

Emergency and Discretionary Leaves

Emergency leave may be granted for no more than five (5) days per year and may be taken in the case of emergencies as defined in the following:

An emergency arises out of unforeseen and unexpected circumstances which create an air of crisis or extreme need. The circumstances must present a grave and clear danger that imminently threatens physical or mental health or would result in irremediable harm or in immediate disaster to life or property unless some action is taken.

A written application for emergency leave must be returned to the district office on the day of return to school.

Family Emergency 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 otherwise stated, any leave used under terms of this policy will be deducted from the staff member's accumulated sick leave. In the event the staff member's sick leave has been exhausted, the leave may be granted without pay.

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

A. Domestic Violence Leave

The district will allow victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking and family members of victims to take reasonable leave from work, intermittent leave or leave on a reduced leave schedule. 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.

B. Family Illness

District staff members may use accrued sick leave or other accrued leave, at the employee's choice, to care for a child of the employee with a health condition that requires treatment or supervision. Accumulated sick leave may be used to care for an adult child with a condition that prevents self-care. Staff members may use accrued sick leave or other accrued leave, at the employee's choice, to care for a spouse, parent, parent-in-law or grandparent of the employee who has a serious health condition or an emergency condition. These provisions are to be implemented in accordance with the Washington Family Care law. The district may require a signed statement from a licensed medical practitioner to verify the need for treatment, care or supervision for any absence that exceeds five (5) consecutive days.

C. Death in the Family

The district shall allow each staff member a maximum of five (5) days bereavement leave with pay upon the death of an employee's immediate family. For purposes of this provision, the term "immediate family" shall mean spouse, child, sibling, parent, grandparent, grandchild, and spouse's sibling, parent, or grandparent. One day of bereavement leave with pay shall be granted, per incident, in the event of the death of an employee's aunt, uncle, niece, or nephew. At the Superintendent's discretion, leave to attend a funeral of a close friend or colleague may be granted. These requests shall be

made through the supervisor. In the event extended travel is required to attend a funeral or if additional time is needed for the above bereavement leave clauses, an employee may be granted up to an additional three (3) days leave without pay, with the approval of the Superintendent or designee. An employee may use accrued vacation or personal leave time with the approval of their supervisor. The deaths of more than one family member resulting from a common occurrence shall be treated as a single death with respect to the length of leave granted. The District reserves the right to request pertinent information.

An extended unpaid leave of absence for a period up to the beginning of the next school term or school year may be approved at the discretion of the superintendent based upon consideration of educational program needs and the desires of the staff member, together with any recommendation of professionals such as medical practitioners or counselors regarding the leave request.

Nothing in this section will preclude the use of accumulated sick leave to care for a child with a health condition that requires treatment or supervision, as provided in the 'Family Illness' section of this policy.

Sabbatical Leaves

Certificated staff will be eligible for sabbatical leave for study or research. The district may grant sabbatical leaves of absence for study and/or research upon application by certificated staff, the recommendation of the superintendent, and approval by the board, provided such a leave will serve the best interest of the district and is within the fiscal parameters of the district. The district will declare its intention by February 1. Certificated staff will be eligible for sabbatical leave for study or research.

Staff shall have served five (5) or more continuous years in the district. A staff member on sabbatical leave for study or research shall not seek employment for compensation in the education field during the period of sabbatical other than to supplement sabbatical leave income in carrying out the approved program. An effort shall be made to replace a certificated staff member returning from sabbatical leave in his/her original position or in an appropriate comparable position.

Leaves of Absence

The district may grant leaves of absence for specific periods of time for up to one school year upon application by a staff member, the recommendation of the superintendent and the approval of the board. Such leaves will be without pay or fringe benefits and, with the approval of the board, and may be extended for one additional school year. During the leave the staff member may pay the district's share of any insurance benefits program in order to maintain those benefits. The needs of students and the district program warrant primary consideration. Leaves of absence will be granted only when they will not have an undesirable impact upon the educational program or business operations.

A staff member 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 staff member is qualified. The staff member 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.

Staff on leave of absence will not earn any salary schedule experience credit or any sick leave credit or benefits during the leave of absence. A staff member on approved leave shall not seek employment for compensation in the education field, or similar placement of current assignment, during the period of leave.

Leaves to Attend Meetings/Conferences

The district may grant leaves, subject to the recommendation of the superintendent and approval by the board, to staff for the purpose of attending meetings or conferences that are likely to be of value to the staff member's performance. Meetings and conferences wherein bargaining unit activities are conducted are excluded. Such leaves may be granted without pay and with or without travel expense reimbursement.

Cross Reference: Board Policy 5021

Applicability of Personnel Policies

Legal References: [RCW 28A.400.300](#)

Hiring and discharging employees —
Written leave policies — Seniority
and leave benefits of employees
transferring between school districts
Sick leave, time off — Care of family
members
Domestic Violence Leave

[RCW 49.12.270](#)

[Chapter 49.76 RCW](#)

Management Resources:

Policy News, October 2011
Policy News, April 2009

Policy Manual Revisions
Domestic Violence Leave

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Wahluke School District
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