the employee's pay in accordance with administrative regulations.</p>
RECORDING	<p>Leave shall be recorded as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. For positions for which a substitute is normally required, leave shall be recorded in half-day increments, even if a substitute is not employed.2. For positions for which a substitute is not normally required, leave shall be recorded on an hourly basis.3. If the employee is taking intermittent FMLA leave, leave shall be recorded in one-hour increments.4. If the employee chooses to offset leave against workers' compensation benefits, leave shall be recorded in the amount used.
ORDER OF USE	<p>Earned compensatory time shall be used before any available paid state and local leave. [See DEAB]</p> <p>Unless an employee requests a different order, available paid state and local leave shall be used in the following order, as applicable:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Local leave.2. State sick leave accumulated before the 1995–96 school year.3. State personal leave.4. Extended sick leave. <p>Use of sick leave bank days shall be permitted only after all available state and local leave has been exhausted.</p>

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CONCURRENT USE OF
LEAVE

When an absent employee is eligible for FMLA leave, the District shall designate the absence as FMLA leave.

The District shall require the employee to use temporary disability leave and paid leave, including compensatory time, concurrently with FMLA leave.

An employee receiving workers' compensation income benefits may be eligible for paid or unpaid leave. An absence due to a work-related injury or illness shall be designated as FMLA leave, temporary disability leave, and/or assault leave, as applicable.

MEDICAL
CERTIFICATION

An employee shall submit medical certification of the need for leave if:

1. The employee is absent more than five consecutive workdays because of personal illness or illness in the immediate family;
2. The District requires medical certification due to a questionable pattern of absences or when deemed necessary by the supervisor or Superintendent;
3. The employee requests FMLA leave for the employee's serious health condition or that of a spouse, parent, or child; or
4. The employee requests FMLA leave for military caregiver purposes.

In each case, medical certification shall be made by a health-care provider as defined by the FMLA. [See DECA(LEGAL)]

Note: For District contribution to employee insurance during leave, see CRD(LOCAL).

STATE PERSONAL
LEAVE

The Board requires employees to differentiate the manner in which state personal leave is used:

NON-
DISCRETIONARY
USE

1. Non-discretionary use of leave shall be for the same reasons and in the same manner as state sick leave accumulated before May 30, 1995. [See DEC(LEGAL)]

DISCRETIONARY
USE

2. Discretionary use of leave is at the individual employee's discretion, subject to limitations set out below.

LIMITATIONS

REQUEST FOR
LEAVE

The employee shall submit a written request for discretionary use of state personal leave to the immediate supervisor or designee in advance in accordance with administrative regulations. In deciding whether to approve or deny state personal leave, the supervisor or designee shall not seek or consider the reasons for which an employee requests to use leave. The supervisor or designee shall, however, consider the effect

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	of the employee's absence on the educational program or District operations, as well as the availability of substitutes.
DURATION OF LEAVE	Discretionary use of state personal leave shall not exceed three consecutive workdays.
SCHEDULE LIMITATIONS	Discretionary leave shall not be allowed on the day before or the day after a school holiday, days scheduled for end-of-semester or end-of-year exams, days scheduled for state-mandated assessments, professional or staff development days, or the end of a grading period. A request for an exception to the general rules may be made in accordance with the district Administrative Procedure shall be presented in writing to the executive director of human resources prior to the absence.
LOCAL LEAVE	<p>All employees shall earn five, six, or seven paid local leave days per school year in accordance with the following schedule:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ten-month positions: Five days• 11-month positions: Six days• 12-month positions: Seven days <p>Local leave shall accumulate without limit.</p> <p>Local leave shall be used according to the terms and conditions of state personal leave. [See STATE PERSONAL LEAVE, above]</p>
EXTENDED SICK LEAVE	<p>Extended sick leave earned prior to the 1986–87 school year may be used after all state and local leave has been used. This leave shall carry over each year until it is used or the employee leaves the District.</p> <p>While an employee is using extended sick leave days, the employee's daily rate of pay shall be reduced by the amount of the substitute's daily rate of pay.</p>
SICK LEAVE BANK	<p>The District shall establish a sick leave bank that employees may join through contribution of local leave or state personal leave.</p> <p>Leave contributed to the bank shall be solely for the use of participating employees. An employee who is a member of the bank may request leave from the bank if the employee experiences a catastrophic illness or injury and has exhausted all paid leave.</p> <p>If the employee is unable to request leave from the sick leave bank, a member of the employee's family or the employee's supervisor may submit the request.</p>

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The Superintendent or designee shall develop regulations for the operation of the sick leave bank that address the following:

3. Membership in the sick leave bank, including the number of days an employee must contribute to become a member;
4. Procedures to request leave from the sick leave bank;
5. The maximum number of days per school year a member employee may receive from the sick leave bank;
6. The committee or administrator authorized to consider requests for leave from the sick leave bank and criteria for granting requests; and
7. Other procedures deemed necessary for the operation of the sick leave bank.

APPEAL

All decisions regarding the sick leave bank may be appealed in accordance with DGBA(LOCAL), beginning with the Superintendent or designee.

FAMILY AND MEDICAL
LEAVE

For purposes of an employee's entitlement to FMLA leave, the 12-month period shall be defined as September 1 through August 31.

