

Policy & Procedure Manual

**LEAVE/EFFECT OF ABSENCE – GENERAL
POLICY – HR-III-18**

POLICY:

An employee may apply for an unpaid leave of absence for the following reasons:

- a) Education
- b) Personal Reasons
- c) Pregnancy Leave – in accordance with the Employment Standards Act.
- d) Parental Leave – in accordance with the Employment Standards Act.
- e) Family medical/caregiver – in accordance with the Employment Standards Act.
- f) Critical illness leave – in accordance with the Employment Standards Act.

Employees requesting pregnancy/parental leave or a leave of absence for medical reasons must submit a Doctor's certificate indicating the estimate date of confinement or the anticipated length of absence along with the form.

Please note that requests for leave of absence to seek/obtain employment elsewhere will not be considered, unless the employment opportunity has been posted through OPTIONS NORTHWEST and the availability of a leave of absence is communicated at the time of distribution.

Employees must endeavor to utilize any paid/unpaid time earned (i.e.: vacation, holidays, etc) and owed them before utilizing an unpaid leave of absence.

All leave of absence requests must be submitted in writing on a "Request for Leave of Absence" form (Appendix A) and will be considered for approval as follows:

- Requests of less than a full shift and up to 3 full shifts – approval at the Supervisor/Manager's discretion.
- Request of more than 3 full shifts – final approval at the Executive Director's discretion.

PURPOSE:

1. To provide employees with a mechanism to apply for a leave of absence.
2. To provide a mechanism for ensuring all affected departments are made aware of when an employee is on a leave of absence.

PROCEDURE:

Requests for Leaves up to 3 Full Shifts

1. When a leave of absence is requested by an employee, a Request for Leave of Absence form must be completed by the employee and forwarded to his/her Supervisor/Manager/Director.
2. The Supervisor/Manager/Director then approves/denies the request and a copy is given back to the employee, with an explanation where required.

Requests for Leaves over 3 Full Shifts

1. When a leave of absence is requested by an employee, a Request for Leave of Absence form must be completed by the employee and returned to the Supervisor/Manager/Director.
2. The Supervisor/Manager/Director shall review the request and make a recommendation on the form, endorse it and forward it to the Human Resources Coordinator to verify time owing. The Human Resources Coordinator shall forward to the Director, Human Resources and Executive Director for final determination to:

(a) Approve:

Upon final approval, the Executive Director shall return the form to Human Resources and a copy of the form will be filed by the Human Resources Department. A letter of approval will be sent by the Human Resources Department to the employee outlining the leave details with a copy being forwarded to the Finance Department.

or:

(b) Deny:

Contact the Supervisor/Manager/Director to discuss the denial and forward the form to Human Resources. Human Resources will take a copy of the form and return it to the Supervisor/Manager/Director, who will meet with the employee to discuss the denial of the request.

EFFECT OF ABSENCE

Full Time Employees:

Leaves under 30 days:

During an unpaid leave of absence under 30 continuous calendar days, both seniority and service will accrue. Full-time employees with benefits will have their benefits continue during the first 30 days.

Full Time Employees (continued):

Leaves over 30 days:

During an unpaid leave of absence over 30 continuous calendar days, the following shall apply:

During an unpaid absence exceeding thirty (30) continuous calendar days, credit for service for purposes of salary increment, vacation, sick leave, or any other benefits provided, shall be suspended for the period of the absence in excess of thirty (30) continuous calendar days, the benefits concerned appropriately reduced on a pro rata basis and the employee's anniversary date adjusted accordingly. In addition, the employee will become responsible for full payment of subsidized employee benefits in which he/she is participating for the period of the absence, except that OPTIONS NORTHWEST will continue to pay its share of the premiums for up to eighteen (18) months while an employee is in receipt of W.S.I.B. benefits. OPTIONS NORTHWEST will continue to pay its share of the premiums for the initial seventeen (17) weeks from the commencement of the leave while an employee is on pregnancy leave and for a period of up to sixty-one (61) weeks while on parental leave for a birth mother and up to sixty-three (63) weeks while on parental leave for a natural or adoptive parent who has not taken maternity leave. Service shall accrue for the initial seventeen (17) weeks from the commencement of the leave if an employee is on pregnancy leave and for up to sixty-one (61) weeks while an employee is on parental leave for a birth mother, and up to sixty-three (63) weeks while on parental leave for a natural or adoptive parent who has not taken a pregnancy leave. Notwithstanding this provision, service shall accrue for a period of fifteen (15) weeks if an employee's absence is due to a disability resulting in W.S.I.B. benefits.

It is further understood that during such unpaid absence, credit for seniority for purposes of promotion, demotion, transfer or lay-off shall be suspended and not accrue during the period of absence. Notwithstanding this provision seniority shall accrue in accordance with the Employment Standards Act during pregnancy and parental leave, or for a period of thirty (30) months if an employee's absence is due to a disability resulting in W.S.I.B. benefits, for a period of twenty-four (24) months if an employee's unpaid absence is due to an illness.

Part Time Employees:

Seniority shall be retained and accumulated when an employee is absent from work under the following circumstances:

- i. when on leave of absence with pay;
- ii. when in receipt of loss of earnings benefits from the W.S.I.B. but not pension); for a period of twenty-four (24) months;

- iii. when on an approved pregnancy/parental leave.

Part Time Employees (continued):

Seniority shall be retained but not accumulated when an employee is absent from work under the following circumstances:

- i. when on approved leave of absence without pay;
- ii. when absent on account of a non-occupational accident or illness;
- iii. when absent due to lay-off.

NOTE: Bargaining Unit employees should refer to their respective Collective Agreements for specifics regarding effect of absence.

RECOMMENDED BY: Director, Human Resources

APPENDICES: 1

OPERATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY: Administration, Finance, Human Resources, Community Services Administration, Community Services (all)

ORIGINAL POLICY DATE: April 1993

AUTHORIZED BY: Executive Director

SIGNATURE:



OPTIONS NORTHWEST
REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

POLICY HR-III-18
APPENDIX A

NAME: _____

STATUS: _____

CLASSIFICATION: _____

AREA OF ASSIGNMENT: _____

REASON FOR REQUEST:

EDUCATION

PERSONAL REASONS

PARENTAL LEAVE

PREGNANCY LEAVE

FAMILY MEDICAL/CAREGIVER LEAVE

CRITICAL ILLNESS LEAVE

EXPLANATION: _____

DATES REQUESTED:

FROM: _____
DD/MM/YR

TO: _____
DD/MM/YR

DATE OF RETURN

SIGNATURE OF EMPLOYEE

TELEPHONE NO. (HOME)

DATE OF REQUEST

SUPERVISOR'S RECOMMENDATIONS: _____

SIGNATURE

DATE

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMENTS: _____

SIGNATURE

DATE

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: _____

APPROVED:

DENIED:

SIGNATURE

DATE

