



Procedure 250.4A Leave Administration

Policy 250 - Leave Administration

1. Purpose

Lower Columbia College (LCC) will provide and administer a program for employee leaves of absence (any paid leave or authorized leave without pay) in a manner that will both serve the well-being of faculty and staff and the organization as a whole.

- A. All employee categories are covered except where specified within this procedure or modified by applicable collective bargaining agreements (CBA).
- B. Supervisors are responsible for managing their employees' leave and keeping both the employee and Human Resources informed of changes in status, rights, and need for information. Additionally, when applicable, supervisors are responsible for ensuring that no employee returns to work without the appropriate medical release.
- C. Employees are responsible for reporting leave and providing the notice and information necessary for LCC to effectively administer this procedure and direct our workforce.
- D. The integrity and accuracy of the leave reporting and approval process is critical for accountability purposes. State regulations require that employees submit leave for any hours of their work schedule that they did not work within that workweek. Accurate and timely leave reporting by all employees is necessary to meet standards and criteria

for reporting outcomes, costing programs, and safety and liability purposes.

2. General Provisions

- A. Leave will start on the date requested or date of need. Modification of these dates must be approved by the immediate supervisor and may require additional verification and/or documentation. Revisions must be submitted by the employee and approved by the supervisor in ctcLink.
- B. When an employee has been absent without authorized leave for three (3) consecutive days and has failed to contact their supervisor, or HR, of the reason the return date is not achievable, may be considered to have voluntarily resigned in accordance with applicable CBAs.
- C. Accruals are credited to the employee's leave account around the 9th of the following month. Paid leave may not be used before the month's accruals post. Employees can use accruals as of the 1st of the month the accruals post.
- D. HR will work with employees to coordinate Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Paid Family Medical Leave (PFML) qualifying leave in accordance with Procedure 250.1A – Family & Medical Leave Procedure.
- E. Accrued vacation leave will not be awarded in any month an exempt or classified employee is on an approved leave of absence without pay (LWOP) that exceeds ten (10) working days in that month. For employees in overtime eligible positions (exempt or classified) who have been on approved LWOP that exceeds ten (10) working days in that month, sick leave will accrue at the rate of one (1) hour per forty (40) hours worked up to a maximum of eight (8) hours of sick leave that month in accordance with RCW 49.46.210. For faculty and exempt employees in overtime ineligible positions, sick leave will not be awarded in any month where LWOP exceeds ten (10) working/contractual days.
- F. Use of paid leave at the end of an employee's separation from employment will only be approved for the number of business days

remaining in the month of the employee's last working day. Exceptions may be approved by the President or Vice President of Foundation, HR & Legal Affairs based upon business needs of the College.

- G. An employee who has accrued non-compensable sick leave may use non-compensable sick leave pursuant to normal leave request processes. Non-compensable sick leave will be used prior to compensable sick leave. The non-compensable sick leave will not be available for cash-out. Non-Compensable sick leave is only available for one year from earned date when an employee moves to a full time Classified Position, Non-Perm Part-Time Position, or Exempt Overtime-eligible Position.
- H. Suspended Operations/Inclement Weather: Employees on preapproved leave will not have their leave reversed upon notice of suspended operations. Employees may use paid leave (including sick leave) or leave without pay when they are unable to report to work due to inclement weather/suspended operations. For full details regarding required use of leave during suspended operations/inclement weather, please refer to applicable collective bargaining agreements, handbooks, and policies. The first day of Suspended Operations employees should enter an absence type of Other Paid Leave and the Reason is Suspended Operations.
- I. Accrued leave may be used as a supplemental benefit through the PFML program.
- J. Jury Duty: An employee that is required to report to Jury Duty will request a Jury Service Verification form at the end of service. This form will include the date and hours of jury duty each day and is signed by the court clerk with the court seal. Employees will enter an absence of Jury Duty for the hours required to be at the court including reasonable drive time from the court to the office. If Jury Duty ends early the employee is required to return to work or enter another absence type for the remaining hours.
- K. Non-Perm Part-Time Unscheduled employees earn Holiday Credit for the month that a holiday occurs that can be used the following month. This is based on the calculation listed in WAC 357-31-021. This

Holiday Credit may be used on a holiday, as vacation, and in the ways stated in WAC 357-31-027.

3. Requesting Leave

- A. Leave requests shall be made to the employee's supervisor using the request and reporting processes required within that department. An employee must request leave in advance of use when the need for the leave or the absence is foreseeable, including but not limited to medical treatments or other events planned or known in advance. For family care emergencies or for an emergency health condition, employees must make every effort to notify their supervisor at least two (2) hours prior to but no later than the start of their work shift. When advance notice cannot be given because of an emergency or unforeseen circumstance due to domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking, the employee or the employee's designee must give notice to the employer no later than the end of the first day that the employee takes such leave.
- B. When considering requests for vacation, personal or compensatory time off, the immediate supervisor shall consider the request of the employee but may instead require that leave be taken when it will least interfere with the operational needs of the department.
- C. Vacation requests exceeding three consecutive weeks require HR and Vice President approval in addition to direct supervisor approval.

4. Faculty Leave Guidelines

Instructions for Reporting Leave (all faculty)

- A. Full-time Faculty cannot accrue more than one (1) day (seven (7) hours) of sick leave per month and cannot take more than seven (7) hours of sick leave in a single day.
- B. Available leave must be used prior to leave without pay (LWOP) unless otherwise approved by HR. Some examples of instances where leave without pay may be approved for use prior to paid leave include during summer schedule and the December efficiency closure, eligible medical leave (FMLA/PFML, accommodations) and LNI-related absences.