TWELVE-MONTH
PERIOD

COMBINED LEAVE
FOR SPOUSES

If both spouses are employed by the District, the District shall limit FMLA leave for the birth, adoption, or placement of a child, or to care for a parent with a serious health condition, to a combined total of 12 weeks. The District shall limit military caregiver leave to a combined total of 26 weeks. [See DECA(LEGAL)]

INTERMITTENT OR
REDUCED
SCHEDULE LEAVE

The District shall not permit use of intermittent or reduced schedule FMLA leave for the care of a newborn child or for the adoption or placement of a child with the employee. [See DECA(LEGAL) for use of intermittent or reduced schedule leave due to a medical necessity.]

CERTIFICATION OF
LEAVE

If an employee requests leave, the employee shall provide certification, as required by FMLA regulations, of the need for leave. [See DECA(LEGAL)]

FITNESS-FOR-DUTY
CERTIFICATION

If an employee takes FMLA leave due to the employee's own serious health condition, the employee shall provide, before resuming work, a fitness-for-duty certification. If the District will require certification of the employee's ability to perform essential job functions, the District shall provide a list of essential job functions to the employee with the FMLA designation notice.

END OF SEMESTER
LEAVE

If a teacher takes leave near the end of the semester, the District may require the teacher to continue leave until the end of the se-

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	mester. [See DECA(LEGAL), LEAVE AT THE END OF A SEMESTER]
FAILURE TO RETURN	If, at the expiration of FMLA leave, the employee is able to return to work but chooses not to do so, the District may require reimbursement of premiums paid by the District during the leave. [See DECA(LEGAL), RECOVERY OF BENEFIT COST]
TEMPORARY DISABILITY LEAVE	<p>Any full-time employee shall be eligible for temporary disability leave. The maximum length of temporary disability leave shall be 180 calendar days. [See DBB(LOCAL) for temporary disability leave placement and DEC(LEGAL) for return to active duty.]</p> <p>An employee's notification of need for extended absence due to the employee's own medical condition shall be forwarded to the Superintendent or designee as a request for temporary disability leave.</p>
WORKERS' COMPENSATION	<hr/> <p>Note: Workers' compensation is not a form of leave. The workers' compensation law does not require the continuation of the District's contribution to health insurance. [See CRD(LOCAL) regarding payment of insurance contribution during employee absences.]</p> <hr/>
	An absence due to a work-related injury or illness shall be designated as FMLA leave, temporary disability leave, and/or assault leave, as applicable.
PAID LEAVE OFFSET	An employee eligible for workers' compensation income benefits, and not on assault leave, may elect in writing to use available partial-day increments of paid leave to make up the difference between the employee's income benefits and the pre-injury wage. [See CRE]
COURT APPEARANCES	Absences due to compliance with a valid subpoena or for jury duty shall be fully compensated by the District and shall not be deducted from the employee's pay or leave balance.
RESIGNING	Upon resignation from the District, employees with at least ten consecutive years of service in the District immediately preceding resignation from the District shall be entitled to reimbursement for any unused local leave earned in the District. The rate of reimbursement shall be \$35 per day for auxiliary personnel and \$45 per day for professional personnel.
RETIRING	Upon resignation from the District, employees with at least ten consecutive years of service in the District immediately preceding resignation from the District and eligible for retirement under applicable Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) guidelines shall

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be entitled to reimbursement for any unused state personal and sick leave and local leave earned in the District. The rate of reimbursement shall be \$75 per day for auxiliary personnel and \$100 per day for professional personnel.

Upon resignation from the District, employees with at least 25 consecutive years of service in the District immediately preceding resignation from the District and eligible for retirement under applicable TRS guidelines shall be entitled to reimbursement for any unused state personal and sick leave and local leave earned in the District. The rate of reimbursement shall be at the employee's current daily rate of pay, not to exceed 50 days. Any days exceeding 50 days shall be paid at \$75 per day for auxiliary personnel and \$100 per day for professional personnel. Based on issuance/adoption of policy. No retroactive pay at this rate is allowable.

FAILURE TO RETURN
TO WORK

In the event that an employee fails to return to work as soon as he or she is released by his or her physician to perform regular duties or light duty, as applicable, the contractual employee shall resign, or such failure shall be deemed to be repeated and continued neglect of duties on the part of the employee.

In this event for a noncontractual employee, he or she shall be deemed to have resigned the position with the District and to have waived any and all rights to further employment by the District.

WORKING WHILE ON
LEAVE

While on any type of leave status with the District, the employee may not perform work in any capacity except as approved by the Department of Human Resources ~~director of~~ human resources/employee services as part of an approved return-to-work or transitional duty assignment in the District.

Working during a leave of absence shall be considered a violation of the District's leave policy and may be grounds for immediate termination of at-will employees or recommendation of termination for contract employees.

FREQUENT OR
PROLONGED
ABSENCE

The supervisor shall report all absences in excess of ten days in a school year to the Department of Human Resources ~~executive director of human resources~~. All absences in excess of ten days shall be investigated by the Department of Human Resources ~~executive director of human resources~~ if the leave was not approved as family and medical leave or temporary disability leave. The Chief Human Resources Officer ~~executive director of human resources~~ shall make recommendations to the Superintendent for action if deemed necessary.

Any employee who is absent three or more days must make personal phone contact with his or her immediate supervisor no later

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than the third day of absence unless there are extenuating circumstances. Failure to make contact may result in termination due to job abandonment for at-will employees and recommendation for termination of contract employees.

SANCTIONS FOR
ABUSE

All employee leave shall be provided for the specific purpose stipulated in this policy and is not intended to be used as a vacation or for mere convenience. Except for discretionary state personal leave, documentation may be required for any absence at the discretion of the Superintendent or designee. Abuse of the employee leave program is a violation of District policy and may result in disciplinary action up to and including loss of pay, suspension, demotion, or termination of employment.