- C. Faculty are required to take seven (7) hours for a full day's absence or prorated for a partial day's absence. Personal Leave days must be used in full day increments.
- D. Faculty shall notify their supervisor of any cancellations or changes in course meeting pattern, associated with leave. If faculty are not able to perform contractual duties on a contract day, faculty must submit leave.
- E. Full-time (FT) faculty with moonlights: Because FT faculty do not accrue additional sick leave for moonlights, when faculty take a full day (7 hours) of leave, it will also cover any moonlights they had that day. If the FT faculty member missed the moonlight only or missed less than seven (7) hours, they take the time missed including the moonlight class time up to seven (7) hours.

5. Approval of Leave

All leave requests or reporting of leave use is subject to the approval of the supervisor. In accordance with CBAs, the supervisor will notify the employee as soon as practical following request/report whether or not the request is approved. Requests may be denied where the absence would interfere with operational needs.

6. Documentation of Leave

- A. Leave usage shall be documented in ctcLink or other automated system prescribed by LCC no later than the last working day of the pay period.
- B. If the employee is unavailable to complete leave requests in ctcLink, the supervisor or payroll may submit leave requests on behalf of the employee by the appropriate deadline.

7. Leave Without Pay

- A. Leave without pay may be allowed for any of the following reasons and in accordance with WAC 357-31, applicable provisions of a collective

bargaining agreement, or this procedure or another administrative procedure:

1. For any reason leave with pay may be granted, as long as the conditions for leave with pay are met, including prior approval.
2. Family and Medical Leave Act
3. Parental Leave
4. Employees receiving time loss compensation due to a work-related injury or illness that is compensable under the state workers' compensation law.
5. Military leave & Military family leave (RCW 38.40.060 & RCW 49.77)
6. To accommodate annual work schedules of employees occupying cyclic year positions
7. Volunteer firefighting leave
8. Domestic Violence Leave (RCW 49.76)
9. Educational leave
10. Child and elder care emergencies
11. Leave for government service in the public interest
12. Citizen volunteer or community service leave
13. Union rights and activities
14. Bereavement leave
15. Absence due to inclement weather
16. Leave taken voluntarily to reduce the effect of a layoff or reduction in force
17. Leave that is authorized in advance by the appointing authority as part of plan to reasonably accommodate a person with disability

18. A high-risk employee, as defined in RCW 49.17.062, seeking a reasonable accommodation to protect themselves from the risk of exposure to an infectious or contagious disease may use leave without pay if no other accommodation is reasonable.
 19. Absence due to the employee serving as a member of the state legislature. (RCW 49.100)
- B. Leave without pay must be requested and, where practical, approved in advance by the immediate supervisor. Unapproved leave without pay may be cause for disciplinary action up to and including termination or job abandonment.
 - C. Leave without pay may not be approved for any period exceeding twelve (12) months, except for extensions as may be provided in the applicable collective bargaining agreement.
 - D. Except where modified by an applicable collective bargaining agreement, leave without pay will not exceed twelve (12) months in any five (5) rolling year period which begins with the first occurrence.
 - E. Per Article 709.C. of the LCCFAHE CBA, when a full-time academic employee is on leave without pay for more than fifteen (15) consecutive contract days, the academic employee's seniority date will be moved forward in an amount equal to the duration of the leave without pay.
 - F. Per Article 39.1B of the WFSE HE CBA, when a classified employee is on leave without pay for more than fifteen (15) consecutive calendar days and the absence is not due to one of the reasons listed in Article 39.1 B, the employee's seniority date will be moved forward in an amount equal to the duration of the leave without pay.

8. Sick Leave Cash Out at Retirement or Death of Employee

- A. Employees who separate from LCC due to retirement or disability retirement based upon their retirement plan, or the estate of a

deceased eligible employee shall be compensated for unused accrued compensable sick leave at the rate of twenty-five percent (25%). Such compensation shall be based upon the employee's salary at the time of separation.

- I. For the purposes of this sub-section, retiring employees shall be defined as employees who meet the applicable age/years eligibility requirements under the rules and regulations of the Public Employee Retirement System (PERS), the Washington State Teacher's Retirement System (WSTRS), or for individuals under TIAA/CREF: (a) twenty (20) years of service, or (b) fifty-five (55) years of age and ten (10) years of service, or (c) sixty (60) years of age and five (5) years of service.
 - II. ii. The Board of Trustees has authorized administration to provide employee groups with the option of participating in a medical expense reimbursement plan, called VEBA. If this option has been implemented by a majority vote of eligible participants, all participants in the employee group are required to convert the sick leave cash out at retirement to a VEBA account in accordance with applicable IRS regulations. Sick leave cash out to VEBA is not subject to federal income tax or social security tax.
- B. **Exclusions:** Compensation for unused sick leave shall not be used in computing the retirement allowance; therefore, no contributions are to be made to the employee's retirement plan for such payments, nor shall such payments be reported to the employee's retirement plan as compensation.
- I. An employee who separates from LCC for any reason other than retirement or death shall not be paid for his/her compensable sick leave balance.
 - II. Under no circumstances shall an employee receive monetary compensation for non-compensable sick leave.

Procedure History

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